

How to help refugees

According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), [over 4.8 million Syrians](#) have now fled from their country as refugees. Most of them are in the countries around Syria. That is where the biggest need is. But there are also other refugees and displaced people in Devon, either as part of the former national Dispersal Programme or are here independently. A list of different local organisations working to support refugees and people seeking sanctuary and asylum is outlined below.

Donate money

Making a donation to one of the international aid organisations will make a difference. All major aid organisations are accepting donations: British Red Cross, Oxfam, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and others. If you would like to donate, go online and search "[donate for Syrian refugees](#)". The Charity Commission offers advice on [giving safely to refugee appeals](#).

Volunteer

[Refugee Support Devon](#) are playing an important part in coordinating offers of support for refugees in Devon and always need volunteers to help. They are particularly interested to hear from Arabic speakers, but all help is welcome. If you can offer any of your time, please contact them by email at info@refugeesupportdevon.org.uk. In Plymouth there is a refugee centre run by the Devon & Cornwall Refugee Support Council who also want volunteers: <http://dcrs-plymouth.org/>

Pledge

The number of Syrian refugees in Devon will grow only gradually, so we do not need large amounts of clothes, toys, furniture or appliances. But there are particular household items that will be very helpful. Refugee Support Devon keeps an up-to-date list of the things we need. Please contact them by email at info@refugeesupportdevon.org.uk if you want to buy items or pledge money to help buy the most important things.

Rent a property

More than anything else, we need self-contained homes for refugee families. If you are a landlord – or you know someone who is – who would consider renting a property to accommodate a refugee family, please get in touch with your city/district council housing team:

- East Devon: housingneeds@eastdevon.gov.uk 01395 517469
- Exeter: vanessa.macdonald@exeter.gov.uk 01392 265723 or claire.hope@exeter.gov.uk 01392 26 5833
- South Hams and West Devon: iblake@westdevon.gov.uk
- Teignbridge: housing@teignbridge.gov.uk

We know that some people would like to offer spare rooms. We are grateful for these offers, but we need self-contained housing where families can lead independent lives.

Community sponsorship

The UK Government is encouraging community groups to get directly involved in supporting the resettlement of vulnerable people fleeing conflict. You can find full details about the responsibilities involved and the process for applying at [GOV.UK – Apply for full community sponsorship](#). Churches in North and East Devon are very engaged in developing projects. See Facebook pages [Tarka Community Refugee Sponsorship](#) and [Abide in East Devon](#)

If you apply to the government to be a community sponsor to support a family to settle in Devon, you will need approval from Devon County Council and the relevant district council. Contact us at refugeesupport@devon.gov.uk and we will help you through this process.

Refugee and Asylum Support Organisations in Devon

Refugee Support Devon Tel: 01392 682 185 / info@refugeesupportdevon.org.uk

Devon & Cornwall Refugee Support Council – Masiandae Centre (Plymouth) Tel: 01752 265952 / <http://dcrs-plymouth.org/>

Exeter City of Sanctuary info@exeter.cityofsanctuary.org <https://exeter.cityofsanctuary.org/>

About Time, Plymouth marlene_schuster@hotmail.com

All Nations Tel: 01752-651817 / allnations@allnationsministries.info

Open Doors International Language School, Plymouth 01752-258770/258771 english@odils.com <http://odils.com/>

Salvation Army Tel: 01392-822107 / DevonandCornwall@salvationarmy.org.uk

North Devon Refugee Solidarity (NDRS) www.facebook.com/northerndevonsanctuary/about/?ref=page_internal
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1641979666042474/>

Community Sponsorship – Abide (Ottery St. Mary) abide@otterystmary.org.uk

Tarka Community Refugee Sponsorship hopeis@btinternet.com

START (Plymouth) Tel: 01752-255200 / www.studentsandrefugeestogether.com