

# Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service



## Impact Report 2023

Drawing by Yulia K, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Parent, Dundee



**Believe in  
children**  
**Barnardo's  
Scotland**

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## Introduction

“Barnardo’s has a long history of helping people seeking sanctuary in the UK, and today our work includes supporting children, young people and families that have arrived after fleeing the war against Ukraine.

Barnardo’s support to families from Ukraine since 2022 builds on our significant experience across the UK of supporting refugees, including our partnership in Highland with Highland Council and Aberlour, where we have helped to support dozens of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people since 2021.

When Russia invaded Ukraine, we quickly mobilised resources in Scotland and I am so proud of how our Welcome Service has grown and adapted to provide vital support to hundreds of displaced children and families across Scotland.

This report summarises the work and impact of the Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service so far, demonstrating the learning we have gained from the service and our hopes for how the Welcome Service and provision of family support for displaced families in Scotland can be made available for all who need it.”

*Martin Crewe, Director of Barnardo’s Scotland*

### About Barnardo’s

Barnardo’s Scotland is one of the leading children’s charities and works with thousands of children, young people and families every year across over 100 services. We deliver a wide range of services which includes providing family support, early intervention, support to care-experienced young people in the transition to adulthood, support to children, young people and families through fostering and adoption services, helping children affected by sexual abuse and exploitation, supporting young people who come into conflict with the law, helping young people entering employment, education and training, and supporting young people and families affected by substance use.

With a UK-wide footprint, Barnardo’s supports hundreds of thousands of people across hundreds of services. Our services include support for displaced and unaccompanied children, specialist services for victims of abuse/exploitation; mental health and wellbeing; family support; employability; housing support and advocacy and much more.

We take the experience and learning from our services across Scotland, gain insight from the children and young people we work with, to seek positive change in policy and practice based on what matters to the people who use our services and what we see working in communities. We work collaboratively across all sectors and political parties to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people.

Barnardo's vision is that the lives of children, young people and families should be free from poverty, abuse and discrimination. This is reflected in our priorities, where we support people to:

- Build stronger families through early intervention, Family Support and Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- Provide safer childhoods through tailored support to prevent abuse and keep children safe from harm.
- Build positive futures by supporting Children and Young People to reach their potential and improve their life outcomes.



## A Warm Scots Welcome

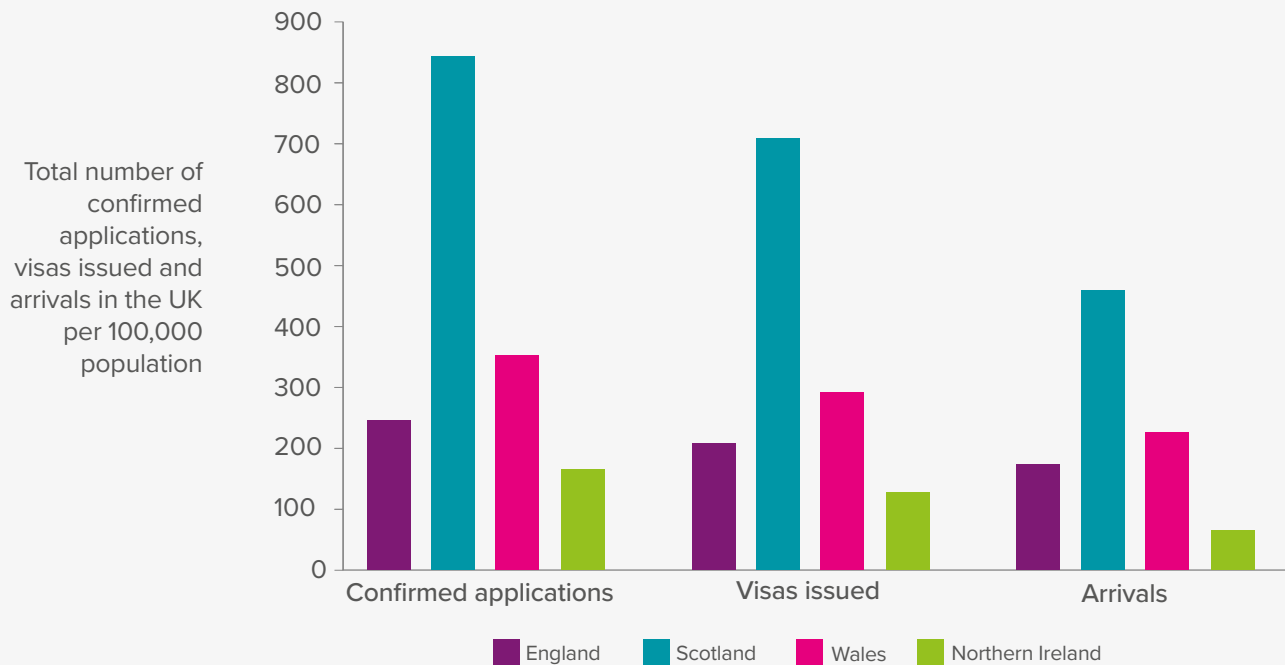
At the outbreak of war, the Scottish Government made an initial commitment to welcome 3000 displaced people from Ukraine – but to date, more than eight times this amount have arrived. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) statistics show that 25,365 people displaced from Ukraine have arrived in Scotland, many of these are women and children. The warm welcome that Scotland promised continues to be appreciated by those who settle in our communities.



*'On behalf of the Scottish Government – and the people of Scotland – I warmly welcome you, and your family and friends, to Scotland. I want you to know that you are now safe. Please know that you will be treated with care, dignity and respect, for however long you stay. As we open our doors to you, we also open our hearts. We offer not just a refuge, but a warm Scottish welcome and a nation of helping hands to you and your loved ones.*

*Welcome to Scotland, our home – and, for as long as you need, yours too.'*<sup>1</sup>

Figure 4: Total number of confirmed applications, visas issued and arrivals in the UK per 100,000 population by UK nation as of 25 July 2023.



Government sponsored visas included where applicable (Scotland and Wales only) and individual sponsors

<sup>1</sup> A Warm Welcome – message from the First Minister (19 March 2022)

## Barnardo's Response

Responding to the catastrophic war against Ukraine, Barnardo's understood the importance of reaching those children, young people and families who were arriving in Scotland to seek refuge and wanted to ensure they had the support they required. Additionally, we understood the commitment Hosts were making as they opened their homes to welcome families when they were most in need. This therefore saw the creation and mobilisation of **Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service**.

The Nationwide service currently comprises an Operational Manager, Team Manager & six Project Workers operating across Scotland,

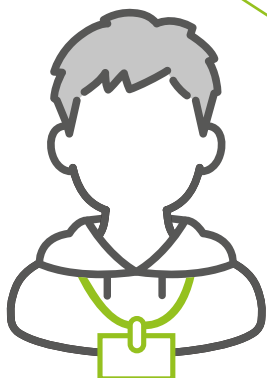
as well as a flexible bank of sessional staff to further support within areas of particular need.

The staff team are highly qualified and include social workers, teachers, family support workers, those who have previously supported refugees and asylum seekers, staff with housing experience and also those with lived experience of fleeing war.

To enhance our approach and delivery, members of the staff team also include those with Ukrainian heritage and experienced and skilled staff who had themselves been displaced from Ukraine. This has helped to strengthen the cultural understanding and language capacity within our service and allow us to share knowledge and to meet the needs of those we serve across Scotland.

*'Workers of Barnardo's are extremely friendly and are to create a warm atmosphere around them. I feel heard, understood and accepted and this is what really matters for me. Also, we've managed to do a great job as a team, helped so many families to feel welcomed and so many children to feel safe. The benefit of having staff from Ukraine has an advantage as we are like mediators that help Ukrainians to get the exact help they need and also explain some cultural differences so that can provide a better support and keep the service improving in general. I am lucky to be a part of Barnardo's team as they definitely make the world brighter for those who went through dark times.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Project Worker



*'Working at Barnardo's means being part of a team of people who care for families who need support. This is the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as the opportunity to realize your potential. I liked that the management supports new ideas and they can be brought to life. As well as the opportunity to improve your skills through training. Employees from Ukraine brought new ideas, activity, and experience.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Project Worker

