

## Epsom and Ewell gears up for Ukrainian refugees

Tuesday 29th March over 160 local citizens converged on St Joseph's Church Hall for an information evening about hosting Ukrainian refugees. Half the hands in the room went up when asked who is willing to host refugees fleeing the war. There was overwhelming enthusiasm for the aid the community can bring to the urgent need for hosting Ukrainian refugees.

Joanna Sherring of the Epsom Refugee Network chaired the event and introduced local refugee supporters with experience of hosting and teaching English. Nina Kaye spoke about her experiences of opening her home to no less than 30 Syrian refugees since 2015. It is a big but rewarding commitment and friends for life are made. The important point was made that most refugees want to return home. Making them welcome here is a small way to meet the trauma of forced displacement.

The Government rules about hosting were explained including a requirement that hosts undergo a "Disclosure and Barring Check" (DBS). Basically this means a check about any criminal record. Apparently these rules are welcomed by Ukrainians especially as men are required to remain in Ukraine and the majority of guests will be women and children.

You can find out more information and guidance on the Epsom Refugee Network website [here](#).