



## Introduction

This year has seen projects and services end at the Forum and exciting new ones begin. On the 22nd of June 2023 we had our local MP, Mr Daniel Zeichner, and Fiona Brice from the National Lottery at our office for a photoshoot to launch a press release. This was for a grant of over £430,000, which we have received from the National Lottery Community Fund for an exciting new project called 'Vision Horizon'. This gives us a much-enhanced capability to better serve individuals and communities, enabling us to recruit new staff to do this.



From left to right of the photo:

Yang Wang: CECF Treasurer, Asaduz Zaman: CECF Chairperson, Fiona Brice: Grants officer from The National Lottery, Daniel Zeichner: Cambridge City MP, Eddie Stadnik: CEO of CECF

Helen Bushell, Head of Regional Funding for London, the Southeast and East of England at The National Lottery Community Fund, said: "Thanks to National Lottery players, and the hard work and dedication of the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, this funding will make a big difference in supporting Black and ethnic minority communities in Cambridge. This funding will help meet rising demands of the community, improving access to important services, helping people to reach their potential and thrive."

**Reported by Eddie Stadnik**  
CEO (Chief Executive Officer)

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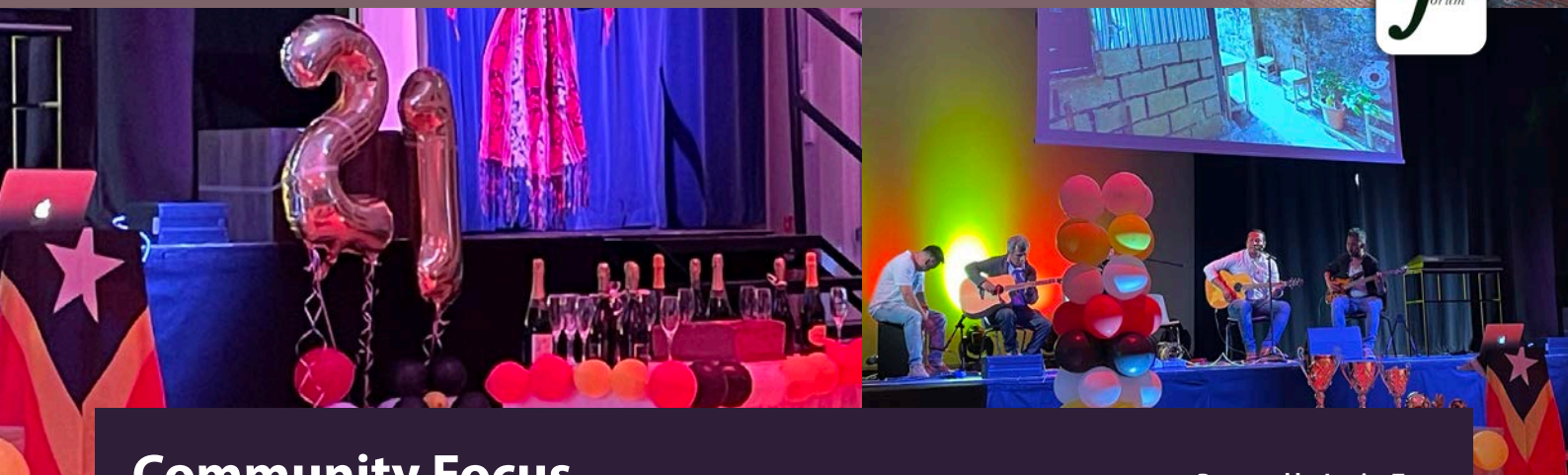
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We are open for appointments only. We are not currently operating a drop-in service. Please contact us via our office number 01223 655241 or [cecfenquiries@cecf.co.uk](mailto:cecfenquiries@cecf.co.uk) for advice, information, or an appointment.



Regulated by the OISC  
Ref No N201800033



## Community Focus

Reported by Louise Tan  
CECF Development and Organisational Support Officer

### Timor Leste - 20th May 2023

On Saturday 20th May 2023, we joined with the East Timorese Community in Cambridge (ETICC) for an all-day event celebrating 21 years of independence for East Timor, also known as Timor Leste. This took place at the Netherhall School.

The morning began with a football tournament, with fast paced football matches, which CEO Eddie Stadnik launched. In the evening, we saw younger members of the community showcasing traditional dance and clothes on stage and had the pleasure of live music performances. Trophies and awards were presented in recognition of the sporting success from the morning.

