

Syrian Refugees – Landlord proposal

Mendip District Council is supporting the national Vulnerable Persons Scheme - part of the government's response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria. **The council is looking to house two Syrian refugee families in the Frome area.** Below are details of what they will be entitled to:

- ❖ A package of support will be in place for each family, including interpreters and an appointed Family Support Worker to help the families settle in and become integrated. The package is funded by the government.
- ❖ A key part of this package is the provision of accommodation so the families can settle safely into their new environment. **The Council is therefore looking for landlords willing to rent two properties to Syrian refugees.**
- ❖ As part of the government funding **the Council will pay for the upfront costs** of the formation of a new tenancy, including deposits, costs for inventories, setting up of new tenants, the transfer of tenancy etc. This list is not limited by description and the Council is happy to discuss any additional costs that may occur as part of the process.
- ❖ The Council is looking for landlords willing to agree **a minimum one year tenancy** with the refugees being the tenants. It recognises that housing benefit claims are unlikely to cover the current market potential of the tenancy and has committed to making up the shortfall between the local housing allowance and the average market rate **for two or three bed properties.** The proportion of rent payable through housing benefit will be paid direct to the landlord.
- ❖ The exact date of the refugees' arrival has not yet been confirmed. The Council recognises it would be unreasonable to ask landlords to hold a property pending the refugees arrival, therefore **the Council will pay the landlord the lost rental income if they agree to hold a property** and is willing to discuss contributing to any other identified costs that might fall on the landlord during this time.
- ❖ The refugees will have **support from statutory agencies** to help their resettlement, and will also have local support from Frome's Syrian Refugee Support Group, both on arrival and over the longer term. This will help establish a secure and reliable tenancy.

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