



Helping the Ukraine as a Village Community.

Minutes of meeting Saturday 26th March 2022.

There was a brief introduction from John Headon on how the subject of the Ukraine crisis had been addressed at Cafe Church, which generating suggestions that this meeting take place today to initiate a village wide response.

There followed a film of a Ukrainian child singing a song of what her life now was.

Rachael Lewis then spoke of her involvement with the Winsford Hub, which had already helped Afganistani refugees and was to be a hub for Ukrainians for the whole county.

Working from the old Job Centre there are already, a foodbank, babybank, kitchen and social space in situ and it is planned for this to become a centre for Ukrainian refugees, offering a place for them to socialise, talk to Citizens Advice, use a translator and stock up with clothing, shoes, toys, household goods and food.

Trucks have already been dispatched twice with aid on board for Eastern Europe.

Becky Freeman has already used 'Reset' and Facebook to make contact with refugees that they hope to house and can be contacted for further information on Facebook as to the steps to take and how to register with the Government Website.

Other help we can offer is support for the Winsford Hub that will be teaming up with Cheshire Changing Lives Together from 1st April.

Suggestions included providing a taxi service, helping people to read, a welcome group, making the village hall available for refreshments and access to the internet for refugees to contact relatives elsewhere and fund raising to support a refugee fund.

Richard Cluley offered his music groups and offered to co-ordinate a mixed music concert to raise funds and there were offers of further help to supply refreshments.

Our village website **VillageArena.org** will create a New Page dedicated to the village response which will be up and running with all the services, coordinators, volunteer jobs and links etc by midnight Saturday 26/3/2022.

St Bart's Church will be available as a venue for the concert and will advertise events at the Plant Sale from 29th April to 2nd May and start fundraising during the weekend. St. Bart's will also be available to be used for Ukrainian Service's if required or if another Church was allocated we could organise transport. The Church bank account can be used as a temporary holding account for funds raised and claim Gift Aid on donations.

A Welcome group co-ordinator could be appointed who could welcome any refugee into the village and show them around the village and introduce them to our community.

It was mentioned that the upcoming Jubilee Celebrations may be an opportunity to introduce our new group and start fund-raising.

Insight Magazine will cover and advertise events and information.

Everyone is encouraged to email our MP, Edward Timpson at timpson.mp@parliament.uk and Sarah Pochin at pochin@cheshireeast.gov.uk our local councillor.

There will be a further open meeting on 23rd April at 11am in the village hall to report on progress and decide further steps in this fast moving crisis.

.end of meeting 11:59am