



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welcome

to Bedford Borough



Welcome to Bedford Borough

On behalf of Bedford Borough, I would like to welcome you to the UK and to Bedford Borough and to thank all the hosts and communities who have stepped up to support people affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

Partners across Bedford Borough are working together to welcome those who have arrived here, and we hope this pack will help to ease any worries you may have and explain aspects of living in the UK that may be different to Ukraine.

You can find out more about the local response to the crisis in Ukraine at www.bedford.gov.uk/Ukraine.

You can translate our website into Ukrainian on any desktop or tablet. Select the 'ReachDeck'- white stick figure in the red circle. This will make a toolbar appear at the top of the browser window and you can scroll down the list or search for your preferred language. This will change the whole website into that language

If you have any questions about the services that the Council can offer you, please contact us on 01234 267422. You can also find the Government's Welcome Pack on their [website](#).

From Mayor Dave Hodgson



About Bedford Borough

Bedford Borough is in the East of England, around 60 miles north of London.

There is a population of over 174,000 people in the Borough. About two-thirds of them live in the towns of Bedford and Kempston, and the remaining third in the villages.

We are a proudly diverse Borough, with 149 different languages spoken in our schools.



How will I get money?

Setting up a bank account

The currency is the UK in the Pound Sterling (£). £1 (one pound) = 100p (pennies, or pence). Cash is generally accepted but increasingly people use debit/credit cards to pay for goods and services.

You will need to set up a UK bank account as a priority on arriving here. You can do this in person, in a bank or online.

Accessing Benefits

Your “Leave to Remain” to stay into the UK has been extended to give you access to the benefits system:

Universal Credit

A payment for those of working age, to help with your living costs if you’re on a low income. You could be working (including self-employed or part time) or be out of work; [Apply for Universal Credit](#).

Pension Credit

Extra money to help with your living costs if you are over the age of 66 and on a low income. Applications for Pensions is [online](#).

Disability benefits

Extra money to help with additional costs if you have a long term physical or mental health condition or disability.

Carer’s Allowance

Extra money if you care for someone at least 35 hours a week.

Child Benefit

Extra money to help with the cost of raising a child.

To access any of these you will need to apply for a National Insurance Number, which you can apply for online. When you make an application, you will need to give a copy of your passport and proof that you have the right to work.

Immediate Financial Help

People arriving in the UK through the Homes for Ukraine visa route are entitled to an immediate payment of £200 per person. This will be paid to you by Bedford Borough Council. You or your host should let us know when you arrive in the UK and we will explain how you can claim the payment. We can also help with a weekly payment until you start to receive benefits or are working, and may be able to help with exceptional costs.

Employment

If you need help to look for a job, Bedford Borough Council has a support service called the Jobs Hub which can be accessed for free.

This service is based in the town centre and you can book an appointment by calling 01234 223510 or by dropping in.

The advisors can help you to write a CV, help with job searching and applying for jobs. The advisors can also help you to find out how to get to work using local transport and print out maps for you.

You can use computers and the internet for free at The Jobs Hub too. The Jobs Hub is based at 15 Greyfriars, Bedford, MK40 1JH.



Schools and Nurseries

How do I get a school place for my child?

In Bedford Borough, we mainly have a two tier system of education: primary and secondary schools.

Children can go to primary or lower school in the school year after they become 4 years of age (if born between 01/09/2016 and 31/08/2017 for September 2022).

Most children will move at 11+ years to a secondary school. Some children will move at 9+ years to a local middle school and then at 13+ years to a local upper school, but this will all be explained when your child is accepted into a school.

Applying for a school place (In Year Transfers)

If your child was born between 31/08/2006 and 01/09/2016 you will need to complete an In Year Transfer Admission Form to apply for a school place for your child, you can find out more on our [website](#). Please don't worry if you do not know which year group the child will be in, you can just select the year group that you think is correct and we will work out this out for you. Once we have received your application, it will be processed within 15 school days.

For information on local schools you can visit our Schools and Colleges pages. you will see a list of all our schools with their contact details. If you want to visit schools before applying, please contact them directly to arrange a visit.

If you have any questions about the admissions process in Bedford Borough contact us by email admissions@bedford.gov.uk or by calling us on 01234 718120.





How can I get a place for my child who is aged between 2 and 4 years old?

In Bedford Borough we have a wide range of different Early Years settings that are available for you to send your child to. We have nurseries, pre-schools and childminders, which all offer high quality care and education. Our settings all follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which will ensure your child gets the best possible start to their education. For more information visit Early Years and Childcare.