**So far, we have supported**

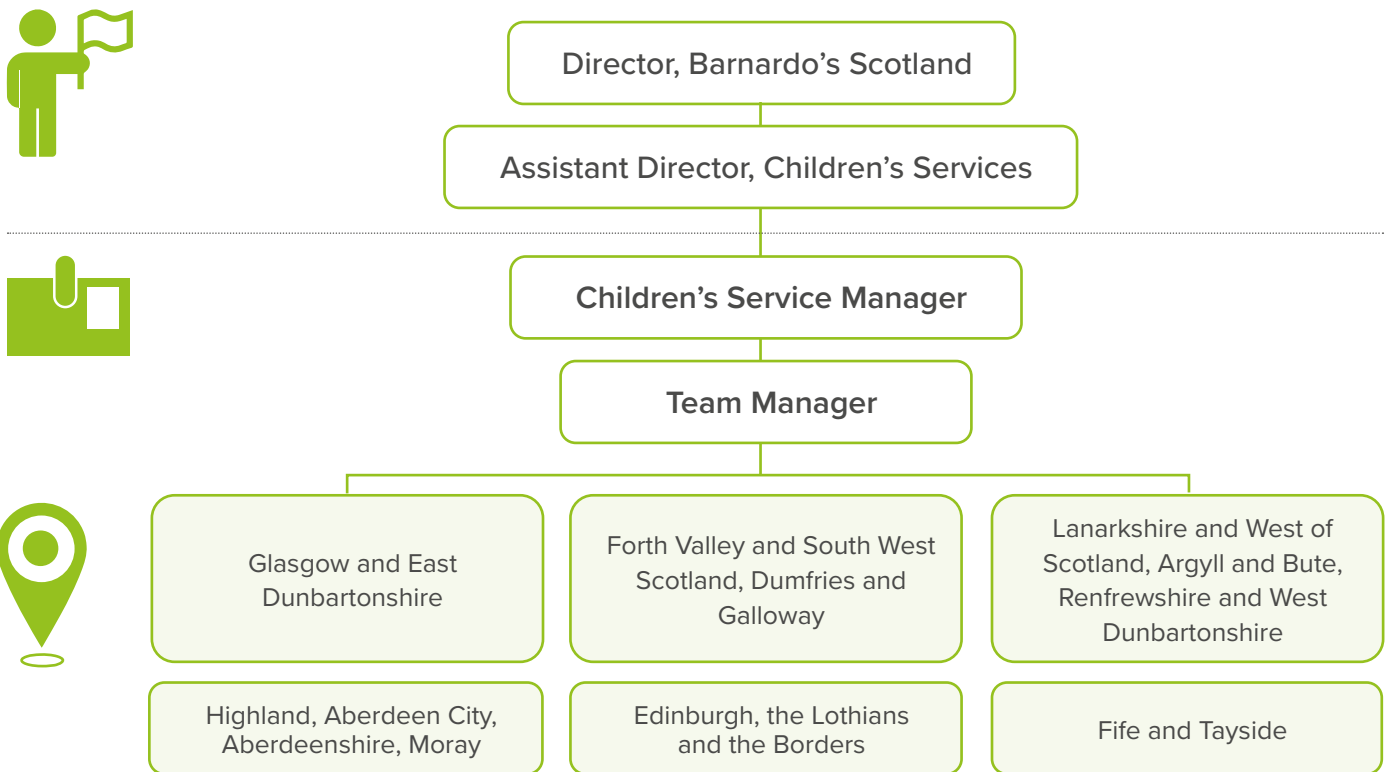


**...more than  
2000**

**children,  
young people  
and parents**  
who have arrived  
in Scotland.

**To offer targeted support we continue to work closely with** local authority Resettlement Teams, Universal Services; *such as Education and Health*, our third sector partners; The Scottish Refugee Council, Just Right Scotland and Third Sector Interface's all across Scotland. With the aim of ensuring that children, young people, and parents receive the support they need to feel less isolated and integrate into their communities.

## The Service Delivery Model



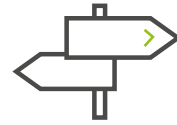
The service approach was developed to take into consideration Barnardo's vision but was also underpinned by the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2018-2022. The strategy informs how we support refugees and people seeking asylum from the day they arrive in Scotland, as well as building longer-term integration.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-scots-refugee-integration-strategy-2018-2022/>

## TIER 1



**Advice** and emotional support and responding to initial queries.



**Signposting.**

## TIER 2



Assesment and development of a **support plan** to address specific issues.



**Practical support** including phones, sim cards and tablets, toys, food vouchers and clothing.



**Community integration** including access to education and local services. Information and support to reduce isolation, money, benefits and employment.

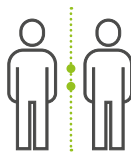


**Training and information for host families.**

## TIER 3



**Tailored therapeutic support** such as those associated with bereavement, trauma and loss.



**1-1 and group support** for parents, children, young people.



Ensure children, young people and parents are **safe in our communities.**



**Mediation** for families /hosts for example those at risk of host relationships/ arrangements breaking down.



## Core Aims

- 1. Ensure vulnerable children and families are effectively welcomed as they arrive and settle in Scotland.**
- 2. Ensure ongoing support is available to address immediate and emerging needs.**
- 3. Provide access to trauma and mental health support for those that need it.**

## Scotland Outcomes

- Ukrainian families feel safe, welcomed, included and feel informed in their early life in Scotland – this includes easy access to financial and other resources; education, training and employment; health and support services.
- That host families and other supports feel informed and supported when welcoming people from Ukraine.
- Where necessary, trauma support and specific therapeutic interventions are offered to support recovery and future wellbeing.
- Ensure that all those that work with the Welcome (Ukraine) Service are included and involved in decision making and this includes their views about service provision to shape the future of the “welcome” to the Scotland.
- That children, young people and families are enabled to reach their potential whilst living in Scotland.

## Key Features

- Ensure Barnardo's is a key partner in National efforts to welcome Ukrainians to Scotland.
- Contribute to and strengthen the sector.
- Ensure services are accessible, responsive and developed through a process of inclusion and collaboration.
- Support policy change through our experience of operational delivery.
- Develop key alliances to increase public understanding and create a welcoming environment.
- Promote safety, wellbeing and ensure appropriate accommodation, education and employment and other resources and opportunities for families.
- Ensure a trauma informed approach to promote recovery, healthy development, achievements and accomplishments.

## Trauma Informed Approach

Barnardo's believe children, young people, families along with our colleagues should have access to environments that are supportive and embed the principles and values of trauma informed care (safety, trust, collaboration, empowerment and choice) within its culture and operational activities. This creates environments that 'do no harm' but support relational repair, respectfully and safely.

What we know is the families displaced from Ukraine were likely to have experienced significant trauma. The Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service built a team and created a culture that effectively identifies and responds to families. We have strived to achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and colleagues affected. We believe it is important for us all to play our part in fostering safe and trusted relationships and environments to support and empower recovery. Being a trauma informed and responsive organisation is essential to support those who are in most need of support.

**Trauma is everyone's business.**

## Whole Family approach

In response to the Covid-19, the Scottish Government established a Collective Leadership Group (CLG) and developed a Vision and Blueprint for Holistic Family Support in Scotland, which also forms part of the Scottish Government's commitment to keep The Promise to reform the care system. The route map states that the Holistic support should address the needs of children and adults in a family at the time of need rather than at crisis point. This will help families to flourish and reduce the chances of family breakdown, and of children entering the care system. The same preventive interventions should also support parents' ability to engage with the labour market. These interventions could help parents/carers to pursue qualifications or progress in employment, thereby enabling them to improve their financial situation.<sup>3</sup>

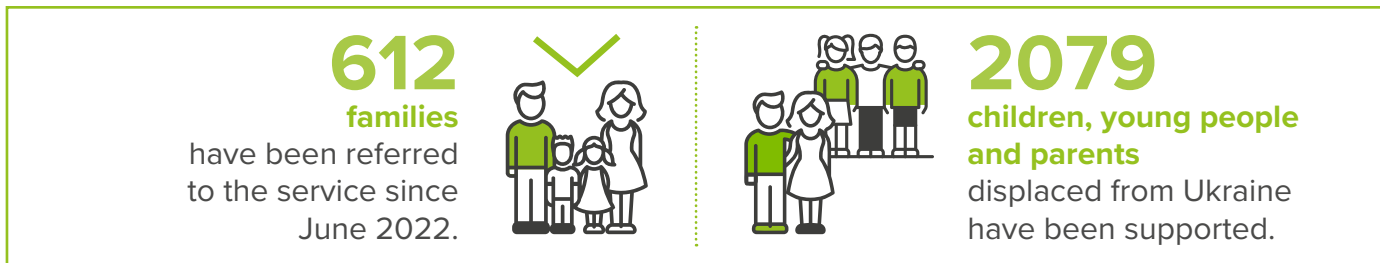
The Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service firmly embedded the Whole Family Approach at the centre of its service delivery. The families we have met have often been



<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/routemap-national-principles-holistic-whole-family-support/>



# Impact of Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service

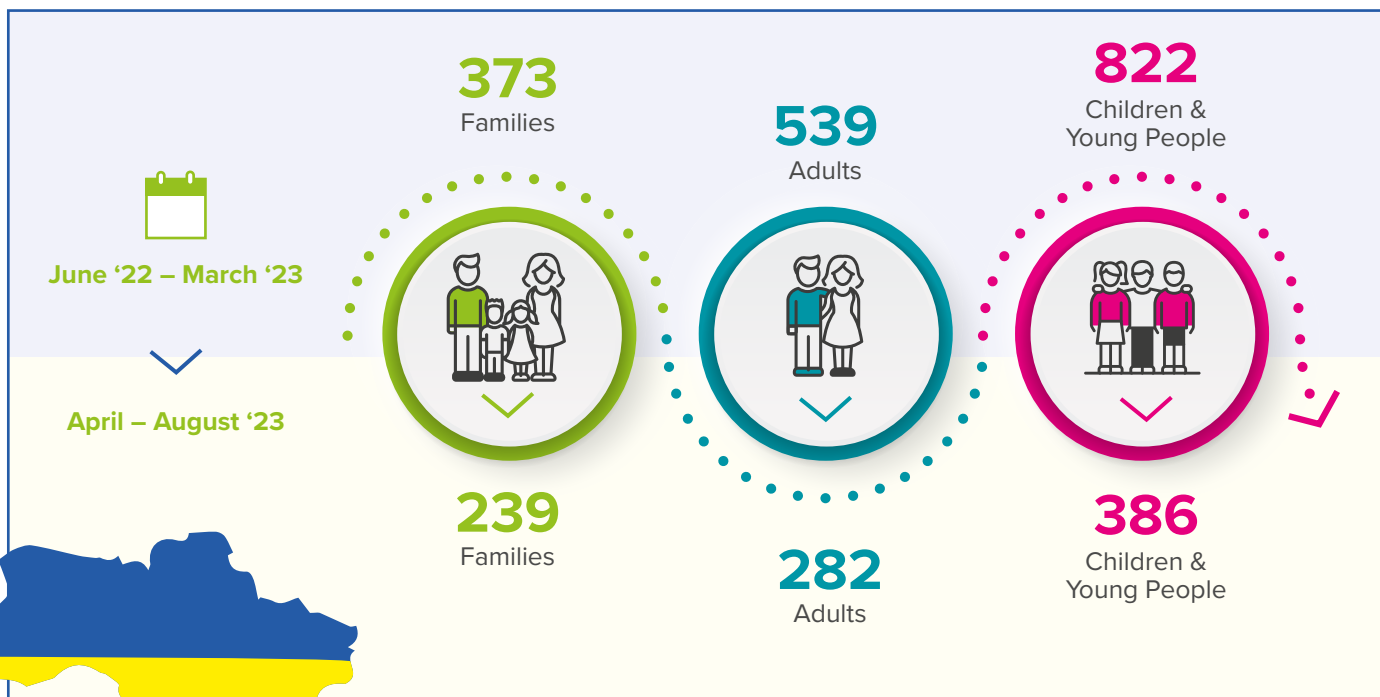


The Service uses a hybrid model of support where staff across Scotland continue to work face to face and digitally with those in hotels, on the 2 cruise ships (up to July 2023), living with Hosts and those in their own tenancy.

