

# Welcome

To the Royal Borough of Kingston  
upon Thames



## New Arrivals Welcome Pack



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
**KINGSTON**  
UPON THAMES





## Dear Friend

I write to welcome you on behalf of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

Our beautiful borough has a very diverse community. We welcome and celebrate people from all over the world.

As a borough, we will do all that we can to provide you with support while you are here.

A welcome pack has been put together to help you access information and support as you arrive.

We know there is a lot of information here. You can see it as a guidebook for helping you adapt to life in Kingston. Take a look at the contents page to find the sections most useful to you.

With warmest regards

*Yogan Yoganathan*

**Councillor Yogan Yoganathan MBE**

**Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames**



# REFUGEE ACTION KINGSTON

Welcome to Kingston and the UK,

We know this will be a moment of very mixed emotions for you, but we want to let you know that Refugee Action Kingston (RAK) is here to help as part of your new journey and helping you while you are in Kingston.

We are a charity that has supported those seeking asylum for over 30 years, by providing support to help you with the things you need the most.

Our services include [appointment based] :

- Legal advice
- Counselling
- English language
- Housing, health and education
- Access to clothing and other essential items
- Linking you to other opportunities and activities in Kingston
- Walk and Talk activities (every Monday morning 11.00am-12.00pm). Outside Kingston Library, Fairfield Road
- Walk-in at St John's Church, Grove Lane, KT1 2SU (every Wednesday Morning 10-12)

We hope to meet you in person soon, but if you need to contact us, please call 020 8547 0115 or visit us on the Ground Floor of Siddeley House, 50 Canbury Park Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT2 6LX.

We're here for you,

**Bassam Mahfouz**, Director, Refugee Action Kingston

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## How to learn English

Refugee Action Kingston can arrange for you to have an English language assessment. This will help us to arrange an English course that is suitable for your needs. To find out more about their face-to-face and online free classes and their 'Walk and Talk' activity in the park, you can call them on 0208 547 0115 or email them at [admin@refugeeactionkingston.org.uk](mailto:admin@refugeeactionkingston.org.uk).

You can also visit their website at [www.refugeeactionkingston.org.uk](http://www.refugeeactionkingston.org.uk)

## Getting healthcare

Healthcare in the UK is provided by the National Health Service, known as the NHS. It is free for most services. You may have to pay for some services such as prescriptions and dental care.

You can access the following services for free:

- Family doctors, called General Practitioners (GPs)
- Hospitals
- Maternity services

The NHS helps those who need medical treatment. They can also help with lots of other things, including:

- Contraception
- Family planning
- Healthy eating
- Mental health

## What is my GP?

Your 'GP' is your main point of contact at the NHS. 'GP' stands for General Practitioner. They are also known as family doctors.

GPs are highly skilled doctors who are trained in all aspects of general medicine. They can provide you with advice about your health. They can also get you in touch with specialist doctors.

## How to register with a doctor

To see a doctor you need to register with a practice. A doctor's practice is usually a clinic or medical facility.

To find your nearest practice, use this link: [bit.ly/Find-GP](https://bit.ly/Find-GP)

Once you have found your local GP's details, you need to contact them. They will help you to register.

To register you, they will ask for personal details. This includes your name, your date of birthday, and your phone number. They may also ask to see proof of your identity and proof of your address. If you do not have either of these, they cannot refuse to register you.

Please discuss your registration with a GP with the Kingston Integration Welcome Team if you need help registering.

## How to book an appointment

To see a GP or nurse, you need to book an appointment. You can do this by ringing your doctor's office ('GP Practice').

You can ask to see a male or female GP or nurse and your GP surgery will do their best to accommodate this. Your surgery may offer you a telephone appointment initially.

You may have to wait a few days for a non-urgent appointment.

If you think you need to speak to the doctor urgently, tell the receptionist that you need an emergency appointment. They will try to see you that day. If the GP thinks you are too ill to come to the surgery, they may visit you at home.

GP appointments are usually 10 minutes long. You must make a separate appointment for each family member as the GP or nurse will only be able to see one patient in each appointment. Please make sure you arrive on time for your appointment or cancel it if you are unable to attend.

If you need support to register with a doctor (GP), you can make an appointment with one of our advisors by emailing [ukraine@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:ukraine@kingston.gov.uk)

## How to book an interpreter for your appointment

If you need an interpreter you must tell the receptionist when you make the appointment.

Tell the staff which language you speak and they will book an interpreter for you or get an interpreter on the phone.

It is important that you and the doctor understand each other so that they can make an accurate diagnosis of your problem.