There is more information on this and early years provision on the government guidance Welcome: a guide for Ukrainians arriving in the UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Free School Meals

Your child may be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Once a school place has been offered, please speak to your child's new school regarding FSM eligibility and what information you will need to have when applying.

How to learn English

The Bedford ESOL Service (English for Speakers of Other Languages) supports people to access English classes in Bedford.

You can find out more at www.bedfordesol.org.uk or call 01234 276336.

In an Emergency

The UK emergency services can be contacted 24 hours a day in an emergency situation. The Police, Fire & Ambulance can all be contacted by calling 999.

Police

If a serious offence is in progress or someone is in immediate danger - call 999. To contact the Police for a non-emergency situation, please call 101.

Ambulance

If someone's life is at risk - call 999.

Fire & Rescue

If there is a fire - call 999.

Healthcare

The National Health Service (NHS) provides health services to people living in the UK. Most of these services are free.

Family doctors are called GPs, and outside an emergency this is usually the first doctor you will see to access healthcare. To receive medical treatment, please register with a GP as soon as possible, even if you are not ill. You can find your local GP on the NHS website.



There is more information about health services in the UK on our dedicated Ukraine page - www.bedford.gov.uk/Ukraine

Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults

If you're worried that a child or young person is at risk of neglect, harm or abuse, it's important that you tell someone.

If you think the child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

If the child's not in immediate danger, but you're still concerned about them, please contact the Council 0300 300 8123 (out of hours), or report it via our [website](#).

If you are concerned about an adult, for example if you think they are vulnerable or the victim of abuse please call the Council at 0300 300 8123, or report it via our [website](#).

Libraries

Libraries are free to visit, free to join and free to borrow books, and there are free activities for children of all ages.

There are computers and internet free to use for one hour every day at Bedford Borough libraries, and WiFi is free all day for people on their own devices. All you need to do is be a member of the library. It is free and you can sign up at any of our libraries:

Bedford Central Library, Harpur Street, Bedford MK40 1PG

Bromham Library, Springfield Drive, Bromham MK43 8NT

Kempston Library, Halsey Road, Kempston MK42 8AT

Putnoe Library, Library Walk, Putnoe Street, Bedford MK41 8HQ

Wootton Library, Lorraine Road, Wootton MK43 9LH

Transport

There is a wide range of public transport solutions to get around the Borough and beyond.

Train services - visit www.nationalrail.co.uk. Bedford train station is on the direct line to London to the south and Nottingham to the North.

Bus services - timetables can be found on the Council's [website](#).

Community Support

PBIC

PBIC's aim is to help migrants settle, achieve, and contribute through providing multilingual and culturally appropriate support. They provide English courses, careers and general advice, help with filling out forms as well as helping individuals with more complex issues. PBIC also holds a listening service and support groups for those who feel in need of a conversation or emotional support.

Website: <https://pbic.org.uk>

Address: 90-92 Bromham Road, Bedford, MK40 2QH

Contact number: 01234 328100

Contact email: ugs@pbic.org.uk

Bedford Citizens Advice

Bedford Citizen's Advice provides support on benefits; work; debt and money; consumer issues; relationships; housing; law and rights; discrimination; tax; healthcare; education.

Website: www.bedfordcab.org.uk

Address: 7a St Paul's Square, Bedford, MK40 1SQ

Contact number: 01234 867944, open Monday to Thursday 9.45am - 1pm, Friday 9.30am - 1pm

BRASS

BRASS: Bedford Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support provides English language tuition and social activities for refugees and asylum seekers; they also provide advice on a range of issues including immigration, finding a house and jobs.

Website: www.brassbedford.org.uk

Address: 27b Tavistock St, Bedford, MK40 2RB

Contact number: 01234 211381

Contact email: info@brass27b.org

The King's Arms Project

The King's Arms Project has a Refugee & Migrant Advice Service, providing free legal advice for vulnerable people without immigration status through holistic, person-centred support and dedicated case workers.

Website: <https://kingsarmsproject.org>

Address: 245 Ampthill Road, Bedford MK42 9AZ

Contact number: 01234 350900

Contact email: info@kingsarmsproject.org

Bedfordshire Open Door

Bedfordshire Open Door offers counselling for young people aged 13 - 25 years living in Bedford Borough and North Central Bedfordshire.

For more information please call 01234 360 388
or visit the website www.bedfordopendoor.org.uk

Notes

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Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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Za Informacje

Per Informazione

তথ্যের জন্য



Bedford Borough Council

Borough Hall

Cauldwell Street

Bedford

MK42 9AP



www.bedford.gov.uk



ukrainesupport@bedford.gov.uk



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