We continue to adapt and change as the landscape for families alters. With the departure of the cruise ships MS Ambition and MS Victoria, many families have moved to different parts of Glasgow/Edinburgh or completely new localities across Scotland. Having a national team has been advantageous to ensure we can

track and support families through change and transition, whilst providing stability.

From **April 2023** we have seen a decrease in the number of requests for practical support and signposting, however there has been an increase in more complex challenges for children, young people and families as the impact of trauma emerges. **Parents, children and young people are requiring more in-depth emotional support along with support to navigate changes and challenges they face as they move to new living circumstances.**



## Practical Support

As families arrived into our communities, hotels, cruise ships and other accommodation in Scotland, many of them arrived with very few or no belongings.

Our **Barnardo's Emergency Fund** and **Barnardo's Cost of Living Fund (COL)** allowed us to respond quickly to meet immediate and emerging needs. Initially having the ability to provide clothing, toys, nappies, baby food, strollers and other essentials to meet the urgent basic needs. Additionally, we received requests for technology such as laptops, mobile phones, Sim cards, tablets. We recognised the importance of parents, children and young people being able to keep in touch with family and friends scattered across Europe, but also giving many the opportunity to apply for employment or attend Education/Training in Scotland or remotely in Ukraine.

As families move from Welcome accommodation, we have seen an increase in requests for household items such as kitchenware (microwaves, kettles), radiators, sofa beds, household linens, and when provided we have seen the significant difference this has made to people feeling able to settle in new homes and communities. Support to manage budgets whilst in Scotland will be extremely important to ensure whilst living in Scotland families do not slip into poverty.

Feedback continues to be extremely positive, particularly now that many are moving into their own tenancies. Providing vouchers has ensured that families have dignity and choice to purchase clothing and other items for themselves and their children.

*'Thank you for the tablet. Our daughter is happy. Now she will be comfortable studying.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Kids are happy as the Lego table we ordered is the same one they had in Ukraine. Being able to provide a small piece of home feels more important.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Today I got a voucher and I'm so happy! Thank you, thank you, thank you!! I'll try to save money and buy a fridge next months ... You have always cared about us..(and it not only your job... I know, you have kind and loving heart!) Sincerely thank you'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'You have done a lot for us to feel calm. It's true! I just explore our cooker. My boys enjoy handmade meals now, like it was at home in Ukraine.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'We would like thank you for the work of Barnardo's charitable organisation, our family not only received a gadget namely a phone to help but also psychological support. We have been in Scotland for a month and faced financial problems. We turned to the organisation for help, they listened to us and helped us, gave us moral support and hope. Thanks for your quick response and help!! We wish the employees inspiration and health in such a difficult but great task that you are doing.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

## Direct and Person-Centred Support

The impact of trauma can have a lasting effect on children, young people and parents and often result in declining mental health and wellbeing if support is not provided in a timely manner. Therefore, an imperative element of our service has been to provide families with 1:1 support where required. The delivery of this is person centred and a whole family approach is adopted where necessary. Providing 1:1 support for parents, children and young people, is often done in partnership with their school and/or resettlement teams which allows for a joined-up approach in supporting emotional and social development.

The regular, in-depth emotional support we provide, allows children, young people and parents to develop a better understanding of the impact of trauma and how it may present in their emotions and behaviour, whilst providing them with a safe space where they can share their thoughts and experiences. We have found many families displaced from Ukraine find this difficult within their own support networks as they do not want to 'burden' others who are also in distress or they simply do not feel their emotions are valid because others are in a more challenging situation. Our emotional support allows their feelings to be validated, but also provides vital support to enable them to be processed whilst helping to establish coping strategies to reduce stress and overwhelm. It enables project workers to walk with individuals through one of the most difficult periods of their life and with careful and continual planning and assessing of needs, the service has been able to support children, young people and parents at their most vulnerable to a place of physical and emotional safety, ultimately helping them to achieve their potential.

*'I am infinitely grateful to your organization for helping Ukrainians. Our whole family is grateful to all of you for existing, for the fact that over a long period of six months, you managed to help us find ways to solve our problems related to injuries against the background of war, relocation, changes in life circumstances, language barrier, loss of quality of life and fear of the future. My daughter is enjoying life, my son sleeps peacefully every night and likes to communicate with his peers, and I am happy again with the achievements of my children and I can return to a normal life, continue studying and working, we can make plans again for the future. We wish you and your organization development and great success. You are the best for us. Thank you very much and we will never forget you.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service

*'I am so happy you helped me to settle. You are my biggest angel in Scotland. I appreciate everything you did for me and my family.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service

*'Thanks to the support and correct advice, thanks to the high professionalism and human qualities of our professional, both my children and I got rid of anxiety and constant stress, which brought us all back to normal life and mental illnesses retreated from us, I hope forever.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service

*'Many different services worked with us at the same time, but we received the most effective support from X, only she was flexible, mobile, resourceful with us, she knew everything about us, and her sincere desire to help had the highest result. My little son loved her very much, even though he doesn't like new people*

*very much, he wanted to invite X to live with us, this is the highest level of trust from a small child. Thanks to X, he got rid of night terrors and got rid of the fear of communicating with local peers'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service



## Case study

### OLHA

Olha and her two children Timor, 8yrs & Nataliia 12yrs were referred to the Welcome (Ukraine) Service from the local authority resettlement team as they were moving into their own social housing property and it was agreed that additional support from the service would be beneficial. Although the family were delighted to be allocated their own accommodation, this move meant they had to relocate to a new area once again, the children would need to settle into different schools and work hard at creating some stability for themselves. Everything that was familiar was no longer and this was a daunting task.

Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service began supporting Olha with weekly 1:1 sessions. Although it was initially thought to be more practical support that was required, it quickly transpired that the Olha was experiencing a lack of motivation, low

moods, difficulty maintaining routines and boundaries at home and a real crisis with her identity. The career and life she had worked so hard for had been taken away and she did not recognise the person standing in front of the mirror. She was extremely grateful to Scotland for the warm welcome they had received, however she was processing a huge amount of grief and loss and missing who remained in Ukraine.

Adopting a person-centred approach meant we were able to help Olha to prioritise her needs to rebuild the family unit and develop her confidence within. Three priority areas were established, these being:

- Managing the children's behaviour and routine more confidently and consistently.
- Improving mental health & wellbeing by seeing themselves as a priority.
- Finding employment.





Regular 1:1 support sessions were essential as this allowed a safe space to talk and share thoughts and experiences. This was a vital component of Olha's progress as it provided the opportunity to be heard and listened to, feelings to be validated and allowed her to be reassured that she did not have to face challenges alone.

Together, a series of small steps were established to help improve routines and boundaries at home. It was important that each change felt manageable and achievable, and with encouragement, it was not long before real progress was made. Each success allowed Olha to feel more empowered and it reignited a belief in herself that had been missing for some time. Her journey was not without challenges; however, the support allowed her confidence and resilience to increase, and this meant she was better equipped when faced with challenges and less likely to feel overwhelmed.

Alongside changes at home, with support and encouragement, Olha began to prioritise her own mental health and wellbeing. She enrolled in some regular exercise classes, spent more time as a family unit at the weekends and began volunteering within the local community.

Finding employment was also important to Olha as she had always worked in Ukraine. Barnardo's signposted to Skills Development Scotland at the beginning of support journey to guarantee she had the specialist

support to achieve her goals when needed. Although it took longer than she had hoped to gain employment, this gave her time to develop her confidence, find clarity in the type of work she would like to pursue and feel more equipped to take on a new challenge.

Despite the ongoing situation in Ukraine, regular support from Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has allowed Olha to take back control, feel empowered and flourish in Scotland. Her overall mental health and wellbeing has improved, she is now in full time employment and has seen significant improvements in her children's behaviour by implementing and upholding boundaries and routines. In addition to our support, the progress made is a testament to Olha's strength and determination for a better life for her family. They now have some stability, a better sense of belonging in Scotland and the hope of a brighter future.



## Therapeutic Support

### LINK Service

In addition to emotional support, we can provide children, young people and families, with specialised mental health support through our LINK service. This partnership has allowed Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service to send direct referrals which enabled an experienced team of therapists and counsellors (with interpreters if necessary) to support those most in need.

