



Media Release

Stirling bids farewell to refugee children from Ukraine

Stirling has bid a fond farewell to the children from Ukraine who have been staying in the area after fleeing the devastating war in their homeland.

Young people and adults from children's homes in Ukraine have had temporary refuge in Callander for the past three weeks following a request to Stirling Council from charity Dnipro Kids.

Suitable accommodation and other key supports for the children were put in place in a matter of days thanks to the extraordinary efforts of Council staff, with the support of key local partners, including NHS Forth Valley and Police Scotland, and volunteers from local businesses.

During their stay, the children and the adults were supported with their health and wellbeing and took part in a range of activities including swimming, cycling, bowling, soft play, crafts and fishing.

Along with visiting local beauty spots, the group also enjoyed a boat trip on Loch Katrine and visits to Blair Drummond Safari Park and Stirling Castle. Traditional Scottish entertainment was provided by Doune Pipe Band and local folk musicians who delivered Country Dancing lessons.

The children are now moving to accommodation in Edinburgh, with Stirling Council working alongside its counterparts in the capital to ensure a smooth transition.

Stirling Council Chief Executive Carol Beattie, who addressed the group at a farewell event, said: "Given the terrible trauma experienced by the children and adults in fleeing Ukraine, we hope the last three weeks in Callander have been an opportunity for them to have some space, sanctuary and respite.

"We were delighted to welcome the group to Stirling and there was an incredible collective effort to quickly put the arrangements in place to ensure they had everything they needed.

"I would also like to pay a heartfelt tribute our dedicated staff and our public sector partners who rose to the challenge magnificently to deliver such high-quality support and care to the children and young people.

"I also need like to thank the people of Callander and our other communities for their warm welcome to the children and adults and the incredible offers of support. The generosity and kindness from residents, organisations and businesses has really been overwhelming and a reminder of the fantastic community spirit across Stirling.

"Finally, on behalf of everyone at Stirling Council, I would like to wish the Ukrainian children and adults peace, love and happiness as they move on to Edinburgh.

"Stirling will continue to support people displaced by the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine."

Steven Carr, Chairman of Dnipro Kids, said: "We're very grateful to Stirling Council for the hard work and dedication they've shown to the group these past few weeks. We couldn't have asked for more.

"We'd also like to pay tribute to the local community for the many kindnesses shown, and for the warmth of the welcome given."