We were informed that the delicious and impressive display of food, was more Portuguese influence for formal occasions such as this. After dinner, we participated in the 'opening dance' where we were impressed by everyone's sense of rhythm except ours!

This was a particularly important occasion for ETICC as they said goodbye to the old President and welcomed in the new. Members of the Executive were sworn into their new roles, collectively cutting the cake in solidarity.

The community is growing in size and we look forward to working with them in the future.

### Women's Voices for Africa - 10th June 2023

On Saturday 10th June, Women's Voices for Africa (WV4A) hosted their summer event entitled 'The Future is Female'. This took place at the William Collyn Community Centre in Girton. The theme was directly in line with the group's aims to celebrate and empower women and to encourage more women and girls into Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and careers. The event was particularly special as Dulce Silveira the Founder and President of WV4A had managed to secure a special guest for the evening, a Minister from the Nigerian High Commission who attended with his wife.

The evening began with nibbles and speeches from an impressive array of contributors, including a local councillor, herself a Black female engineer who could speak of her experience. Another contributor spoke

of women's roles throughout history, including their success on the battlefield and presenting was CECF's own Ila Chandavarkar who shared eye-opening statistics on male/female ratios in terms of academic performance, presence in STEM subjects and the gender pay gap in STEM careers.

An impressive buffet style dinner was served and was enjoyed alongside a fashion show from countries across the continent. The purpose of the fashion show was not only to celebrate traditional female attire, but to help the models build their confidence. Miss Kenya stole the show and walked away with the winning prize, but all the models were celebrated. Music and dancing followed, and much fun was had by all. CECF supported this event with a team of volunteers to help set up, who then stayed on to enjoy the festivities and wonderful event.



### Srebrenica Memorial Day

11th July 2023



CECF CEO attended the Srebrenica Memorial Day - 11th July, in the beautiful gardens of the Cambridge Central Mosque, alongside Imam Sejad Mekić, Cllr Jenny Gawthrop (the Mayor of Cambridge) and Cllr Mairéad Healy (Executive Cllr for Communities) to commemorate Srebrenica Memorial Day.

This was a very poignant and reflective service with messages commemorating, but also stressing the importance of communities challenging 'Hate'.

The Bosnian Genocide was a planned systematic and industrialised murder of just under 100,000 Muslims and displacement of two million people. In the space of just a few days in July 1995, over 8,000 Muslim men and boys were murdered and buried in mass graves in Srebrenica. Judge Fouad Riad from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia described this as 'truly scenes from hell, written on the darkest pages of human history'.

Reported by Eddie Stadnik CEO, CECF

### Shah Jalal Food Hub

27th July 2023



Louise and Eddie from the CECF, visited the Shah Jalal Food Hub at Akeman Street Community Centre. Having started in the car park of the mosque in Darwin Drive in March 2021, the Shah Jalal Food Hub now runs out of Akeman Street Community Centre every Thursday between 11am and 1pm. Managed by volunteers from the (BWCAC) Bangladesh Welfare & Cultural Association Cambridge, who are also a member organisation of the CECF.

It was great to meet the Shah Jalal team and to see them in action. We were extremely impressed by how efficiently everything was organised, from the delivery of donated goods, through the service to users, and then takedown. What was incredibly striking was the amount and variety of people from all communities using the Food Hub. The Shah Jalal Food Hub is providing a vital service at this time of economic hardship for many, at the same time as building community bridges.

For more information about the splendid work of the Shah Jalal Food Hub please go to the following link: <https://www.bwcac.org.uk/food-hub/>

## Development News

We have been busy assisting groups through our online advice surgeries this year. Since April we have assisted at least 6 new or established community groups through at least 12 advice surgeries. These are being provided online through Zoom, covering a range of topics such as legal structure for new groups, charity registration and how to set up a business that would be of social interest.

In addition to these advice surgeries, we met 4 other groups in person to discuss their community needs. CB Mentoring, East Timorese Community in Cambridge, and Women's Voice's for Africa we met at Arbury Court. We met with the Shah Jalal Food Hub at Akeman Street in July. This great initiative, which meets a huge need, whilst building community bridges is one that we want to ensure can continue.

### The Rudd Institute - 12th July 2023

The Rudd Institute approached us about the making of a film – raising awareness of the dire state of funding, where families were not getting support, the challenges faced both by the hardly reached communities as well as organisations like CECF. On the 12th of July we conducted a filming session with a filmmaker at Arbury Court. This was a new experience for us as an organisation, but CECF staff rose to the challenge.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Rudd Institute for this fantastic opportunity.



