

Beyond your hosting arrangement – a guide for guests

We hope that you have felt welcomed in Norfolk and that you have had a happy experience with your host family.

You may be thinking about your next steps and this guide sets out some of the options. It is available in English, [Ukrainian](#) and [Russian](#). There is also a guide for hosts.

We also understand there are some circumstances where you can no longer stay with your hosts. If you need to move out soon, please contact your local council for advice.

Continuing to stay with your hosts

If both you and your hosts are happy with the arrangement you can both agree to stay with them for longer.

This could still be a good time for you and your hosts to have a conversation about what you think is working well and any changes either of you would like to agree. If you feel you need support with this conversation, please contact your local council

Your hosts can receive 'Thank you' payments for up to 24 months from the time their guest first arrives in the UK. From April 2023, host 'thank you' payments in Norfolk have increased to £500 per month. Hosts do not need to do anything to receive this increase, it will happen automatically. As with previous 'thank you' payments, this will not impact on their income and benefit entitlements.

Staying with your host but becoming a tenant

If you would like to stay with your hosts but to have a more formal relationship, you could think about converting to a tenant/landlord relationship.

You would do this by creating an agreement between you and your host with either an Assured Shorthold Tenancy or a Licence, depending on the type of accommodation they are offering.

Key things to consider for this arrangement:

- It will change the legal relationship between you and your host to that of tenant and landlord and will introduce new rights and responsibilities for you both.
- You will have to pay a monthly rent.
- If you are on certain benefits like Universal Credit, you may be able to get help

with your rent costs. However, the amount of housing costs for rent you can claim is capped at a maximum amount called the [Local Housing Allowance](#) rate. This rate will depend on your location, the number of bedrooms being rented and the size of your family.

- The rent you pay needs to be affordable for you.
- Your landlord will need to ensure the accommodation meets certain requirements, so it is safe for you to live in. Your local council can advise on these requirements, or visit the [GOV.UK website for more information](#).
- Advice on creating a tenancy or licence agreement can be found through different organisations such as [The Eastern Landlords Association](#), (ELA) [Shelter](#) or the [National Residential Landlords Association](#) (NRLA)

It is a good idea for you and your host to discuss what you both expect from a tenant/landlord relationship. This includes if/what bills are included, any furnishings provided, pets, and reporting repairs.

As part of a new rental agreement your host can ask for a deposit and a month's rent in advance. The deposit can be the equivalent of up to 5 weeks rent and must be protected in a [tenancy deposit scheme](#).

Your local council may be able to provide support to you to set up your arrangement including with deposit/first month's rent.

Finding another host

If the agreement with your hosting is coming to an end you might want to find a new host.

You could look for a 'private rematch' finding potential new hosts through:

- a local faith group
- other community groups
- your place of work
- through someone you might know who would like to be a host
- recognised providers such as [Opora](#) or [St John of God Hospitaller services](#)

As when you found your current host, it is a good idea to contact any new hosts before you move in to make sure you are both happy with the accommodation you are being offered and expectations you both have, such as

- using shared areas of the house, like the kitchen and dining room
- sharing housework, like cleaning and cooking
- any rules your hosts would like you to follow about things like smoking, drinking alcohol, or noise
- contributing to household costs
- Your host should not be asking you to pay rent on the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Once you have found a new host, it's important you contact the local council so they can make the necessary accommodation and safeguarding checks to approve the arrangement.

If you are having trouble finding a new host, you can contact the local council for further advice and support.

Private rented home

You might wish to look for a private rented home. [There is separate guidance about this available on our Homes for Ukraine update webpage.](#)

Moving elsewhere in the UK

You may wish to move to another location in the UK outside of Norfolk. If this is the case, this guidance is still relevant. However, it is a good idea for you to contact the local council in the area you wish to move to as the new council is likely to offer varying types of support.

If you are looking for another host, the local council in the new area will also need to make sure the right checks have been made before you can move in.

Returning permanently to Ukraine

You may choose to return permanently to Ukraine or another country. If you do wish to return, you will need to consider:

- Travel arrangements
- Contacting schools, employers, DWP etc.
- Sorting belongings and any financial arrangements.
- Who to speak to if you wish to come back to the UK.

Ukrainian guests on the Homes for Ukraine scheme are on the scheme for the three-year life of their visa. This means even if you intend to leave the UK permanently, you can still return to the UK at any point during those three years and seek support under the scheme.

Temporarily leaving hosted accommodation

You can travel to different parts of the country if, for example, visiting friends or family, taking a holiday or exploring moves to another area. You can also travel to another country for the same reasons.

If you are planning to leave for less than 28 days but intend to return to your hosted accommodation, please contact your local council to make them aware of your destination and expected return date.

You should also have a discussion with your hosts about what to do with any belongings, post etc.

If you are planning to leave any children under 18 while you are away, either with your hosts or with someone else, it is very important you contact your local council so we can make sure the arrangements are safe for your child.

If you are planning to leave for more than 28 days, you must tell your local council. You should also remind your hosts to contact the local council as they will need to pause their 'thank you' payment while you are away. This also applies if you had originally intended to return after four weeks but have not done so. Once you return to your hosts, the 'thank you' payment can restart.

We need to know this information to help us:

- Manage 'thank you' payments
- Manage any school places
- Consider any safeguarding concerns we might have

If you receive any benefits from Department for Work and Pensions, you should notify them of any absences from the UK.

You should have a conversation with your hosts about arrangements before you depart. Conversations could cover:

- whether or not the host arrangement will continue if you wish to come back after being away for more than four weeks
- whether you have flexibility to change your travel dates
- where to store your belongings, and how to return them if you will not return to live there

If your hosts decide they do not want to continue offering you accommodation, you should contact your local council as soon as possible.

Local council housing register

Social housing is in very short supply and if you are eligible to join the housing register it will not be a quick solution.

If you wish to explore this option, you will need to contact the local council.

Homelessness

We understand that sometimes host arrangements can end unexpectedly. If you are homeless or at risk of homelessness you should contact your local council.

Homelessness is not a direct route to a socially rented property. Housing Officers will work with you to explore a number of different housing options including those above.

Where appropriate, we may place you in temporary accommodation while we look for longer term housing. Types of temporary accommodation can vary; however, it tends

to be self-contained but smaller than a flat or house and there may be some facilities would share with other residents. In some cases, you may be placed into a B&B or hotel.

Depending on your circumstances, there may be a charge for you to stay in temporary accommodation. The housing officer will fully discuss this with you before you move in.

When you move out

You should have a conversation with your host before you move out to cover;

- Agreeing a date for the move out
- Agreeing arrangements for belongings
- Any expectations on how you leave the home, such as cleaning etc.

You might also wish to talk about:

- Forwarding any mail
- Changing contact details for correspondence
- Any support the hosts can provide with moving
- Support with setting up a new home
- Applying for school places, where appropriate.

Useful contact information

Breckland District Council - housing.advice@breckland.gov.uk

Broadland District Council – h4u@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Great Yarmouth Borough Council - Housingoptions@great-yarmouth.gov.uk

Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk - housingoptions@west-norfolk.gov.uk

North Norfolk District Council - Housing@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Norwich City Council - housingoptions@norwich.gov.uk

South Norfolk Council - h4u@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Norfolk County Council – ncchomesforukraine@norfolk.gov.uk