



Marlow Ukraine Collective : Trustees Annual Report
for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Registration Number : **1202913**

Registration Date : **2nd May 2023**

Address : **One Stable Cottages**
Temple Lane
Temple
Marlow
SL7 1SA

Charitable Form : **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**

Introduction

The trustees present their second annual report and financial statements for the Marlow Ukraine Collective (MUC) for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. This is our second annual report, following the formation of the charity in 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's constitution and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Charity Structure

The charity is constituted under our governing document as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which was originally registered on 2nd May 2023. The Trustees that were appointed at the formation of the charity remain in place. The Trustees meet approximately quarterly to review the strategy and areas of activity for the charity, including consideration for any upcoming significant expenditure, fundraising activities, awareness raising, welfare issues for the Ukrainian community and any requirement for policies and procedures (such as Volunteers Code and Conduct, Safeguarding and Financial Controls)

Our Purpose is "to relieve the needs of the Ukrainians granted refugee status under the Homes for Ukraine or Family Scheme and their hosts in Greater Marlow and High Wycombe by the provision of practical advice and financial assistance to support day to day living."



Formation and Subsequent Reporting

The initial stages of the formation of the MUC prior to registration, and subsequently up to the date of this report were as follows:

- a) Key individuals from MUC began working informally to find and support host families following the Russian invasion of the Ukraine on 24th February 2022.
- b) Working closely with Marlow Refugee Action (MRA) while the charity registration process occurred, we continued to support the needs of the community.
- c) We were approved by the Charities Commission as a CIO and became a registered charity on 2nd May 2023.
- d) The first annual report and accounts, covering the period 2nd May 2023 to 31st March 2024 was submitted to the Charities Commission on 29th January 2025, having been approved by the Trustees on 27th January 2025, and accepted.

Aims and Objectives

We remain focused on our original objectives from the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, namely:

For the public benefit, to relieve the needs of Ukrainians granted refugee status under the Homes for Ukraine or Family Scheme in Greater Marlow and High Wycombe, primarily but not exclusively through providing or assisting in the provision of:

- a) Advice, practical support services and information to assist them to adapt within a new community;
- b) Essential items and financial support;
- c) Recreational and leisure activities provided in the interests of social welfare designed to improve their conditions of life;
- d) Advice and guidance to hosts or those interested in hosting;
- e) Education and training in the English Language
- f) Signposting to other organisations where appropriate.

In February 2025, the Trustees requested an amendment to our constitution to clarify the geographical area covered by our activities, specifically to include High Wycombe where families being supported by the charity were increasingly taking



up residence in private accommodation; this was approved by the Charities Commission and the constitution amended.

Achievements and Performance

Our key achievements over the period of this report are:

- 1) Assistance, guidance and financial support has continued to be provided to Ukrainian families in the Greater Marlow and High Wycombe area, co-ordinated with civic and other charity support efforts, to achieve our purpose to support families in the Greater Marlow area under the two schemes established by the government, the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the Ukraine Family Scheme.
- 2) As intended, the charity is fully divested from previous joint financial arrangements with Marlow Refugee Action (registration number:1180428) and fully reports and accounts for all activities, income and payments according to our purpose and the analysis for this report and attached accounts is for this period.
- 3) This accounting period has been characterised by a steady general transition of arrangements for Ukrainian refugees and families in the locale - from accommodation and assistance being provided by host families (supported by the MUC), to increasing financial and domestic independence and movement to private accommodation, enabled by the benefits of employment, education, language and a growing inter-dependence and spirit amongst the local Ukrainian community.
- 4) This has required a changed approach to support from the MUC, with greater focus on assisting the transition to independent living with removals, furniture, household equipment, rental contracts and arrangements for living further away from the immediate centre of Marlow. A lack of available rental properties combined with the long waiting lists of social housing continue to make this a significant challenge as we continue to prioritise supporting our families to greater financial and personal independence. Unfortunately we have had to remain alert to unscrupulous landlords and agents, and the charity has on occasion worked with legal representatives to resolve these matters appropriately and satisfactorily for our Ukrainian families.



- 5) In addition, Ukrainian schoolchildren, initially seeking to integrate in a safe environment, are now thriving within the UK schooling system and have required additional support for travel, specialist education, advanced language and wellbeing activities. The MUC is both heartened and proud of the formal academic achievements being realised by the Ukrainian children we have supported, and are now seeing progress to higher level education including University.
- 6) Particular effort has also been made to secure suitable, secure, long-term employment for the Ukrainian adults, which has included introductions to and advocacy amongst local businesses, assistance with language skills, applications and interviews, and advice on setting up their own businesses. The positive attitude, determination and strong work ethic of our Ukrainians has fitted in well locally, and the support getting into good jobs is a major part of them establishing independence and a greater sense of self-determination and mental well-being.
- 7) Special mention must be made of the extraordinary energy, dedication and diligence of two of the founding trustees, Ali Leibowitz and Chis Horn, who have continued to play a pivotal role as Founders, Leaders and Trustees of the Marlow Ukraine Collective. They have consistently gone above and beyond all reasonable expectations, to provide life-changing help, advice and support to the Ukrainian families fleeing to Buckinghamshire – both through their own personal efforts and by galvanising, directing and leading a veritable army of community supporters. They have been steadfast at the heart of the MUC for over 3 years, from the very inception of the concept, dedicating a huge amount of personal time to the cause, without fuss, fanfare or expectation, and deserve the very highest praise and recognition. The Trustees wish to extend our admiration and thanks to them for their exceptional work.