### #IAMRemarkable - 21st July 2023

We hosted a face-to-face session on the 21st of July at Arbury Court, with experienced facilitator Reem Assil, coming to run the Google initiative #IAMRemarkable. The theme is to encourage people to speak up about and celebrate their achievements, whether these be in the workplace, at home or any other arena. Nine women from six different communities attended the session, including two mother and daughter duos. The positive feedback from all reflected their engagement and participation throughout.

One of the key takeaways was the value of sharing one's own story and achievements as a way of both recognising oneself and inspiring others. Having experienced this in the room ourselves whilst listening to each other's stories, it added another layer to the power and importance of acknowledging ourselves. Following the success of the initial session, we will be looking to run #IAMRemarkable again.

If you are interested in attending, we'd be very happy to hear from you. Please contact [louise@cecf.co.uk](mailto:louise@cecf.co.uk)



**CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM**

**FREE TRAINING**

for Black and Minoritised Ethnic (BME) Community Groups

**Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum is offering free informative learning sessions from September 2023 to March 2024.**

All sessions will be online.

**Overview, dates and times of sessions:**

**1 Why do Equalities matter for a community group?**

Many believe that running a group for a BME community means you are already meeting Equalities considerations. Have you considered this fully? Could you successfully engage more people through good equalities practice?

**Wednesday 6th September 2023 1 pm to 2.30 pm**

This session will go through what good equalities practice is and how this can benefit your group in many far-reaching ways. It will also briefly look at what is required by legislation as well as how to develop a good policy that is both appropriate for your group as well as practical and useful, rather than just a document to satisfy a funder.

**2 The ABC of organisational business plans**

Do you want your organisation to be proactive not reactive? Do you want to consider how to increase enterprise and diverse ways of raising income? If you do, you will need to have a long term view of what you want to achieve, and how you will achieve this through a business plan.

**Wednesday 11th October 2023 1 pm to 2.30 pm**

This session will start with the basics of exploring what a business plan is, and its various sections. Business plans can be simple documents for small community groups or more complex ones for larger organisations with several projects. This session will be pitched for all levels.

**3 Choosing the right structure for your group**

There is no correct answer to choosing the structure for your group, you need to pick what is the right one for the way your group operates. This session will consider all the different structures you could choose, including staying as an unregistered community group. It will review the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

**Wednesday 7th February 2024 1 pm to 2.30 pm**

This will give you all the information you need to consider, to decide the right structure for your group. The session will also briefly look at what you need to do to register as a charity or as a company.

Please contact [ila@cecf.co.uk](mailto:ila@cecf.co.uk) or [eddie@cecf.co.uk](mailto:eddie@cecf.co.uk) for any enquiries, or to secure a place.

## CECF Training

**CECF will be delivering three learning sessions over the coming months. Please see the accompanying flyer for more information.**

## Funding for your community

Community Grant

Cambridge City Council has launched the 24-25 Community Grants which support local voluntary and community groups to run activities which tackle social and/or economic inequality among Cambridge residents with the greatest need of support.

To find out more and complete the application form, please go to <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/apply-for-up-to-2000-from-the-community-grants-fund>

If you wish to apply for more than £2,000 for an activity and DRR, or just DRR then you can either request the application guidance and application form from [grants@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:grants@cambridge.gov.uk) or go to <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-grants> for both documents.

Please note that you cannot apply to both the Small Grants fund and the over £2,000 grant fund.

£1 million

Community Grants

Funding for your community

£275,000

Homelessness Prevention Grants

£30,000

Sustainable City Grants

*The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Monday 2nd October 2023*



## Cambridgeshire Human Rights and Equality Support Service (CHESS)



Cambridgeshire Human Rights and Equality Support Service (CHESS) provides advice, assistance, representation and advocacy to individuals, families and organisations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 but not exclusively. We also provide equality, diversity and inclusion training to employers and service providers. Our main areas of operation are employment, discrimination, education, health and social care, housing, policing and criminal justice and others.

Last April 2023 marked the eight years since I assumed the mantle of managing CHESS. Since then there have been some changes, including the most dramatic, the COVID19 pandemic. We also moved from the old office at Courtyard to Arbury Court in late 2016. Prior to that the Outreach Advice Officer (Mrs Ingrid Bedford) left after her fixed term contract ended in August 2016 and funding shortage resulted in our service hours being reduced from fifteen per week to ten. Last but not the least, the joint funding with Disability Cambridgeshire also came to an end in 2021. Like most service providers, the pandemic forced us to operate remotely.

