**SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RELOCATION SCHEME**

**Update for the Kent Housing Group – 20 January 2016**

Discussions with individual districts are ongoing. In addition to further Kent-wide meetings, separate meetings are being held with individual districts. The latest position on indicative numbers is shown in the table below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **District/Borough** | **Number over the 5 years** | **Number before Christmas** |
| ASHFORD | 250 people (approx 50 families) | 3 families |
| CANTERBURY | TBC | None |
| DARTFORD | One at a time and will be reviewed. | None |
| DOVER | 12 families | None |
| GRAVESHAM | 5 families | None |
| MAIDSTONE | TBC  | None |
| SEVENOAKS | Cannot commit at present | None |
| SHEPWAY | 10 families | None |
| SWALE | TBC  | None |
| THANET | 8 families | None |
| TONBRIDGE & MALLING | 10 families | None  |
| TUNBRIDGE WELLS | 10 families | 2 families |
| **TOTAL** | **105 families** | **5 families** |

**Arrivals so far**

On 16 December five families arrived – three for Ashford and two for Tunbridge Wells. So far things are going well. All families are receiving intensive resettlement support – in Ashford this is being provided by Ashford Borough Council staff and in Tunbridge Wells by Rethink (supported by TWBC staff where appropriate and KCC services).

NB: in addition to Rethink, KCC is commissioning Migrant Help to provide the support in several areas, including all the East Kent districts that wish to participate (apart from Ashford who are providing this support themselves).

**Funding:** the funding for local authorities for year one is as follows:

Adults: £8,520

Children 5-18: £14,020 (includes £4,500 for education and £1,000 for SEN)

Children 3-4: £11,770 (includes £2,250 for education and £1,000 for SEN)

Children under 3: £8,520

It is important to note that the above figures do not include the Housing Benefit and other DWP benefits (which will be paid in the usual way) or the medical care costs (which will be paid direct to the CCGs - £2,600 per person).

Following the Spending Review, theGovernment announced further details of the funding:

Year 2 - £5,000 per person. Year 3 - £3,700 per person.

Year 4 - £2,300 per person. Year 5 - £1,000 per person.

Extra payments may be available for education for refugees under the age of 18 and also a special cases fund will be set up to provide extra support for the most vulnerable refugees.

Although extra housing payments are not going to be available in areas of high housing costs, local authorities will be allowed flexibility in how the funding allocation is spent, allowing some of the funding to be used to top-up Housing Benefit rates. However there is a concern in Kent that housing cost arrangements need to be sustainable as far as possible (to avoid families having to move).

For the Ashford families, the funding is being transferred to and administered by ABC. For the Tunbridge Wells families this is being handled by KCC who reimburse TWBC for any agreed expenditure they incur. This was agreed as being more practical for T Wells as most of the services (KSAS support, Rethink etc) have been commissioned by KCC.

**Referrals from the Home Office:** apart from Ashford (who as early participants received the referrals direct),a process has been set upwhereby the Home Office send the referrals to KCC via their secure Move It portal. KCC is now also handling the Ashford referrals in this manner. We are currently in discussion with the Home Office about the best way to do this. They prefer a system whereby they are informed of properties only once they are confirmed. However this poses challenges unless families are then referred very quickly to avoid lengthy void periods. We are hoping that eventually we will move to a system whereby referrals take place, KCC performs an initial triage function to see if the household needs to be in a particular area (e.g. for access to a particular hospital), and then a panel made up of the relevant districts, health, education, social care and other partners will decide the best place for the family to settle given available housing, access to schools etc.

**Resettlement support:** a summary of the support arrangements is as follows:

**1. Kent Support and Assistance Service (KSAS)** will be dealing with the welcome pack, the cash allowance, arranging (through its partner West Kent Extra) for furniture, white goods etc and manging the collection and delivery of any donations.

**2.  Education** – school and college places will be arranged by KCC Education Officers and ESOL coordinators (the latter will also organise ESOL for the adults).  Educational Psychology and Special Educational Needs/Disability staff will be involved where necessary.

**3.  Health –** the Kent CCGs and NHS England have agreed for one of the Chief Nurses to be responsible on their behalf for dealing with all the referrals for Kent – arranging for NHS numbers, GP registration and, if required, specialist referrals.

**4.  Resettlement Support Provider** – a Key Worker will be provided for each family and a resettlement plan will be drawn up based on their particular needs for support. The Key Worker will liaise with the relevant agencies and voluntary sources of support to enable the families to integrate into the local community as quickly as possible. KCC is currently commissioning Rethink and Migrant Help to do his work. In T Wells this is being done in close cooperation with the housing team. Ashford are using their own staff to provide this support – from the Housing Team.

**5.  Interpreting and translation** – this is being done through the contract KCC has with Connect2Kent who have at least 30 Arabic speakers on their books. They are also able to translate key documents. Mainstream provision will be used where possible.

**6.  KCC Early Help Services and Adult Social Care** will also be involved where necessary. The Key Worker will ensure that any referrals are made if such support is thought to be required.

**7. Benefits** – Jobcentre Plus has provided single points of contact for each district and so far this is working well.

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