Receipts

- 8) During the relevant period a further total of £69,420 was raised and reported as income received. The majority of this income was raised by virtue of a single individual benefactor, but funds were also received from local organisations and individuals. Significant benefit has also been gained from Gift Aid claims against donated funds, for which we are grateful for government support.



- 9) Due to the healthy state of our reserves and with regard to our reserves policy, we continued to hold back any proactive fundraising during the period to ensure we did not exceed our policy of keeping appropriate levels to support the future needs of the Ukrainian community.

Payments to support the Ukrainian community

- 10) MUC made payments in support of the Ukrainian community as part of our purpose of £46,493 in respect mainly of reimbursements for the following items
- a) Clothing Items such as school shoes and uniforms
 - b) Children's after school activities, such as craft and dance classes and access to education.
 - c) School transportation, principally for families moving further away to live independently.
 - d) Homewares, furniture and support as families transitioned into independent living from their initial hosted environments.
- 11) Within the Marlow area we supported many families and family members who have been hosted under either of the two schemes. We have continued to advise and help children accessing local schools, adults finding work in local businesses and families integrating into social and sporting activities.
- 12) Working in partnership with a number of smaller providers we have continued to offer school holiday activities including arts, crafts and other creative activities for Ukrainian Children to support their mental wellbeing.
- 13) Through our ongoing strong relationship with the Marlow Language School, we have continued to arrange and offer a full range of English language education to adults and children (to supplement to assistance given within the school environment),.
- 14) The MUC continues to engage and share valuable information (GDPR compliant) with the Ukrainian families, Marlow based hosts and the wider community via a heavily subscribed What's App community which continues to bond our Ukrainian community with each other and foster better integration into UK society.



15) Trustees continue to spend significant time working with local authorities and wider government in respect of representing the Ukrainian community in areas such as housing policy, Universal Credit, Biometric Residency Permit (BRP) changes and ongoing host support payments.

16) To achieve our goals we are proud to have an active group of volunteers who assist us with social media, maintaining of information stalls, financial management and events delivery.

Partnering with Other Organisations

17) We again partnered with several organisations within the Marlow area, most notably Saddle Safari, Transition Town Marlow and Brand Events to deliver wider benefit to our Ukrainians – the latter again generously hosting a number of families with allocated free tickets at the Marlow Pub in the Park event. The MUC again took the opportunity to raise awareness within the local community of the ongoing challenges faced by the Ukrainian community with prominent stalls hosted by MUC volunteers to share information and educate the local community.

Reserves Policy

18) The environment as at 31st March 2025 remains fluid with the conflict continuing to generate significant casualties on both sides and the potential to escalate. Our current policy working with our major donor is to maintain healthy reserves in case there is a requirement to deploy significant resources in the short term to meet a sudden influx of new refugees.

19) As at 31st March 2025 we hold £44,235 in reserves (all cash) for further support to the community and ongoing activities into the future period.

Plans for Future Periods

20) The charity plans to continue to support guests to greater financial and personal independence, to improve language skills and access to skills and jobs with all the other welfare activities outlined above subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

21) However, we do not expect the requirement for our support to extend indefinitely. While the war in Ukraine shows no sign of abating in the very near term and there



is hope that a peaceful outcome can be achieved sometime in the future, arrivals of new refugee families to the UK has slowed and indeed some have returned to Ukraine. Notwithstanding potential changes to visa, immigration and residency status in the coming years, as the Ukrainian families gain further independence, the Ukrainian community integrates further within the UK, and as language hurdles are overcome, the requirement for specific support should reduce.

- 22) Consequently we are drawing up plans to drawdown funds, cease formal MUC activity and support, and transition back to individual volunteer-based arrangements, with effect from September 2026. This remains under review by the Trustees.
- 23) Looking beyond formal closure of the MUC, in order to establish a connection to promote longer-term support for Ukrainians in Marlow and High Wycombe, and to leave a legacy of the spirit and solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people which has characterised the Marlow community's response to their plight, we are advocating for the Town council to consider twinning with a similar town in Ukraine. We have made introductions between the civic teams of Marlow and candidate town, Trostyanets, which we hope will develop to a more formal arrangement.



Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document – The organisation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as a charity on 2nd May 2023 and governed by its constitution.

Charity Trustees (8 Trustees plus 2 Volunteers)

The Trustees as at 31st March 2025 are:

Mr Jeremy Browning (chair of Trustees)	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 2 years
Ms Alison Leibowitz	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 3 years
Mr Christopher Horn	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 2 Years
Mr Sean Drury (Treasurer)	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 4 Years
Mr Christopher Hughes	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 2 Years
Mr Stuart Wilson	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 2 Years
Mrs Nicola Huxley	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 2 Years
Ms Katherine Breathwick	-	appointed 2 May 2023 – 2 Years

Governance

New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees having regard to skills, knowledge and experience needed for effective administration of the CIO. New Trustees serve for a period of 2 years, except the treasurer whose period is 4 years, after which they put themselves for re-appointment. The minimum number of trustees required by the charity is 3.

The trustees consider themselves as comprising the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling its activities and running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. All trustees give of their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year.

Given the gross income achieved through this reporting period, the trustees consider that an audit or independent examination is required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011. This is being arranged by the Trustee treasurer and will be reported with the accounts.



The Trustees Report and Financial Statements was approved at a trustee meeting on Wednesday 28th January 2026.

Signed	Mr Jeremy Browning (Chair of Trustees)
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Signed	Mr Sean Drury (Treasurer)
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Signed	Ms Alison Leibowitz (Trustee)
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