Despite these changes, CHESS continues to grow from strength to strength as far as our advice, assistance, representation and advocacy work are concerned. In fact, we were worried that operating remotely would have affected the volume of service users negatively. On the contrary, the good news is that, the number

of people using our services have gone up since we went remote.

In the 2022/203 financial year, we provided advice, assistance, representation and advocacy to 55 individuals, families and organisations as follows:

In employment CHESS advised, assisted, represented and advocated for twelve workers and five employers, making the total seventeen. Housing saw a total of sixteen (thirteen individuals and families and three housing providers). Education was four, made up of three individuals and one school. Policing and Criminal Justice, six individuals. In addition to the six individuals, CHESS worked with and advised Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Constabularies on matters of Stop and Search, equality, diversity and inclusion.

On Health and Social Care, CHESS advised, assisted, represented and advocated for two individuals and two organisations. We also worked with six mothers on Children and Family matters. Six individuals received advice, assistance, representation and advocacy on various forms of discrimination, especially race discrimination. There were also six individuals who received advice, assistance, representation and advocacy in various areas. Finally, CHESS also carried out work on six Personal Independent Payment applications and appeals.

In addition to the above, CHESS also engaged in partnership work with Cambridge City Council and the three county constabularies mentioned above.

Our work was in the form of telephone and email advice, correspondence with employers and service providers on behalf of our service users as well as telephone discussions, Zoom and Team meetings and occasional in person activities such as court or tribunal hearings and other meetings.

Remote working has brought more benefits to CHESS than disadvantage. For example, we are able to take on more service users as they do not have to travel to the office, which sometimes resulted in lateness or no show up due to transportation problems. Again, CHESS has done away with the paper work of service users completing client forms. This is because many of our service users do not have the facilities to complete

forms and email them to us. This has had positive cost to CHESS as we are no longer photocopying Client Information Forms and all our records are kept as electronic copies. However, telephone cost may be relatively higher as we now engage more on phone with service users, than previously.

CHESS has chalked successes and our service users are very please with our work as most say that without CHESS they would not have known what could have happened to them. Many would definitely have lost their jobs, housing, benefits, and others. These are indications that CHESS is making positive difference to the lives of our service users, contributing to reducing poverty, social exclusion and economic disadvantage and improving the quality of life for our service users.

**Reported by Samuel K Budu**  
CHESS Manager

## Equality Services



In April 2023, I was appointed as the Equality Service Advisor at Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum.

The Equality Service aims to provide welfare advice and support to the most marginalised and isolated Black and Minoritised Ethnic (BME) people in Cambridge. Supporting beneficiaries on the topics of accommodation & housing, ESOL, healthcare, education, employment, access to immigration advice, volunteering, and training opportunities. Tackling barriers and ensuring access to services for both established and migrant communities to successfully help people build lives of quality and enable them to fulfil their potential.

The period April – June has been a busy one with the Equality Service providing help to at least 99 beneficiaries, with at least 166 contact issues. The top three reasons for help being requested were 58% for welfare needs, 71% of this being for emergency energy or food needs. The second most

requested 14%, was for accommodation. We helped 6 individuals who were street homeless during this time. The third most requested 13%, was for access to immigration advice. The three main communities that people were from that we helped were South Asian, Arab, and European.

We provided welfare help in the form of small CECF grants for food or energy needs, issued shop cards and were also able to help many people with culturally appropriate food thanks to our partnership with the Karim Foundation, in addition to issuing Foodbank Fuel vouchers through our partnership with the Cambridge City Foodbank. We also worked with the Cambridge Central Mosque to deliver dry food packs to 30 needy individuals and families, 109 beneficiaries, in July.

We have been obtaining help for people with grants for furniture, flooring, and white goods through Cambridge Aid too.

I am very excited to be part of the Equality Service Project and am looking forward to working with local projects, services, and communities, developing existing partnerships and creating new ones.

**Reported by Panna Chowdhury**  
Equality Service Advisor

# Refugee Services



The Refugee Service has been very busy in the reporting period April-June, with 319 pieces of work done in this quarter. My position is now full time thanks to National Lottery Funding and with asylum seekers in a hotel in Barhill our workload has really increased.

- 29% of the work was related to welfare needs (66% of that total general, 25% for food and 9% for energy needs).
- 27% of the work were queries regarding immigration (asylum and protection).
- 16% of the queries were about accommodation.
- 8% of the work were applications for Asylum Support.
- There were 5 individuals or households that were destitute or experienced severe financial hardship.

