

Please quote:
Your reference:
Date: 10 August 2016
Please ask for: Andrew Palmer
Telephone direct: 01424 451316
E-mail: apalmer@hastings.gov.uk
Web: www.hastings.gov.uk



**Assistant Director,
Housing and Built Environment**
Aquila House, Breeds Place
Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3UY

Office of Amber Rudd MP,
Swallow House,
Theaklen Drive,
St. Leonards-on-Sea,
East Sussex,
TN38 9AZ

Dear Amber

Further to my letter to you of 16 March, I can now confirm that Hastings Borough Council is the lead for East Sussex in respect of the Syrian Refugee Programme (SRP). All four Districts and the County Council agreed to develop and co-ordinate a County-wide approach to resettling vulnerable Syrian people under the SRP.

We fully understand the pressing need to resettle people as quickly as possible and have advised the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration (SESPM) that we aim to take the first households in October.

We have recently created a temporary full-time officer post to co-ordinate and support the District and Borough Councils across East Sussex with the arrival of the first households. The post is actually split between one part-time Project Manager and one part-time Support Worker. We aim to continue this for at least 6 months so as to inform an assessment of whether additional resources will be needed in the future.

We believe that it is imperative to have a strong network of support in place and have been working closely with the SESPM and making links with other local authorities who have already resettled people under the SRP. We recently hosted a South East regional event on behalf of SESPM, which included presentations from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who have a lead role in preparing households for their resettlement; and will be hosting another similar event in September. We have established an Operational Working Group, bringing together representatives from across key service agencies across East Sussex, which include Health, Education and the Police.

As I previously outlined, we still have concerns around sourcing privately-rented accommodation, particularly due to the growing gap between Local Housing Allowance rates and market rent. We are however developing strong links with local faith-based organisations and community groups in support of our targets.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Palmer", written in a cursive style.

ANDREW PALMER
Assistant Director - Housing & Built Environment