**53 children, young people and parents** who required more specialist mental health support have accessed the service.

*'I have never been a person who would talk to anyone, I would always be the listener, with your patience and support I have been able to open up and discuss what is troubling me.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'I accept myself for who I am and do not worry about taking medication and talking to someone, I feel free.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'I look at the difficulties between my children in a more positive way and can let things go if needed.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service



**Barnardo's B-Wild Project**  
**Connecting children, young people and families in order to nurture their wellbeing.**

A number of our Welcome (Ukraine) staff have participated in training to be B-Wild champions. B-Wild is a Barnardo's initiative which has broad aims to improve the wellbeing of children, young people and families (CYPF) through time in nature. The B-Wild approach enables our staff to work in a therapeutically informed way with CYPF in nature spaces, building on existing trauma-informed approaches and relational practice in a safe, effective, sustainable and environmentally responsible ways. This in turn supports increased wellbeing of CYPF through:

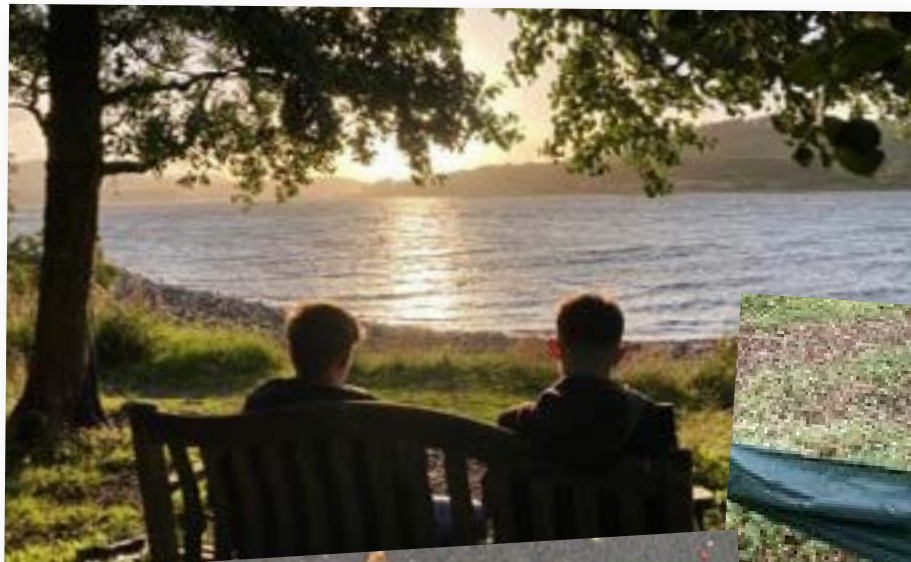
- Greater attachment to nature and awareness of environmental responsibility
- Increased self and social awareness
- Opportunities to build mastery and resilience.

B-Wild practice blends emotional literacy, trauma-informed practice and creative & nature connection activities to create a nurturing experience in nature spaces.

This practice is particularly beneficial for families displaced by their country of origin as it allows them to:

- Re-establish a lost connection to nature (beneficial for mental health and wellbeing)
- Develop a connection to the landscape of their country of residence promoting feelings of connection and belonging.
- Develop the confidence to use nature spaces local to them for fun, play and wellbeing support.

B-Wild sessions are now taking place regularly with children, young people and family groups in various sites across Scotland.



*Our Children and Young People connecting with nature.*



### Group work

Our group work continues to grow and develop.

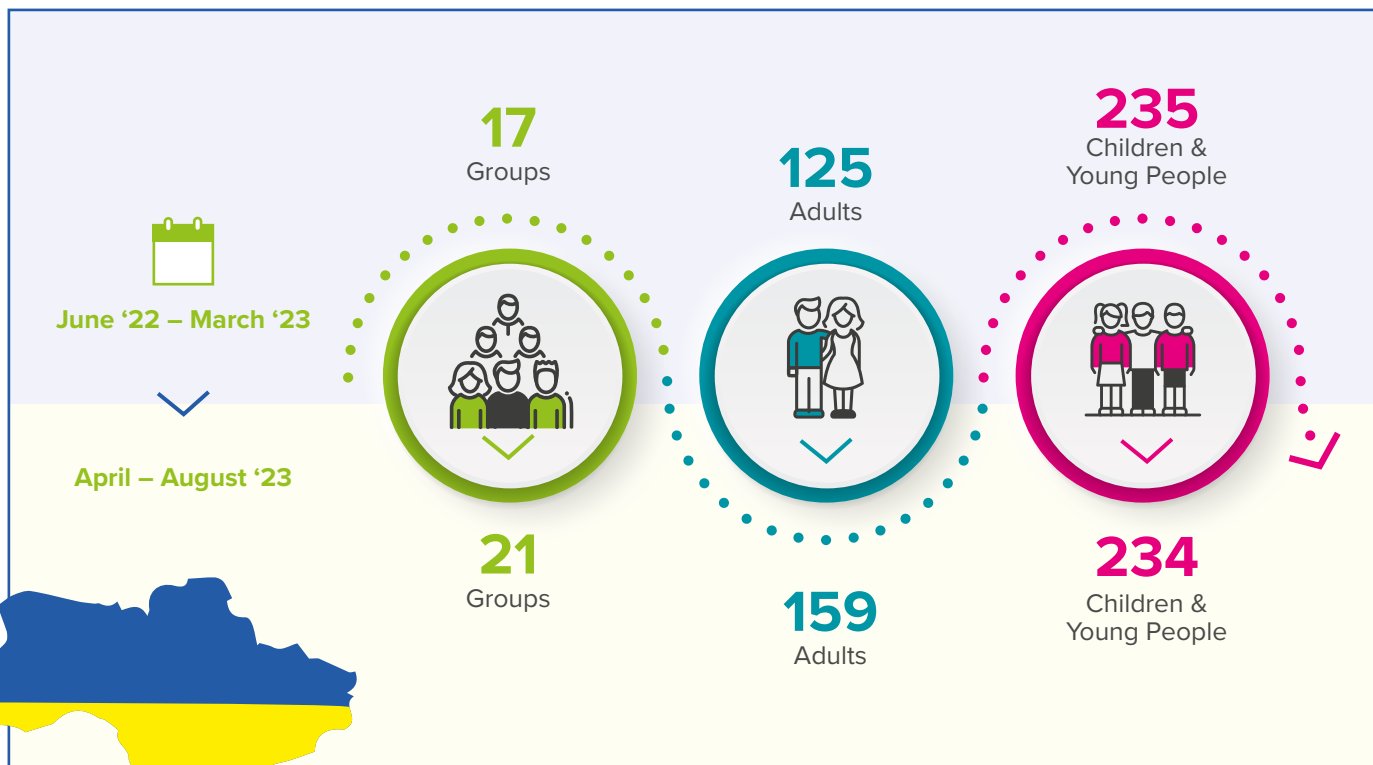
Currently we have **21 groups** across Scotland, each with a therapeutic aspect and developed collaboratively with those who attend.



The groups welcome those who receive 1-1 support but also others in the community that would like to reduce social isolation and improve their overall mental health and wellbeing. The need to reduce isolation, support integration, encourage connection to Ukrainian culture with food, song, language etc alongside learning about Scottish culture continues to be of high importance. We work collaboratively with each group taking their lead and filling gaps that have been identified by our partners/community. We continue to be open to develop these further where needed.

Family play sessions, friendship groups, women's groups, craft groups, music groups and young people's groups have provided a place to be welcomed and feel safe. New friendships have grown, their use and understanding of the English language has improved, and smiles and laughter brighten up staff's days as they witness children and young people grow in confidence and reach their potential whilst parents stress lessen, and they begin to feel more confident in their environment.

Over holiday periods we also recognised the additional pressures families may be feeling, particularly those in hotel rooms and ship cabins. During each holiday period we have facilitated additional groups, along with community excursions which included visits to castles, beaches, Botanical gardens, safari parks, Dynamic earth, cycling trips and much more.



*'This place makes me feel happy! I can definitely say that I found friends for life here!'*

– Young Person, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Group has helped me to feel braver to speak to friends in school...'*

– Young Person, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'The activities put on for young people and children especially has helped people enormously. Staying in a hotel for lengthy periods is not good for anyone's mental health and wellbeing. The activities provided give people a purpose and escape from the day-to-day monotony of staying in a hotel especially during the winter months. It allows young people and children to interact with their peers and for a few hours they can*

*forget any worries they have. This is vital for young people's mental health and ongoing integration into their new community.'*

– Stakeholder comment

*'For us Scotland is new home. The people is welcome and nice. We travelled around the country and discovered many interesting cities and towns. Nature here is amazing. The Scottish people is the best in the world.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Scotland is very beautiful, and people here are very kind, smiling and responsive.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Lots of fun and laughter from all with one mum saying on a visit to a castle garden "WOW" Scotland even smells beautiful..'*

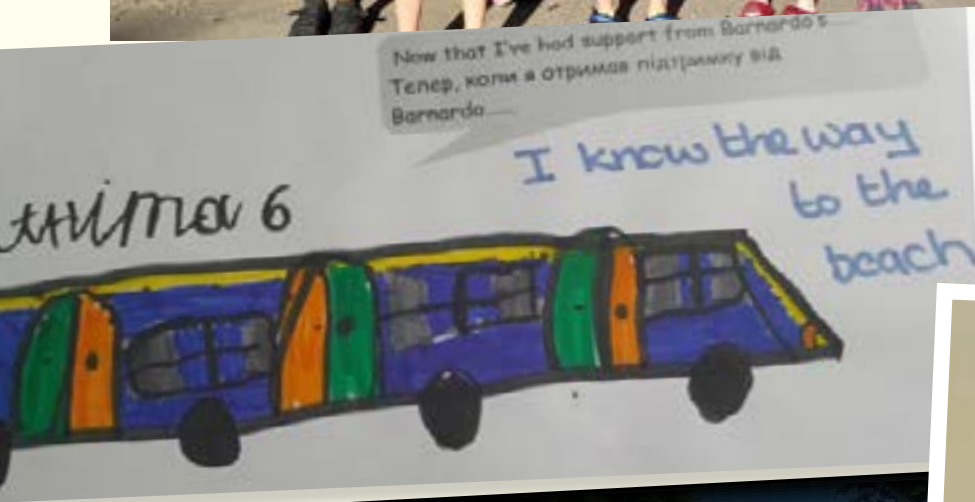
– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service



