

Please quote:
Your reference:
Date: 30th March 2016
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Office of Amber Rudd MP,
Swallow House,
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East Sussex,
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Dear Amber,

[REDACTED] at the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration, has contacted me following your letter of 3rd March 2016 to [REDACTED] regarding Syrian refugee resettlement. Having spoken with [REDACTED] I thought it might be helpful if I advised you of the latest position in East Sussex.

In principle, the local authorities across East Sussex have indicated a willingness to assist between 200 – 260 Syrian refugees over a 5 year period. The figure reflects the collective view that East Sussex should meet its fair share of the 20,000 commitment made by the Prime Minister.

Broadly speaking, East Sussex makes up about 1% of the total population of the UK, and 1% of 20,000 equates to 200 people. This would mean each of the District Authorities accommodating 40 refugees over the 5 year period. However, Peter Chowney, the Leader of Hastings Borough Council has made a commitment to increase this to 100 within Hastings. Therefore, the total figure is 260.

Across East Sussex, the Leaders and Chief Executives of the County and District Councils have agreed we should adopt a co-ordinated and joined-up approach to resettlement. We understand that the government has met its target of resettlement of 1000 Syrians prior to Christmas and is now looking at ways in which transfers can be streamlined for the remaining.

We are not at this time expecting any further guidance to be issued from central government and understand that refugees will only be flown in to the Country once accommodation is available and suitable arrangements are in place for their support.

The availability of private rented accommodation within local housing allowance limits is a challenge, and makes it more difficult to make the government funding package work - few private rented homes are available at or below the local housing allowance, which leaves a gap between the rent paid by the government, and the actual rent we'd have to pay. Collectively across East Sussex, we are looking at how best we can secure suitable accommodation, and perhaps maximise philanthropic offers from property owners. We are committed to accepting 100 refugees in Hastings however, and look forward to welcoming them here.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

We are however dependent on appropriate support services beyond the borough council being in place, which will be gearing over Spring. It would be our intention to take refugees as soon as the appropriate package of inter-agency services and accommodation is in place.

Yours sincerely,


Andrew Palmer,
Assistant Director,
Housing & Built Environment.

