

## Newsletter 3



### **Building Partnerships**

We have now signed a memorandum of understanding with Taunton Welcomes Refugees, who have been a registered charity since 2019 and have a lot of experience supporting Syrian and Afghan refugees in Somerset and training volunteers to help them. We will benefit from their experience and it means we can claim gift aid on donations.

We have started discussions with CHARIS Refugees who have a contract from Somerset County Council to open welcome hubs across Somerset, including Wivey. The idea of a hub is to be a place where refugees can meet up with each other, access support services, have English lessons and make friends with local residents. We are open to suggestions and offers as to where this should best be.

### **Numbers**

We know of ten refugees who have moved into the Wivey area, with another thirty odd waiting for visas or in discussion with hosts. We have yet to hear of anyone being matched through the government's approved RESET scheme and the visas continue to take very different amounts of time to arrive, even for those in the same family who have all applied at the same time. It can be frustrating, but this is put in perspective when you are having a facetime conversation with a family, helped by an interpreter, which has to end abruptly when a siren sounds and the family have to go quickly into an air raid shelter away from a missile attack.

The admin team for the Taunton Hosts facebook group are winding down actively matching people but the site remains open and is still the most successful channel for hosts to match up with guests.

Across Somerset there are 438 hosts matched with refugees and 101 are known to have arrived. 3100 prospective hosts have registered with the government.

If you are thinking of hosting and haven't told us yet, or have changed your mind about it, please update your details at <https://wiveywelcomesrefugees.org.uk/wivey-hosts-form.html>

## Events

**Thursday 19th May 7pm Whist Drive**, Victoria Rooms, Milverton, Cheese and puddings, raffle, bar, £10 per person, tickets from [geoff@xini.com](mailto:geoff@xini.com) proceeds to WWR

**Sunday 22 May 2-5pm, Open Garden** at Bedrock Barn, Brompton Ralph, TA4 2RT, Entry £5, children free, in aid of WWR and St Margarets Hospice. Refreshments available.

**Saturday 28th May Music for Ukraine**, Wiveliscombe Community Centre, A fund raising event for the DEC appeal for Ukraine Suggested Donation £5 on the door.

3.00pm - 6.00pm Wivelele, Wiveliscombe Community Choir, Alan and Dave from Diving Duck, James Morrell on piano, Dave Eastoe on guitar. Tea and cake available

7.45pm - 11.00pm Two great local bands: The Understairs: Jesse and the Skunknecks  
Bring a bottle

*First sent on 13 May 2022 Wivey Welcomes Refugees*

*Wivey Welcome Refugees is a Community Association formed on 01/04/22 with the aim of coordinating the welcome for refugees across the wider Wiveliscombe area. We are affiliated to Taunton Welcomes Refugees, registered charity no. 1183921 . Peter Pearson (Chair), Mirren Boyle (Secretary), Tom Fox (Treasurer), Steering group: Mark Blaker, Pauline McNichol (Town Council Refugee Champions), Dr Rosie Riley, Julian Mellor, Ann-Marie Paterson, Eddie East, Julia Hatfield*

### **Our mailing address is:**

The Community Office  
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Wiveliscombe  
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If you would like to subscribe, please complete one of our two forms or email us at [wiveywelcomes@gmail.com](mailto:wiveywelcomes@gmail.com)

*Our thanks for Martin Valuks for permission to use his Ukraine inspired photos*