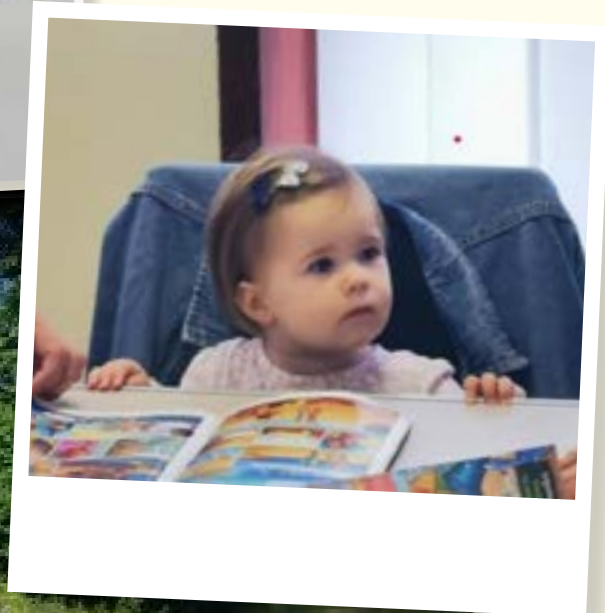


*Pictured above:  
Children's Creative Group – Glasgow.*

*Pictured left:  
Outing to North Berwick with families  
from Edinburgh.*

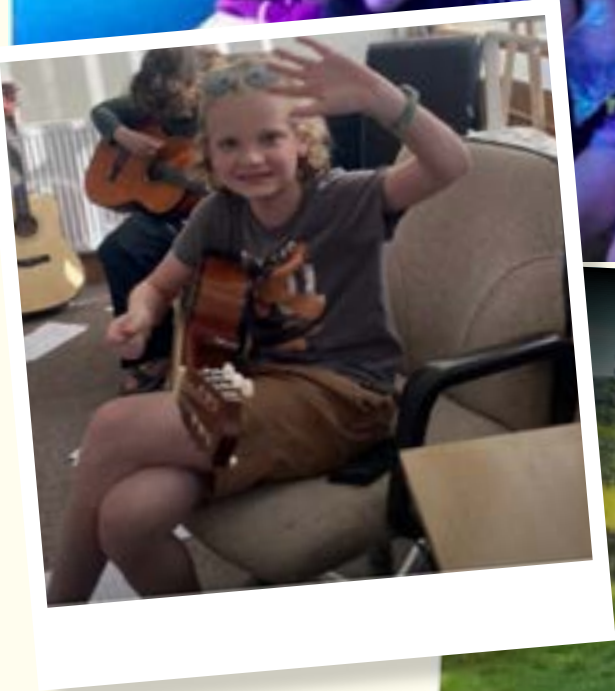


*Pictured here and right:  
Family Friendship Group outing – Ayrshire.*





Edinburgh Families enjoying Sea life Centre.



Pictured above:  
Friendship Group – Paisley.



Parents  
Group Outing  
– Ayrshire.



Pictured above:  
Exploring Nature in the middle of the city – Edinburgh.



Pictured right:  
Young People's Group – Building Trust.

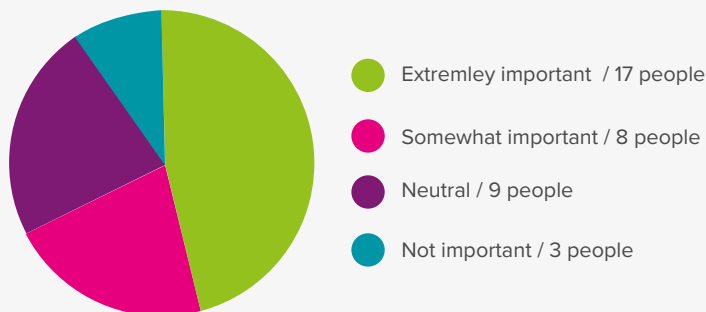
## Digital Groups

A hybrid approach to service delivery has been extremely important to ensure we reach as many families as possible, particularly for those in rural areas. Along with 1-1 support we have also developed a number of digital online groups. We recognised that as families move to settled accommodation this meant that many needed to move to other locations within our cities or localities across Scotland. By offering digital groups, the service has been able to ensure relationships could be maintained despite distance and therefore reduced the risk of feeling further loss and isolation. We recognised that for many children

and young people forming new relationships and maintaining friendships is extremely important for their mental health and wellbeing. Through discussions with partner agencies across Scotland, it emerged that many young Ukrainians were at risk of feeling isolated and therefore vulnerable. With the aim of reducing social isolation, improving mental health and wellbeing and allowing young Ukrainians to feel part of a community across Scotland, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service asked young people across Scotland if a **Digital Youth Network** would help to meet these ongoing needs and be beneficial to their wellbeing.

### They told us why this was important and what they needed from the network.

**Q: How important do you think it is for your own mental health and wellbeing to be able to connect with other Ukrainian young people in Scotland?**



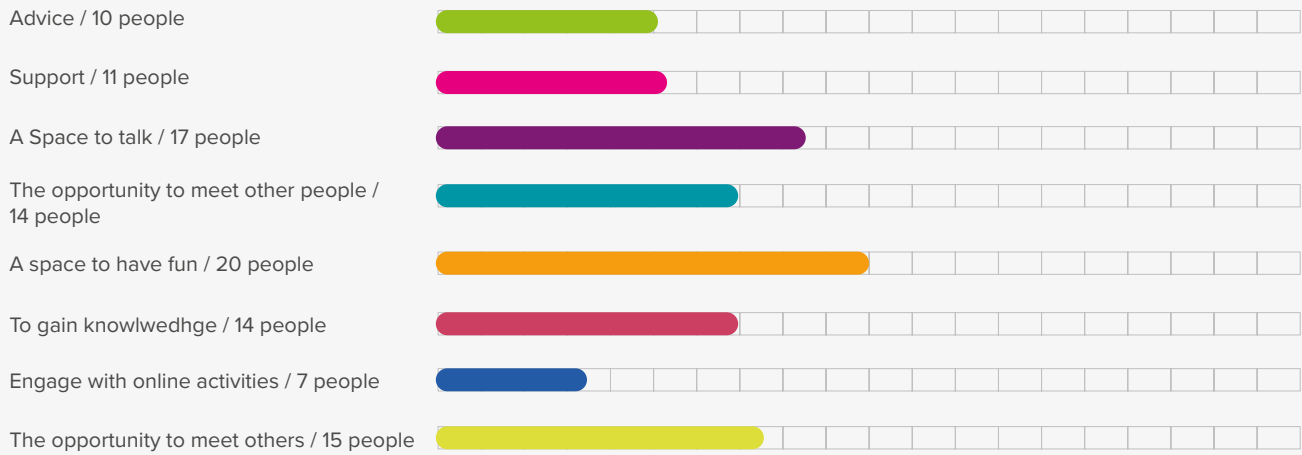
**Q: Which statement(s) apply best for you?**



- Sometimes I can feel bored / 19 people
- I can feel lonely / 15 people
- I have made a few friends / 15 people
- I am content with the friendships I have / 11 people
- I have no one to talk to / 9 people
- I only see my friends at school / 9 people
- I spend time with friends at the weekend / 8 people
- I have not yet made any friends / 8 people



### Q: What would you like most from a Ukraine Youth Network in Scotland?



The results were conclusive, and Barnardo's Ukrainian Youth Network was developed to digitally support young Ukrainians across Scotland. Whilst the network was initially open to **13-19 year old** Ukrainian young people across Scotland, we have recently extended this to incorporate **8-20 year olds** to ensure we continue to meet the needs of the Ukrainian community.

## Host Support

When planning service delivery, we recognised the importance and commitment of our hosts in Scotland as they opened their homes and hearts to those displaced from Ukraine.

We developed a programme of workshops to help hosts support Ukrainian children and families with presenting needs arising from the difficult experiences which led to the being displaced and the potential presenting trauma.

We developed six workshops and delivered to two cohorts of hosts from October through to December 2022 and January to March 2023. Each workshop was 1.5 hours in duration and a range of topics were covered and explored:

- a) Cultural awareness
- b) Understanding the impact of trauma
- c) Responding to challenges
- d) How to help keep families safe
- e) Support around navigating Scottish systems
- f) Children and young people's rights and advocacy

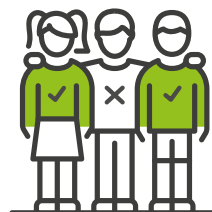
The programme of workshops were delivered virtually over six a week period and, to accommodate as many hosts as possible, a range of morning, afternoon, twilight and evening sessions were offered to take into account



differing personal and work commitments. The workshops were facilitated jointly by a lead facilitator from Barnardo's Training and Consultancy, supported by a co-facilitator from Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service. An identified group of facilitators consistently delivered the sessions promoting collaborative teamworking and allowed a trusting relationship to develop with the hosts attending.

