

Sporting success...

...and lots of enthusiasm for Taekwondo and skateboarding

One of the 17-year-old boys, A, who has been going to Taekwondo for the past year has just received first place in a tournament, which is amazing! The sessions are being offered weekly free of charge by Bytomic and they use the hall at Wycombe High School.

The Taekwondo coach writes: *'The tournament we had in November was a local event drawn from a pool of 30 Taekwondo clubs in Bucks, Oxon, Berks and Herts. A competed in the cadets division (ages 13–17) most of whom were higher grades than him with up to a year's more experience. He had five or six fights to win the gold and showed great technique and control. He has great potential, and he recently won two more tournaments.'*

Back in January, Sky Sports and BBC Three Counties Radio did a feature about our weekly skateboarding sessions, including finding out the benefits of learning to skateboard! Our sessions, funded by Wycombe Wanderers football club, have now been going for just over a year in which time 16 children have learnt the art of skateboarding. The brilliant Joe from Skateboard Academy, who has taught from the start, is a true inspiration to the children.



On the day we were joined by two of the Wycombe Wanderers football team, Sam Vokes and Tyla Dickinson, who were amazing with the children and joined in the fun! Despite a large number of reporters and cameras Trina Richards says that she was 'super proud of the children, who all spoke on camera'.

Trina received this message from a mother about her children, aged 8 and 14, who attend the skateboarding sessions:

'I am messaging you about the skateboard course. I want to thank you for arranging this free class for our kids. My kids are so happy with them and all week they are waiting for Wednesdays. Furthermore they have made new friends there, and the activity also helps them to be calm and relax mentally. I can honestly say that I also look forward to it because the environment is so friendly and full of positive energy. Although I have many problems and life is so stressful, the energetic and patient coach makes me feel motivated to join them! In short I have to say that I have not before seen such an interesting and creative course. Many thanks to you and the hard working coach.'

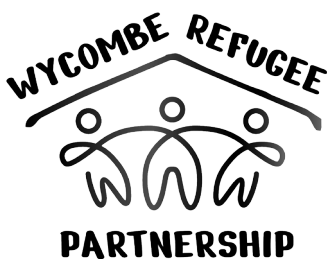
“My kids are so happy with them and all week they are waiting for Wednesdays.”

New Logo!

Sarah Gregory, one of our fundraisers, writes about the design of WRP's new logo and asks for your comments.

The pandemic transformed the way we care for people in our local area, as our existing service users' journey to self-sufficiency was disrupted and a new community of people were reaching out to us for support—asylum seekers.

In the last two years we have doubled our reach and introduced various new initiatives changing the lives of displaced people in and around High Wycombe. This has included a Community Response Programme, Digital Connectivity Initiative, Hardship and Access Fund, Activities Fund and an Education stream for individuals applying to university. Considering this, as an organisation we have doubled our income and begun reaching out to new larger pools of funding, we have created a new Individual Giving Strategy that campaigns to the general public for support, and we are continuously trying to boost our volunteer database.



Acting together
in loving kindness



Acting together
in loving kindness



With our new services and impact, we have now fully established ourselves as one of the leading charities in our local area that prioritises the needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

Our new logo has kept the underpinnings of our roots providing housing to refugees, but has opened the shelter to show our wider wraparound support that we now also offer to asylum seekers. There is space for any refugee or asylum seeker in need under our organisations umbrella of support. We believe our community can be enriched by the culture and diversity of refugees and asylum seekers. The people interconnected symbolises our service users but also our community of High Wycombe that has come together to help those that have come from unimaginable beginnings. Finally, our new logo can be used with and without our strapline—Acting Together in Loving Kindness—that has been used since 2016 when the organisation was first established.

Please let us know what you think at fundraising@wycombe-refugees.org

Together on the long journey

Trustee Sue Butler on what awaits those arriving in our area, and the support that WRP offers.

The refugees and people that WRP support have made difficult decisions to leave their countries, their families and the life they have grown up with. It is not an easy decision to leave loved ones, parents and siblings and seek asylum in the UK, knowing you will have to start a new life from zero.

Along with helping families and individuals with refugee status we have also helped about 31 families who are still in the asylum system awaiting Home Office interviews and decisions. In the past year or so as people have been granted refugee status, a number of the families we have helped have joined other family or friends across the UK or have found jobs in London and so have moved away. At the moment, we are supporting our first family who has been housed in Wycombe through the asylum system, been granted refugee status and who plan to stay here. They have found support and friendship, and now want to make their home here.

The asylum system is long and arduous for people. Whereas Home Office substantive interviews used to take place within six months of arrival, people are now having to wait two years or more for their first interview. They are normally not allowed to work or have access to public funds so they can become very socially isolated. Once granted refugee status there are often gaps in their support as they move from the asylum system to more independence as a refugee.

As people get awarded refugee status, WRP is able to provide support for initially accessing universal credit, writing a CV and applying for jobs. Finding affordable housing is the biggest challenge—if you have a flat or house in Wycombe and could rent it to a refugee family at an affordable rate please get in touch with us.