You will not be charged if you require an interpreter.

Everything discussed in the consultation is confidential including anything discussed in the presence of an interpreter.

## What to do if your GP surgery is closed

If your GP surgery is closed and it is not an emergency, for example a minor illness or injury (cuts, sprains, or rashes), you can visit a walk-in health centre, minor injuries unit or urgent care centre.

Visit this link to find your nearest health centre: [bit.ly/Find-Walk-In](https://bit.ly/Find-Walk-In)

This card outlines that everyone in England is entitled to register and receive treatment from a GP practice, without providing proof of address or ID.

**NHS**

**I have the right to register and receive treatment from a GP practice**

I do not need a fixed address.  
I do not need identification.  
Anyone in England can see a GP.

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**NHS**

If I have any problems I can call 0300 311 2233  
If I need more information I can visit [www.nhs.uk/register](https://www.nhs.uk/register)

- I may need help filling in forms.
- I may need help reading and understanding.
- I would like to speak to someone confidentially.



## Accessing medication from the pharmacy

Your GP may want you to take medicines and will write you a prescription. Take your prescription to the pharmacy or chemist. You may need to pay for your medicine.

The pharmacist can also give free advice on treating minor health problems, such as colds and coughs.

You can buy some medicines from the pharmacy without a prescription, including some painkillers and cough medicines; however, you will have to pay for these medicines.

## Support while you are pregnant

If you are pregnant, there are services you can attend for support. When you register with a doctor, they will be able to advise you and put you in touch with a midwife. They will be able to offer you courses to support you.

There are a number of services you can access in Kingston. These include:

- Babycare courses
- Local children centres
- Parent support groups
- Free baby clothes and equipment from Growbaby. Visit [www.growbaby.org](http://www.growbaby.org)
- A 'Health Visiting Service' that provides advice for parents and carers of children aged 0-5 years. You can speak to the service if you are worried about your child.

Visit the Connected Kingston website to find out more about these support services.

For support when you are expecting a baby:

[www.connectedkingston.uk/services/expecting-a-new-baby](http://www.connectedkingston.uk/services/expecting-a-new-baby)

For support when you have a newborn baby:

[www.connectedkingston.uk/services/support-for-0-5-year-olds](http://www.connectedkingston.uk/services/support-for-0-5-year-olds)

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Many people in Kingston and the UK are still catching coronavirus. Help us to stop people from getting sick by following the below health advice.

- Get vaccinated
- Meet people outside when you can
- Open a window if you meet people indoors
- Wear a face covering in crowded and indoor spaces
- Stay at home if you are unwell
- Wash your hands regularly with soap

## Coronavirus vaccination

You are eligible for a free COVID-19 vaccination through the NHS. You do not have to pay. Visit: [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine) to book an appointment.

## Dental Care

You normally have to pay for dental care in the UK. In the following cases, it will be free.

- If you are under the age of 18
- If you are pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months. You will need a certificate to show in this case.
- Some treatments are free, such as removing stitches or repairing dentures.

You need to register at a dentist surgery. Find your nearest dentist surgery: [www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-Dentist](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-Dentist)

If you require urgent dental care either:

- Call your dentist
- Call NHS 111
- If it is an emergency go to your nearest hospital with an Accident & Emergency (A&E) department

## What should I do if I am sick or in an emergency?

You can call **999** (free phone) in an emergency for these services:

- Ambulance
- Fire
- Police

If you or a family member has an accident or a sudden serious illness you should go to your nearest hospital with an A&E department which is free for everyone.

Your local Accident & Emergency hospital is:

Kingston Hospital

Galsworthy Road, KT2 7QB

Website: [www.kingstonhospital.nhs.uk](http://www.kingstonhospital.nhs.uk)

Email: [khft.pals@nhs.net](mailto:khft.pals@nhs.net)

Tel: 020 8546 7711



## Non-emergency

You can also get medical help for health problems that cannot wait by calling the NHS non-emergency number, 111.

This is a free service operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can also go online [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)  
(for assessment of people aged 5 and over only).

You will be asked for some details, such as your name and address.  
If you do not speak English, you will need to either request an interpreter in English at the beginning of the call, or ask a friend or relative to make the call for you to ask for an interpreter.

### **Reporting non-emergency crimes:**

To report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response, please call **101**. You can also report an incident by visiting [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

### **What to do if you are concerned about the welfare of a child:**

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child, call 0208 547 5008.

If you need to speak to someone urgently after hours or at the weekend, call the 'Out of Hours' team on 0208 770 5000.