A total of thirty-six sessions were available for hosts to book; this being six workshops delivered over six sessions each week with twenty places available per workshop.

The total number of **sessions booked** over the two cohorts was **593**



total sessions attended **473**

*'The workshop was a great introduction to Ukrainian culture. It was great to have real Ukrainians giving their perspective.'*

– Host, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'The support offered to sponsors is really beneficial and should be offered to all sponsors hosting Ukrainian families. Having a go to person for moral and practical support helps to prevent issues from escalating. Without the support I feel I would not have been able to continue hosting for as long as I did.'*

– Host, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'The trauma sessions helped me realise the needs, and the depths of needs, and that (guest) may just not be ready, maybe it was too much too soon, so that grounding, and*

*perspective and also the cultural context was so helpful. My perspective has changed.'*

– Host, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'It was also very interesting to hear from Ukrainians about their challenges living in UK. These workshops are wonderful, and I think it is enormously beneficial for the host family to understand the differences of expectations of Ukrainian people and host families.'*

– Host, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

### **Other Host Comments**

*'The workshops have been excellent.'*

*'Amazing, these sessions have been a god send.'*

*'Informative and comforting to know the support is there.'*





As a result of these workshops and the feedback from hosts about wanting to feel part of the hosting community, we introduced our Barnardo's Ukraine Host Network in March 2023. 51 Hosts have joined the network. This platform offers the opportunity for peer support and regular monthly events allow for new learning opportunities to ensure they can offer their guests the best support possible. The monthly meetup sessions include a digital Brew and a Blether where hosts can join their peers for informal discussions and advice and a more formal meet up which are often delivered alongside valued partners.

These have included:

- **Top Tips for Hosting – SCOTHOST**
- **Awareness Raising of Human Trafficking – SOHTIS (Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland)**
- **Employment Part I – Capital City Partnership and Remploy**
- **Housing Options – Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Staff**
- **Employment Part II – World Jewish Relief (STEP Programme) and Barnardo's WORKS**
- **Hosting Experiences and Endings – Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Staff**

*'I benefitted hugely from the various courses and chats that you all organised. Please accept and pass on my sincere thanks and I wish you all the best for all your hard work in the future.'*

– Host, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

When listening to hosts, many voiced that their hosting experience was positive, they had formed positive relationships and friendships that would be long lasting. They mostly felt supported by their local authorities and online resources like SCOTHOST and others. Hosts did also voice challenges including expectations, as at times these did not always match up between host/guest. Language barriers, differing parenting styles and for some the impact of ongoing stress that their guests

were experiencing along with declining mental health and a reduced of tolerance meant some hosts found it difficult to understand and support their guest's behaviour. As hosting was ending, hosts supporting their guests to move to independent accommodation commented that had also been stressful and challenging for some with a lack of knowledge of social housing systems including the challenge of deposits and availability of private lets.

Families have voiced how grateful they were to Hosts in Scotland *'The sponsors helped me a lot with adaptation, they were and remain like family.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service, Parent

## ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Provision

In May 2023 we received a small amount of funding from Scottish Refugee Council, **Supporting New Scots Fund**. This has given us the opportunity to develop both face to face and digital ESOL (English as a Second Language) provision for children, young people and parents, in addition to the groupwork that we had already established

CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) trained Barnardo's As and When workers are facilitating a wide range of ESOL opportunities such as conversational English for 8-20 year olds, English for Employment, parent and toddler digital rhyme time sessions and learning English through comedy. The Parents/Children/Young People's input continues to be

essential to ensure these groups develop to meet their needs.

We recognised that much of the existing ESOL provision is often aimed at adults however the opportunity to learn in a more relaxed environment has been welcomed by parents, children and young people. This has allowed them to learn English in a fun and supportive space that would enhance their learning. These sessions aim to increase opportunities to practise English, feel more confident using English in everyday situations, help them to integrate with their Scottish peers, and more fully in education/employment and community opportunities.



## Working in partnership

The importance of partnership working has been vital to ensure that we can offer the best support to families. We meet regularly with the Scottish Refugee Council and participate in integration meetings and other third sector meetings across Scotland allowing us to highlight the work of Barnardo's and the service. This has also given us the opportunity to develop positive working relationships with local community services. We have fostered many positive relationships and partnerships, and we work closely with the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB) in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee, Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC), YMCA, Hibernian Community Foundation, church groups and third sector partners.

Our work with professionals continues to be recognised and appreciated which indicates that the service is achieving its aims and delivering support to a high standard. We have been able to support a large number of displaced children, young people and families from Ukraine. They acknowledge that the service has been vital to meet the increased need.

*'The experience of the Barnardo's Welcome (Ukraine) Service has been for the Ukrainians who have used it a wonderful and vital service and much appreciated by staff of Glasgow City HSCP. The service fills the gap that cannot be filled by statutory services. For families, children and young people who are fleeing a war and coming to a strange new country this warm welcome and dedication shown by the staff of Barnardo's helps them immensely in terms of feeling welcome and coming to terms with all the changes they are experiencing.'*

– Glasgow City Council

*'The mental health of children and families has been a key priority for Edinburgh's Ukraine third sector partnership. The work of the Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has been pivotal in providing wrap around support for children and families arriving in Edinburgh displaced by the Russia's full-scale invasion. Supporting families with some of the most complex needs, the team at Barnardo's Scotland has empathetically and compassionately supported the integration of Ukrainians in communities across Edinburgh as well providing ongoing support to families being accommodated in hotels by The Scottish Government's super sponsor scheme.'*

– EVOC (Edinburgh Voluntary Organisation Council)

*'Barnardo's Welcome (Ukraine) Service have been active and informative members of Scottish Refugee Council's Integration Networks across Scotland. The Project Workers are enthusiastic in their support of young people and families and raise issues to the wider sector to raise awareness and seek further support where needed. They have actively identified and filled gaps in support, for example through the Host Workshops and the Youth Network, as well as many other groups and activities. They have provided excellent support to young people and families from Ukraine at a very challenging time in their lives.'*

– Scottish Refugee Council

*'Huge shout out to X and other staff at Barnardo's and the YMCA, they create a lovely atmosphere in the place that allow the young people to relax and have fun!'*

– Sound Lab

*'The Sound Lab team have been incredible to work with. Their enthusiasm, support and commitment to our children, young people and families have been outstanding and the positive impact on everyone's mental health and wellbeing has been unmeasurable. It has created positive socialisations between the children in the group and helped form close friendships with their peers through shared*

*interests and helped improve their confidence in using English. It has provided a distraction from the trauma they've experienced and provided much fun and laughter within the group between children and parents.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service Project Worker

*'On behalf of ScotHost we fully support the incredible work of Barnardo's Ukrainian Youth Network – a much needed network to support these young people. I look forward to ScotHost working collaboratively with Barnardo's now and in the future.'*

– SCOTHOST





Through 2022/23 the Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has worked with partners to hold events to raise awareness, listen to voices and celebrate our children, young people and parents.

The Scottish Education Information event was supported by Strathclyde University, National Centre for Languages (SCILT). At this event families came together to discuss with education specialists the Education system in Scotland, this included colleagues from the University of Strathclyde admissions team, SAAS (Students Award Agency) and colleagues from South Ayrshire EAL (English as an Additional Language) and Ukrainian support team.

The Scottish Curriculum and pedagogy for some was confusing and parents voiced that they were concerned about their children's learning and development. Many Ukrainian young people have been maintaining their Ukrainian studies online as well as undertaking their Scottish schooling, and it was important for parents to understand the impact of trauma can have on their child's mental health and wellbeing and why lessening pressure, play and downtime is necessary.

Next steps and Higher Education for young people whilst in Scotland was also at the forefront of many parents' minds wishing young people to continue to succeed and have positive destinations. The language barriers for some young people are challenging; directing parents to community support, Barnardo's Groups and other services meant parents felt that they were doing all they could to support their young people to achieve.

Parents continue to want their children to be happy and to achieve at school therefore being able to reassure parents that our education partners are committed to offering support to each child and young person was well received.

What we know from talking to the children and young people being supported by the Welcome (Ukraine) Service is school can be a safe, predictable place to socialise and make new friends, however it is also difficult for some where they feel isolated, lost and struggle to understand what is being taught due to language barriers.



## Glasgow and Renfrewshire Showcase Event

In September 2023 the Welcome Service along with a group of children, young people and parents from Glasgow and Renfrewshire were fortunate to partner with SoundLab, YMCA and CCA (centre for contemporary Arts) to put on a showcase of music and song.

Four months earlier we had a request from a young person who would like to learn to play the guitar. This set a ball rolling that took us down a path we would never imagine would end with a spectacular evening of music and song that showcased the amazing talents of our families. The rehearsals began with everyone being committed to practice and extra practice. The children and young people never cease to amaze us with their determination as they learned songs in English, discovered new talents in playing the guitar and sang us traditional songs in their mother tongue. Young people with beautiful voices held hands as they sang being accompanied by their peers who provided the backing music meant that at the end of the evening there was hardly a dry eye in the audience. However, after the nerves subsided and Thanks given, the laughter, joy and pride shone. Parents hugged each other and their children, young people high fived and complimented each other's talents and the staff all burst with pride to watch the hard work from everyone come together.

