EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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2 years on Epsom to gather in solidarity with Ukraine

13 February 2024



The Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN) and Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU) are calling upon the community to join them in a special gathering on Saturday February 24th at 11 am in the **Market Place in Epsom**. This gathering marks the solemn second anniversary of the commencement of the war in Ukraine.

The local Ukrainian choir, **Renaissance**, will render the Ukrainian National Anthem. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with Ukrainian residents regarding the ongoing situation in Ukraine and to learn how they can extend support to the Ukrainian community within Epsom & Ewell.

The Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Cllr. **Rob Geleit** (Labour Court), will attend. The event will foster a sense of unity and solidarity with the Ukrainian population residing in and around Epsom.

“We are deeply moved by the outpouring of support from the Epsom community for Ukrainian refugees,” said **Jo Sherring**, Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network Lead. “This gathering is an opportunity for us to stand together in solidarity with our Ukrainian friends and reaffirm our commitment to supporting them as they rebuild their lives.”

“It is important for us to get together on this sad date to commemorate those who lost their lives in the war, to thank our supporters, defenders, volunteers, and the British people who gave shelter to us at these hard times for Ukraine.” said **Nataliia Zadorizhna**, pianist and director of the Renaissance choir who has been living in Ashtead with her 11 year old daughter since May 2022. “It is an enormous privilege to stay in the UK and to be surrounded by such noble, caring and generous people.”

Epsom has exhibited remarkable solidarity with Ukraine since the outbreak of the war, with numerous families opening their doors to Ukrainian refugees and contributing substantial amounts towards humanitarian aid. The community has banded together, with volunteers actively aiding refugees in assimilating into the local fabric.

All members of the Epsom community are warmly encouraged to attend this event, which promises to be a meaningful demonstration of support for the Ukrainian populace.

For further inquiries, please contact:

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English classes for Ukrainians and other refugees in Epsom.

Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN)

Established in 2015, operates as a community-driven organization in close collaboration with the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. It operates under the auspices of the charity **Good Company (Surrey)**, with a mission rooted in compassion, solidarity, and inclusivity. EERN extends support to refugees and asylum seekers within Epsom and its environs, facilitating their integration into the community through various initiatives including employment guidance, educational support, cultural orientation, and free English language lessons.



Epsom and Ewell residents welcome Ukrainians fleeing war.

Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU)

At the onset of the conflict in Ukraine, a collective of British and Ukrainian residents from Epsom joined forces to establish Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU), a humanitarian relief project dedicated to aiding Ukraine. SSWU provides support to both the Ukrainian populace within Ukraine and those residing in the UK by gathering and distributing medical supplies and other essential aid. Operating under the registered charity **Harrop HR Missions Ltd**., SSWU ensures that 100% of all donations are directed towards supporting the people of Ukraine, with no fees or wages deducted for volunteers or trustees.

EERN and SSWU are very grateful for the magnificent support provided for their efforts by **The Ashley Centre** Epsom, through its donation of the use of a suite of offices used for processing donations, English classes and an advice centre. Also to **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** that has waived the imposition of business rates.

Related reports:

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Hosts of Ukrainian refugees appreciated

Flight of refugees: history repeating?

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Local refugee cash appeal

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