Call 999 if you think a child or young person is in immediate danger.

## **What to do if you are concerned about the welfare of an adult:**

If you are worried about your own safety or the safety of another person, please contact Kingston Council's Access and Safeguarding Team on:

Telephone: 0208 547 5005.

Email: [safeguarding@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@kingston.gov.uk)

This service operates Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

### **Red Cross**

To get support as a refugee

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee>

### **All Saints Church in Kingston**

From 11am-12pm on Monday to Saturday mornings a group of trained listeners is available if there is something you want to talk about in confidence.

Address: 14-16 Market Place, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1JP

### **Mind in Kingston**

Mind provides counselling for adults aged 18 years and over who have moderate mental health issues e.g. depression, anxiety, panic attacks.

Please call 020 8255 3939 or go to [www.mindinkingston.org.uk](http://www.mindinkingston.org.uk)

### **Kingston iCope**

This service provides a range of short-term, psychological therapies including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (known as 'CBT') and counselling. Support can be accessed in a range of different ways, such as face-to-face, telephone, group-based courses and online help.

Please call 0203 317 7850 or go to [www.icope.nhs.uk/kingston](http://www.icope.nhs.uk/kingston)

## **Samaritans**

If you are struggling and wish to speak to somebody, you can talk to a trained volunteer at Samaritans by calling their free contact number 116 123. You can reach a volunteer 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

[www.samaritans.org/branches/kingston-upon-thames](http://www.samaritans.org/branches/kingston-upon-thames)

## **Free counselling from Refugee Action Kingston**

Refugee Action Kingston provides free counselling services. You can register by emailing [admin@refugeeactionkingston.org.uk](mailto:admin@refugeeactionkingston.org.uk). You will be assessed and may be referred on to other appropriate agencies if needed.

## **Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls**

If you are frightened of your partner or frightened for your children, support is available.

## **Kingston Domestic Violence Hub**

The Kingston Domestic Violence Hub (DV Hub) provides free, confidential, non-judgmental and independent support to anyone who is experiencing domestic violence. For more information see

[www.kingston.gov.uk/domestic-sexual-violence](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/domestic-sexual-violence)

The Kingston DV Hub can be contacted by phone 0208 547 6046 or email [kingstondvhub@refuge.org.uk](mailto:kingstondvhub@refuge.org.uk) Monday to Friday, 9am - 5.30pm.

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline offers support outside of these hours:

Freephone 24-Hour: 0808 2000 247

[www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk)

## **Kingston One Stop Shop**

The Kingston One Stop Shop is a walk-in service for anyone experiencing domestic abuse to access specialist support. The One Stop Shop runs every Monday from 9:30 - 12:30pm at the Women's Hub, KingsGate Church, 161A Clarence Street, KT1 1QT.

## Racism and Discrimination

In the UK it is illegal to treat anyone differently because of their gender, race, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation.

Racism is unacceptable in the UK. It is a serious offence to injure, harass or verbally abuse someone because of their race or to damage their property for that reason.

It is also against the law to stir up racial hatred. It is unacceptable to discriminate against another person because of their race, ethnicity or where they came from. You should not be treated any differently because of your race when applying for a job, looking for somewhere to live, using the National Health Service (NHS) or just buying something in a shop.

You should not experience racial harassment at work, school or in public (where other people make comments about your race or where you come from that are offensive or make you uncomfortable).

If you or someone you know is the victim of racism, report it to the authorities by:

- Calling 101
- Calling 999 in an emergency
- Report it online at: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Going to the police station in person

Do not try to deal with racism or racist attackers on your own. Get the authorities involved. If you try to resolve it on your own you could get hurt or even get into trouble with the police yourself.



## Education

Education for children is free and compulsory. In England, children must be in education from age 5 years to 16 years and individuals aged 16 to 18 must be in either full-time education or work (with an educational component).

You can find information about schools in Kingston and how to apply for a place for your child at: [www.kingston.gov.uk/schools-education](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/schools-education)

If you have any questions or difficulties with school registration, please make an appointment with Refugee Action Kingston.

**Telephone: 0208 547 0115**

### **Nursery education and childcare**

Between the ages of 3 and 4 years, children can get free early education. Some 2-year-olds are also eligible. Early education can be taken at a nursery or with a childminder.