*'Thank you for providing my daughter (8) with the opportunity to learn to play the guitar, she looks forward to it each week.'*

– Parent, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service



*'I love learning guitar and teaching John some Ukrainian songs; my dad likes when I play to him on video call the Ukrainian cartoon song I have learned.'*

– Young Person, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Learning the guitar has been hard and it's sometimes confusing but I am getting better'*

– Young Person, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'Huge shout out to X and other staff at Barnardo's and the YMCA, they create a lovely atmosphere in the place that allow the young people to relax and have fun!'*

– Young Person, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome Service

*'The memories of seeing our parent's faces looking so proud watching their children on stage and then joining them is something that will remain with me always. The impact this has had is life changing and I know that when things are sad and difficult for them they will remember the feelings of being loved, cared for and celebrated and I hope that will make them feel better.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Project Worker

*'Mums came up to me and asked me if I remembered meeting them in the hotels for*

*the first time and how sad and scared they were. They then pulled sad faces which made us all laugh, before showing us jazz hands and shouting but look at us now'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Project Worker

*'It's been such a joy to be part of this work and the tutors all feel the same - lots of proud teacher moments on Wednesday eve!'*

– Sound Lab Development Co-Ordinator





*Children and young people performing at the Glasgow and Renfrewshire Showcase Event September 2023*



*Guitar ensemble*



*Choir group*



## Bright Family Futures

As highlighted, Barnardo's services support families in many different ways and our Barnardo's Works colleagues in Edinburgh and the Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service identified the need to support parents with employability. Navigating the complex world of work in a new country has many challenges and with the knowledge and skills of both services we identified what support would be beneficial to the community. The services worked together and applied to Edinburgh's Capital City Partnership and were awarded monies from the Parental Employment Support Fund 2023-2024.

**Bright Family Futures (BFF)** was developed to support New Scots parents who have been displaced to progress into employment or within employment. We deliver a range of activities tailored to individual needs, engaging with parents for a minimum of 5 hours per week. Activities combine 1-1 support, group work, ESOL and informal learning opportunities. Support is holistic and takes a multi-generational, whole family approach e.g.



two family generations from Dnipro, Ukraine. The project supports wellbeing through social/community activities, mindfulness courses, access to our counsellors/therapists and time with our project therapist. The service has been well received and continues to support parents to develop skills and confidence.



## Using our voice to campaign for national policy

### Rights and Responsibilities

Across Barnardo's Scotland we are actively working to embed the UNCRC into our work. Below are some examples in practice of how we are embedding rights into our service delivery.

If I am a refugee, I have the same rights as children born in that country. **Article 22<sup>4</sup>** of the UNCRC is about refugees. A child or young person is a refugee if they have had to leave their country to escape war, persecution or natural disaster. They have the right to special protection and help whether they have come to Scotland with other people or not.

Ensuring the rights of our children and young people are upheld has been at the forefront of all the work we have done within the service to date and in the future.

**Article 27 I have the right to have a proper house, food and clothing.** The UNCRC states that children and young people should be able to have the food and housing they need to reach their full potential.

Using our **Barnardo's Cost of Living Fund (CoL)** we have provided vouchers for suitable clothing to meet the needs of families particularly during the winter months where warm clothing and footwear was needed such as jumpers, jackets, boots etc.

Although many families had access to food within their welcome accommodation, with delays in universal credit payments it was difficult for many parents to provide snacks for their children both at home, in hotels and at



### *Barnardo's Scotland Right of the Month Competition*

school. Again we knew children still found this important. Providing parents with vouchers, meant they could purchase these items to meet their individual child's needs and preferences which was important, and this was gratefully received.

Having a 'proper home' as we know has been difficult due to the high level of families arriving. With this, we recognised the importance of providing space and this is extremely important especially for those in isolated areas and in hotel rooms/cabins with several children different ages. The Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service responded by developing groups out with these environments that were accessible safe spaces to meet together, play, make connections and where some had access to cooking facilities parents enjoyed making traditional recipes to share together.

**Article 23 If I have a disability, I have the right to special care and education.** All children and young people have the right to be safe and happy. When a child or young person has a disability, people should make sure it does not get in the way of this.

<sup>4</sup> UNCRC Article 22

In some of our localities we have met children, young people and adults who arrived in Scotland and needed specialist health support or support with disabilities. It was vital that the service liaised with appropriate universal services to ensure that the needs of these individuals were met. This does not mean signposting alone but supporting people to understand systems that they are unfamiliar with, supporting people to attend appointments and liaising with Education to ensure that correct supports can be put in place.

**Article 28 I have the right to an education.** The UNCRC says that all children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are. **Along with Article 29 I have the right to an education which develops my personality, respect for others' rights and the environment,** that a child or young person's education should help their mind, body and talents be the best they can. Having the opportunity to access Education in Scotland has been crucial to support children and young people to feel safe and settled.

We have seen our education colleagues go above and beyond to ensure that children and young people feel welcomed. However, this does not come without its challenges, with some children and young people having to move schools several times, in addition to language barriers and cultural misunderstandings meaning that some continue to feel isolated and find it difficult to form friendships. Sadly a small few have faced discrimination and bullying. Children and young people have told us that they have felt overwhelmed and anxious that they will not achieve in exams and tests. They feel conflicted between continuing their Ukrainian education and achieving in the Scottish education system. Children and young people have found what they hoped to study, harder due to their lack of English. Our group work, work with parents and our education colleagues strive to lessen these challenges by removing barriers to ensure, whilst they are in Scotland, **ALL** children and young people have the opportunity to reach their full potential.



## Engaging with Scottish Government and national policy-makers



### Ministerial Visit

On 8th March 2023 we welcomed Neil Gray, Minister with Special Responsibility for Refugees displaced from Ukraine in Stirling and hear from some of our Families, Hosts and staff. The key message of the day being 'Hope and Kindness'. Martin Crewe, Scotland Director opened the morning voicing Barnardo's ongoing commitment to those children, young people and parents displaced from Ukraine and to the Hosts who welcomed them into their homes.

### When we spoke to parents they they told us they wish to ....

- Stay connected to their own culture and language with access to books for their children but also be able to access quality English Language classes.
- Be supported to settle and understand our systems without being passed from person to person.
- Gain meaningful employment but be recognised for the skills and knowledge they bring as it has been extremely hard to have qualifications gained in Ukraine recognised in Scotland.

- Have safe, secure, cost-effective housing that they can call their home for however long they stay without the fear of being moved and with space for their children to study effectively, play and have fun.

*'Being provided with a house took too long and caused lots of stress, we now have permanent housing, and we are grateful but how can you keep living happy if you don't know where you will live after 3 years. It is hard to work and go to college, I am lucky as my older daughter helps with childcare, but we are all alone, we don't have parents and aunties and uncles to help. We all want to work!'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Parent

**Children and Young People told us** that it has been hard to make and maintain friendships in school/communities due to language barrier and cultural differences. This has resulted in some refusing to return to school along with having a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing. Young People have stated they would welcome additional support in school, i.e., translators

Young People have stated they love being in Scotland and want to thank the Scottish people for providing safe and secure environments i.e., Welcome accommodation regardless of time spent time in this accommodation, as they are aware they will have secure housing in the future. They have expressed their feelings of excitement about opportunities they have in Scotland, some of which some not have experienced for a variety of reasons in Ukraine. Overall, they wish the war would end and return to their home.

*'Help at school, I have huge concerns over education and passing exams, school have tried to be helpful by translating material but very worried about sitting exams and failing, what this means and my future.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) young person.

*'I want to go to University, but I can't plan my life as I don't know if we are allowed to stay in this country. I would concentrate on Scottish Education but I am scared that I will have to return to Ukraine so now I am trying to do both schools. If I don't get good grades, I can't continue my education and get my dream job. Everything is uncertain.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) young person

What we know about children is they see, hear and understand more than we sometimes give them credit for. 'Hope' for our children demonstrated that even at a young age they have thoughts about their own circumstances and wish these to be heard.

*'I hope that the war will end soon and I can see my father again.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) child

*'I hope to come back to live in Ukraine and don't stay in another country forever.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) child

*'Believe that I will not see nightmares anymore.'*

– Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) child

*'I hope that the war in Ukraine ends soon, my house remains indestructible and everyone defending returns home alive.'*

The round table discussions gave those attending time to explore what has gone well, what more they needed and what barriers they faced. This date had added significance being on 'International Women's Day' and given the significant numbers of women who had to seek refuge in Scotland this was not lost on those attending. One mother who had travelled from the West of Scotland commented *'On International Women's Day... We had a GIRLS day out' – visiting Stirling Castle after the event.'*

*'Thanks very much for reaching out – it really was our privilege to attend and to hear first-hand from Ukrainian guests, hosts and Barnardo's staff.'*

