

Edinburgh Councillor blogs – Councillor Alex Lunn

✘ As many of you will know The City of Edinburgh Council agreed to take part in the UK Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

I was delighted that Edinburgh's participation in the scheme enjoyed all-party support in the City Chambers and was also warmly received by the citizens of Edinburgh. We now have 100 refugees living in Edinburgh.

I can't imagine the horrific situation these people found themselves in. I am glad that they are now enjoying the safety of this city, country and its people. The refugees will certainly have noticed how cold Edinburgh is, and despite the warm welcome they have received it is hard to imagine they will not have been taken aback by the icy cold winds and erratic, if consistent, rain we experience at this time of year.

The council has been inundated by offers of help from concerned citizens. Just from my own ward we have had offers of help with clothing, food and even offers of tuition. Anyone who would like to help please contact me alex.lunn@edinburgh.gov.uk or your councillor and we will make sure you are guided to the right person.

Getting Edinburgh into the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme fell to the council's Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee. Working with council colleagues from various departments (and enjoying all-party support) a great deal of work has gone into making sure the refugees have the best possible start to life in Edinburgh.

My one regret is that we are unable to help more people. The UK Government has made a commitment to take in twenty thousand

refugees over the next five years. This is not enough and I believe greatly underestimates this country and its people.

We are caring folk and when we see our fellow human beings in trouble we want to help. That is why so many citizens in Edinburgh have offered to help and that is why I think the UK government should reevaluate its intake target.

It can and has done this once already. The original number the UK government wanted to take in was nowhere near twenty thousand. The Prime Minister increased the number in response to the humanitarian crisis. He should do so again. It's the human thing to do.

Councillor Alex Lunn

SNP Councillor for Craigentiny / Duddingston

Vice Convenor Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee

City Chambers | Level 10 | High Street | Edinburgh | EH1 1YJ |

Tel: 0131 529 4956 | Email: alex.lunn@edinburgh.gov.uk