For information about nursery education and other childcare information, please visit [bit.ly/Childcare-Info](http://bit.ly/Childcare-Info)

**Family Information Service:** The Families Information Service can offer information about childcare, support groups and gives advice to parents, parents-to-be and carers on how to get childcare funding for young children. They can be contacted by sending an email to [fis@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:fis@achievingforchildren.org.uk). For more information, please visit this website: <https://bit.ly/3RQYcHx>

### **Primary education (Age 5-11)**

Primary education is free. Information about the primary, infant and junior

schools in the borough and how to apply for a place your child can be found at

[www.kingston.gov.uk/schools-education/changing-school-year/1](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/schools-education/changing-school-year/1)

You can contact the School Admissions team by email at [kingston.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:kingston.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

### **Secondary education (Age 11-16)**

Secondary education is free. Information about the secondary schools in the borough and how to apply for a place for your child can be found at

[www.kingston.gov.uk/schools-education/changing-school-year/1](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/schools-education/changing-school-year/1)

You can contact the School Admissions team by email at [kingston.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:kingston.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

### **Post 16 years Education**

Kingston College offers full time and part time courses for young people aged 16 years and over. It offers an extensive range of courses to suit all learners in a variety of subject areas. You can find more information on their website at: [bit.ly/Kingston-College](http://bit.ly/Kingston-College). Visit [ucas.com](http://ucas.com) to find out about the UK's universities.

### **Keeping fit, active and social and volunteering opportunities:**

We have lots of free and low cost activities in Kingston to help you stay fit and well and meet other people. **Connected Kingston** is a website dedicated to helping people find activities, join clubs, volunteer and navigate local services in Kingston.

Visit [www.connectedkingston.uk](http://www.connectedkingston.uk) to find out more.

## Libraries in Kingston

There are seven public libraries in Kingston. They are in Hook, Kingston, New Malden, Old Malden, Surbiton, Tolworth and Tudor Drive. You can find them at [www.kingston.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/libraries).

We also have an online offer and home delivery service. Most people live within walking distance of a library, so please come in and have a look!

**Our library service is free to use and open to all residents of all ages.**

- Borrow books and other resources
- Use a computer and free wifi
- We have a children's area with books for all ages
- We have events and activities at our libraries and online

Through our online library, we also have newspapers and magazines from across the world. You can also get free eBooks and audiobooks.

Find out more on our website: [www.kingston.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/libraries)

Visit your local library or email [libraries@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:libraries@kingston.gov.uk).

## Events and attractions in London

Timeout is a website that will tell you all about the latest events and activities in London. Visit [www.timeout.com/london](http://www.timeout.com/london)

Visit London has a list of the top 10 attractions in London: [bit.ly/Visit-London-Attractions](http://bit.ly/Visit-London-Attractions)

Visit Britain is the official tourism website of Great Britain. It will give you an overview of the main attractions and events in the UK: [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com)

## Things to do in Kingston

Kingston is a beautiful part of London with plenty of activities, cultural attractions and more. Find the latest in Kingston: [www.inkingston.co.uk/thingstodo](http://www.inkingston.co.uk/thingstodo)



*Kingston-upon-Thames riverside*

Activities with children: [bit.ly/Kingston-Activities](http://bit.ly/Kingston-Activities)

## Transport in Kingston and London

Journey planning across London is easy using Transport for London's [journey planner](#). It gives you options for walking, cycling and cycle hire, as well as public transport.

Visit: [www.tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey)

There are several apps available for tracking bus times, for example [London Live Bus Countdown](#).

The easiest way to pay for public transport in London is to get an Oyster Card.

Paying for public transport in London is cheapest and quickest by using an [Oystercard](#).

You can pick one up from most stations. Visit: [oyster.tfl.gov.uk](http://oyster.tfl.gov.uk)



The Kingston Council website also has information about local walking routes and public transport. Visit [www.kingston.gov.uk/publictransportandwalking](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/publictransportandwalking)

## **Nationwide travel**

For national trains or buses, tickets are usually much cheaper if bought in advance.

You can check out the national express website where you can book coach journeys to travel from one city or town to another. But, we advise that you inform your housing manager if you will be travelling for an overnight stay. You can view the website here: <https://www.nationalexpress.com/en> .

Times and ticket prices vary across the UK. You can find out more information on the national rail website: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) or in your local train or bus station.

## Legal advice

### Civil Legal Advice

Civil Legal Advice (CLA) is a national advice service for England and Wales, funded by legal aid. You can ask for a free translation service if English is not your first language, and even request a free call back.

They can refer you to a local service if needed. For example, if you need representation at court.

You can contact Civil Legal Advice on: 0845 345 4 345.  
Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, Saturday, 9am to 12:30pm  
[www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice](http://www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice)

You can also contact Citizens Advice Kingston on 02031660953 or email them [using this form](#) for information and advice.