– Scottish Government Representative





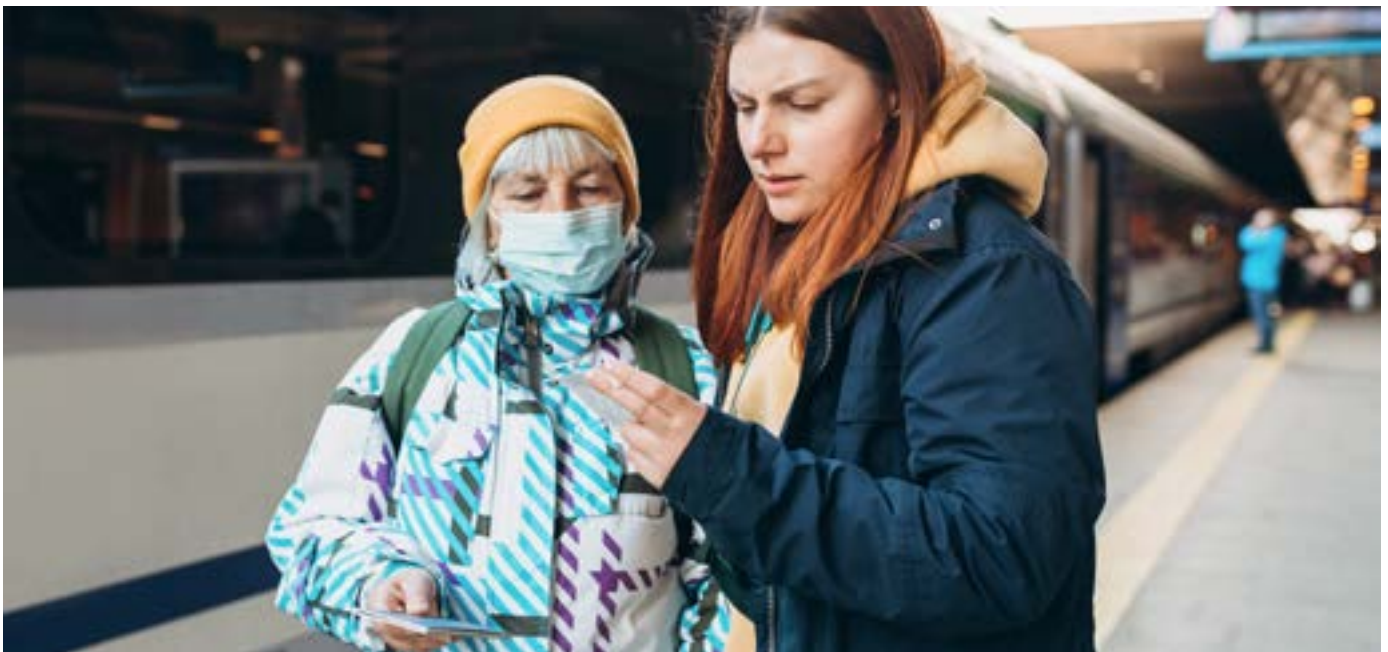
In September 2022, Barnardo's published their report **'Supporting refugees from Ukraine'**,<sup>5</sup> which set out our support for displaced families from Ukraine, including the Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service and our recommendations for the next stage of the UK Government's response. Within the policy report, our Ukraine services highlighted some stark issues to us that need addressing. This included concerns about what happens after the initial six-month period comes to an end for hosting arrangements under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Barnardo's continues to urge the UK Government to act swiftly to ensure that all families have access to long-term, safe, and suitable accommodation.

Barnardo's recently published a research report during Refugee Week, called **'A Warm Welcome'**,<sup>6</sup> which outlines a blueprint for children seeking protection in the UK. Within this we are calling for the UK government to develop a strategic plan for welcoming children, which sits under a wider strategy for refugees.

The report also explores the key components and foundations required for children to thrive during their formative years after arriving in the UK, which is backed by a coalition of charities supporting child refugees including The Refugee Council, Save the Children, Action for Children, NSPCC and the Children's Society.

Key issues reported to the Welcome Service helped to inform this policy report for example how some parents, children and young people are finding their new life in Scotland challenging. Many struggle due to language difficulties which can add barriers to many aspects of daily life and some children and young people have found it difficult to socially integrate and have reported feelings of isolation. We used these themes to develop a blueprint for supporting displaced children seeking protection in the UK, which includes 24 recommendations across government.

Barnardo's Scotland Senior Policy and Public Affairs Lead and , Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service



<sup>5</sup> <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/research/supporting-refugees-ukraine>

<sup>6</sup> A warm welcome: A blueprint for supporting displaced children | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)

Service manager attend Stakeholder Reference Group attended by Emma Roddick, Minister for Equalities, Migration and refugees. This group gives us opportunities to hear about the work of others, the Ukrainian community and highlight the vital work ensuring voices of those we serve are heard.

Additionally, Barnardo's Scotland Senior Policy & Public Affairs Lead, and Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service Children's Service manager meet monthly with staff from the Ukraine Resettlement Directorate and colleagues to ensure that particular themes or individual case discussions can be had. This has ensured that communication channels between Local Authorities, Barnardo's, Ukraine directorate and Families has been effective, swift action taken if needed and barriers if any discussed and solutions considered.

In June 2023, Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service Children's Service manager attended the Illegal Migration Bill Summit, with external partners including the Scottish Government, Scottish Refugee Council, Just Right Scotland, local authorities and third sector representatives to discuss ways the Scottish Government can protect people from the Bill's worst effects, within its devolved powers and budget.

Barnardo's have voiced concerns and in July 2023 Barnardo's CEO, Lynn Perry MBE, stated:

*'Having warned of its serious implications for the safety and protection of children, we are deeply concerned that the Illegal Migration Bill is now set to become law.*

*Not only will this Act make it legal to detain children for more than 24 hours, it will deny children the chance to put forward their case for asylum in the UK. It will also prevent some children who have been identified as victims of trafficking from receiving protection and support, including those who have suffered trauma and exploitation.*

*We urge the Government to develop a strategic plan that protects and welcomes all displaced children who have fled their homes to seek refuge in the UK.'*

More recently, Barnardo's has been asked to sit on The Regional Programme Board with key partners across all of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The Board is run by World Jewish Relief in partnership with the UK Government and The British Council to ensure the STEP Ukraine Programme remains informed of existing delivery, identify shared issues and any barriers to participation/success whilst also reviewing the complementary work of the Programme. This invitation was through recognition of Barnardo's dedicated services to this cohort.

## Learning/Reflection

Given the reach that the Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has had and its success in delivering support to the Ukrainian community across Scotland, we are in a fortunate position to be able to reflect and evaluate on both our practice and the needs of New Scots communities throughout the country. We have observed families being warmly welcomed into Scotland and hosts in the most part have stated that they have been enriched by having a positive experience where they have made friends for life. However, we are also aware of the challenges many children, young people and parents have faced and may continue to face.

We understand that when families displaced by war arrive in Scotland, they often feel bewildered, scared, and confused, however they are open to be supported and welcome this. A joined-up approach between government/s,

local authorities and the, third sector is crucial and needs to be carefully managed to reduce confusion, duplication and complication. We know that families need to feel safe and secure by having trauma informed, person centred, relationship-based set of systems and services.

We recognise the importance of offering a service that gives children, young people and families the opportunity to connect with their own community, culture and language. However, with a carefully planned approach, New Scots can be encouraged and supported to develop a sense of curiosity for Scottish culture and cross-cultural barriers, which can aid social integration and enrich the lives of everybody involved. We have strived to ensure rights are upheld and encouraged children, young people and families to have a voice in what they need whilst they settle in Scotland.



We understand that some will need ongoing support with their mental health and wellbeing. We know from children and young people who have experienced displacement due to war in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Somalia and other countries that some have found it hard to find the words to express what has happened to them, they show us through distressed behaviours and may regress, have difficulty sleeping, find it difficult to take part in activities and may struggle academically, and relationally. We recognise that our communities have wrapped around our friends from Ukraine however we are aware that as time goes on some of these children, young people and families may require more direct and targeted support to recover. We need to recognise that some parents have become lone parents and the stress and pressures this adds to all within the family as they navigate their new surroundings, culture and systems.

Although it is clear from this report how much of an impact Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has had on the Ukrainian communities across Scotland, delivering such support has not been without its challenges. Developments continue to be extremely fast paced and this has meant the service has operated at the same speed, whilst carefully identifying and addressing changing support needs. The landscape across Scotland is ever evolving and it has been imperative that our team responded to the fluctuating needs and mental health of the Ukrainian children, young people and families in a timely and appropriate manner.

Barnardo's Scotland welcomes the most recent policy paper – Warm Scots Future<sup>7</sup> from the Scottish Government which highlights that future support for those displaced from Ukraine should *'focus on trauma-informed, holistic, rights-based integration'*. The Scottish Government has made a commitment to *'ensure the specific needs of displaced children and young people are recognised and supported, along with the additional vulnerabilities of unaccompanied children and young people.'*

The ongoing challenge for families displaced from Ukraine is they continue to live with uncertainty which delays any real sense of safety, and as the three-year period approaches for some, next steps around their right to remain adds additional concern and anxiety. It will be important that families are kept informed of these next steps so they can prepare and plan their futures.

There is clearly a real need for the third sector to work alongside our partners to provide community based support to families arriving in Scotland who need practical and emotional help. Barnardo's, like many other organisations who do this work across Scotland and have done for many decades, are well placed to use their expertise in providing family support services to ensure that all New Scots and those seeking sanctuary have appropriate support.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/warm-scots-future-policy-position-paper/documents/>



## Conclusion

This report is only a snapshot of the breadth of work the Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has undertaken since 2022. Whilst we have no control over the circumstances which may bring children, young people and families to Scotland, we are able to contribute to the care, support and warm welcome they receive in order for New Scots to thrive and succeed. There is no doubt that the displaced people and community from Ukraine continue to feel Scotland's warm welcome and that Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service has played a pivotal role in improving the mental health and wellbeing of those in our care.

However ongoing support is essential if the long-term impact of trauma is to be reduced and children, young people and parents have the opportunity to recover, build resilience and flourish.

The learning over the last 15 months has been invaluable and puts us in a very fortunate

position to be skilled and equipped to be able to support all displaced children, young people and families as well as those arriving unaccompanied.

Our learning has allowed us to reflect and consider the gap in the need for family support and for all New Scots families, as well as all unaccompanied children who come to Scotland to seek safety and sanctuary. Their needs although different for some, are not dissimilar to those displaced from Ukraine.

Children and young people from all around the world need space to play, the chance to build trusting relationships, to feel safe and secure and have the opportunity to learn and reach their full potential. Parents wish their children to thrive in a country where they can have new experiences. Barnardo's Welcome Service will continue to offer those families the support they need when they need it most.





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All images are posed by models. Names have been changed to protect identities.

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