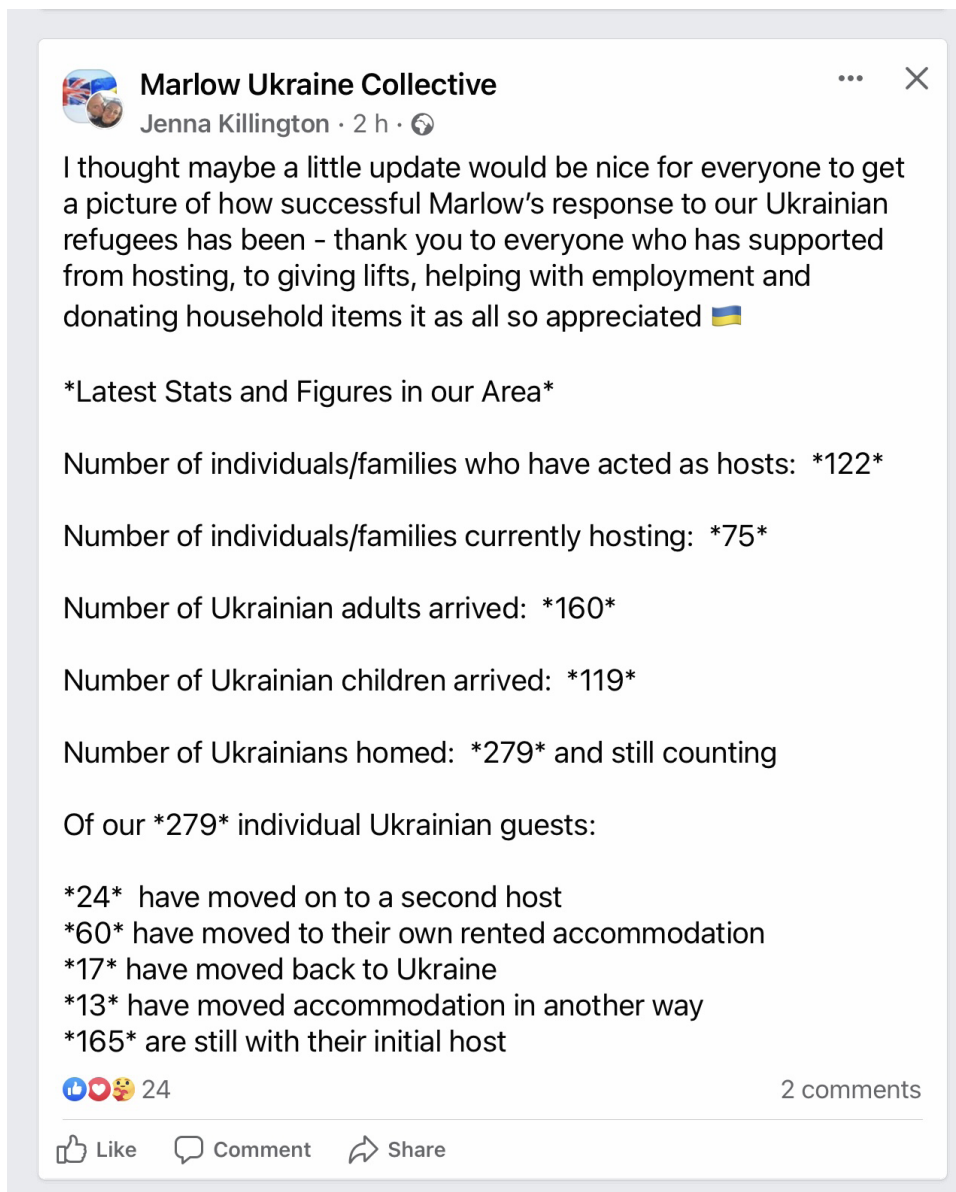
Photo by João Ferrão on Unsplash



Photo by Tierra Mallorca on Unsplash

Ukrainian numbers

Our partners at Marlow Ukraine Collective have published the following, very heartening figures.



Marlow Ukraine Collective
Jenna Killington · 2 h · 🌐

I thought maybe a little update would be nice for everyone to get a picture of how successful Marlow's response to our Ukrainian refugees has been - thank you to everyone who has supported from hosting, to giving lifts, helping with employment and donating household items it as all so appreciated 🇺🇦

Latest Stats and Figures in our Area

Number of individuals/families who have acted as hosts: ***122***

Number of individuals/families currently hosting: ***75***

Number of Ukrainian adults arrived: ***160***

Number of Ukrainian children arrived: ***119***

Number of Ukrainians homed: ***279*** and still counting

Of our ***279*** individual Ukrainian guests:

- *24*** have moved on to a second host
- *60*** have moved to their own rented accommodation
- *17*** have moved back to Ukraine
- *13*** have moved accommodation in another way
- *165*** are still with their initial host

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WRP in figures

In the Wycombe area, WRP is currently supporting **62** adults, half of whom are asylum seekers, and **73** children. They have come here from Afghanistan, Algeria, China, India, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine.



Community Board
High Wycombe



Community Board
North West
Chilterns



PARTNERSHIP

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Contact us

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f Refugees Welcome in Wycombe