We have helped over 50 households representing over 100 beneficiaries. The client casework involved beneficiaries from 17 countries and £2,265.00 was used assisting asylum seekers and refugees from our Refugee Hardship Fund. This help consisted of shop cards for food and basic necessities, small grants for energy needs, emergency accommodation and travel to CECF Refugee Service and Home Office appointments.

## Examples of some of our positive outcomes during this reporting period

### Immigration:

- Helped five beneficiaries get access to Legal Aid immigration solicitors.
- Provided information on the asylum system in UK to ten service users.
- Assisted two beneficiaries with claiming asylum in Solihull.
- Represented one client on his asylum claim which qualified for the new streamlined asylum process.

### Accommodation:

- Provided emergency accommodation for two Sudanese newly arrived asylum seekers.
- Assisted a formerly UCAS refugee with getting social housing.

### Case Study:

CECF Refugee Services assisted two vulnerable Sudanese men, who had been evacuated out of Sudan by the UK in a relief flight, after conflict broke out there in April of this year.

The CECF Equality Service was involved initially in a busy dialogue with the Humanitarian Assistance Centre that had been set up in Uttlesford to help with the flights that were coming into Stansted Airport. Both they and the British Red Cross highlighted individuals and families that might come to Cambridge. The clients were not UK nationals but had visa's that allowed them to enter. However, with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). CECF coordinated & liaised with the local Sudanese Community with regards to organising stay at a Travel Lodge in Cambridge to ensure that they were not street destitute, as the initial support provided by the Humanitarian Assistance Centre was time limited.

CECF Refugee Service then organised for a local immigration firm IR Immigration Law LLP who charitably offered to help pro-bono so that the clients were clear about their options. They both expressed a desire to claim asylum and were assisted in this matter by coordinated and effective partnership work between the Immigration Solicitor and CECF Refugee Services. CECF then financially supported the clients through our 'Refugee Hardship Fund' to stay for over a week at a Travel Lodge in Cambridge, whilst they waited for their Home Office appointment for asylum screening. We reached out and obtained assistance from our partners the Karim Foundation in this regard who made a generous contribution.



We organised and paid for taxis throughout the clients stay in Cambridge so they could come to appointments. To access our services and the immigration solicitor at our offices. We gave shop cards and liaised with the local Sudanese community to ensure that the clients had other food and basic necessities during their stay in Cambridge. We also contacted the NHS, helping to organise a hospital appointment and ensuring that required medications were obtained. Throughout this time with the fantastic help and support of our CECF volunteer community interpreters and local Sudanese community, without which this would not all have been possible.

Finally, we organised and paid for the train journeys to the asylum intake unit at Solihull, taxi to Cambridge railway station and further accommodation in Solihull for a day for one of the clients, as their appointments given were a day apart. Both men successfully claimed asylum and were given asylum accommodation, whilst their cases are reviewed. They were incredibly grateful for the refuge & support that had been afforded them in Cambridge, having had to flee terror in Sudan.

'Thank you very much for standing with us. We were in a very bad psychological state. We found you angels of mercy and humanity'

**Notes – Our 'Refugee Hardship' funds are raised through generous public donations, from Cambridge University Colleges and Churches.**

**Reported by Ana Maldonado**  
Refugee Services

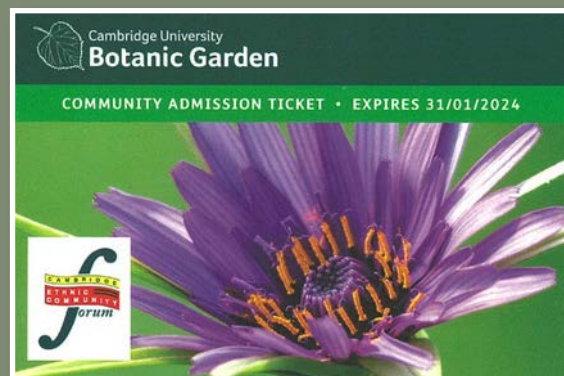
## Free ticket to Cambridge Botanic Garden



**The Cambridge Botanic Garden is offering a free entree** for CECF beneficiaries who are asylum seekers or refugees.

The ticket grants admission to **one adult** into the garden (children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult).

For further information on this offer please contact Ana Maldonado on 01223 655241 or write to: [ana@cecf.co.uk](mailto:ana@cecf.co.uk)



- This ticket entitles free admission for one adult for one visit to Cambridge University Botanic Garden.
- Children aged 16 and under visit for free when accompanied by an adult.

We hope you enjoy your visit!

Visits are in accordance with the Garden's Rules of Admission, which are available on our website.

[www.botanic.cam.ac.uk](http://www.botanic.cam.ac.uk) • 01223 336265 • [communities@botanic.cam.ac.uk](mailto:communities@botanic.cam.ac.uk)

## Ukrainian Project

Being a Ukrainian project worker, I deal with request of different types. People ask me to help them with:

**1** Filling in forms as they are not very confident about their written or spoken English. Usually, I help elderly people who have difficulties understanding necessary procedures and don't speak English. I assist them in applying for benefits and guide them through the sequence of actions they need to follow to achieve their desired results.

**2** course providers are operating at their maximum capacity, causing people to experience wait times. Currently, there is a high demand for classes available during the summer break. I share information about the main language class providers and inform my clients about new courses when they become available.

**3** Understanding what will happen to them after they move out from the sponsor's accommodation. This issue is a primary source of anxiety and depression for many people. Unfortunately, this anxiety is partly due to the lack of communication between Ukrainians and local councils. Sometimes Ukrainians send requests and have to wait for weeks to receive a response, leaving them with little understanding of the support they can get.



**Ukrainian Support Project**

**Допомога та підтримка для українців**

**If you have any issues with:**

- Housing
- Finding a job
- ESOL classes
- Education
- Access to Humanitarian aid
- Access to Public services and Benefits
- Or if you just need advice and support

**Якщо у вас є питання чи проблеми:**

- З житлом
- Пошуком роботи
- Пошуком курсів англійської мови
- Доступом до освіти
- Доступом до гуманітарної допомоги
- Отриманням допомоги та виплат
- А також якщо вам просто потрібна підтримка та порада

**For more information, please contact CECF:**  
Звертайтеся до CECF:  
16-18 Arbury Court, Cambridge, CB4 2JQ. Tel: (01223) 655241

Пишіть (англійською, українською або російською): [alla@cecf.co.uk](mailto:alla@cecf.co.uk)  
**Ми можемо допомогти вам!**

Please write us (in English, Ukrainian or Russian): [alla@cecf.co.uk](mailto:alla@cecf.co.uk)  
**We can help you!**

We have received support from the Cambridge Skive Community Foundation

I try to explain the available housing options, inform them about programs designed to support Ukrainians with moving to their own accommodation, and send requests to councils, asking them to get in touch with those who need their support. Accommodation issues have become a prominent topic, as more than half of all requests I receive are related to this.

**4** Obtaining financial support. The main reasons why people ask for support are:

- They are newcomers who have spent all the money they had but haven't received their first Universal Credit or Pension credit payment in the UK. In this case, I provide them with a list of food hubs, help them apply for free bikes or laptops, and sometimes allocate them some money from the Refugee Hardship Fund



- They need to move to new accommodation, which is usually empty (sometimes people also need to pay for flooring and painting themselves). This type of request comes second (after accommodation issues) among all the requests I receive. I assist them by applying for small grants from Cambridge Aid, arranging visits to Emmaus (a charity furniture shop with affordable prices) and Cambridge Re-Use, and looking for other local charities that can help with money or home essentials. I work closely with Cambridge Refugee Re-Settlement Campaign (CRRC) when arranging transportation or delivery for our clients.

**5** Dealing with psychological issues. Unfortunately, many Ukrainians have experienced trauma, and many of them have been diagnosed with depression, significantly affecting their everyday life.

I help them by sharing information on support groups available for Ukrainians in the area. Additionally, I provide them with information on where to go if they need to share their problems and concerns with other Ukrainians. I find that communication with people who have similar problems helps them significantly.

**Other requests are:**

- How to apply for a school place;
- How to find a better job;
- Applying for a council tax reduction;
- Problems with receiving Universal Credit or Housing benefits.

In response to one of these demands, CECF, in collaboration with WEA, organised two courses for Ukrainians. One took place at St. Andrew’s Street Baptist Church and was called ‘Employability skills,’ while the other one was conducted on Zoom and was called ‘Introduction to self-employment.’ Both courses were successful and attracted a sufficient number of participants (all of whom were Ukrainian refugees). One more course ‘Communicate confidently’ is scheduled for September.

In general, Ukrainian project is becoming more and more popular among the intended audience. If we assisted only 15 clients in April, in June we helped more than 50. The number of requests grows month after month, and I hope we can help more people in the future.

**Reported by Alla Viktorova**  
Ukrainian Services



**Our Funders:**



**Our Partners:**

