**Support workers open their heart and home to Ukrainian refugees**

***Families find refuge in Morton – leaving loved ones behind***

***(30th March 2022)* From Gloucestershire to Lincolnshire and beyond Ambient Support staff across the country have stepped up to support the people of Ukraine in their hour of need. In the village of Morton, Lincs staff at Springfields and Brambles supported living services, have not only been helping by organising collections but two team members have gone a step further by opening up their homes to welcome Ukrainian families via the Government’s sponsorship scheme.**

The two services, which are next door to each provide care and support for up to 12 people with a learning disability and have a combined 18 employees. Team Leader at the services, Andrea Woodcock, has been organising collections with all 18 employees getting on board to donate what they can and asking friends and families to get help too.

Donations are sent to Ambient Support’s regional head-office in Grantham, where it is then distributed to recognised charities. Items include toiletries, sanitary aid, nappies, pet food, tinned food, clothes, and paracetamol.

**Andrea Woodcock, Team Leader at Ambient Support, says:**

*“Our staff teams at Springfields and Brambles work very closely together, and we have a lot of support for each other. We don’t see our work as a job, it’s a vocation and we are incredibly passionate what we do and the people we support. We’re in care roles because we want to help and support people who can’t do it for themselves, so our instinct is to want to help others and the people in Ukraine need our help and as much support as they can get, and we can give. Seeing the devasting effects of the War has been heart-breaking and we have all wanted to do something to help.”*

The two support worker’s at Springfields, Julie Houldershaw and Sandra Tilley are going a step further by welcoming refuges into their homes.

Julie and husband, Gary, are sponsoring a Ukrainian mother and her 7-year-old-boy. Once the visa application is passed, the Ukrainian mother and son will leave their current place in Poland and fly to the UK to live with Julie and Gary for 6 months.

Sandra is hoping to keep the family close by sponsoring the boys Aunt and is waiting to hear news about her application.

**Julie, who hopes to collect the family from Stansted airport imminently says:**

*“Watching the horrors of the War unfold has been extremely distressing. We have three grown-up daughters who have flown the nest and a four-bedroom house, so we have plenty of space to be able to help.*

*“We have spoken to the family via Zoom and it’s very emotional. What they are doing is courageous, leaving loved ones behind, coming to a new country and not being able to speak the language.*

*“We want to give them a safe roof over their heads, food and security and emotional support. The mother doesn’t speak English, so we are trying to find local lessons for her. We hope to give them a chance of a new life.*

*“Everyone at Ambient Support has really come together to support and help each other and we’re collectively doing what we can.*

*“Sandra speaks Russian and has been integral in helping us communicate with the family and will be coming with me to collect the mother and son from the airport next week.*

*“It’s the first thing I think about when I wake up and the last thing I think about before going to sleep and I would like to think that someone would help me and my family if I were in the same situation.”*

**Chief Executive of Ambient Support, Mark Milton says:**

*“It is incredibly humbling to see how our support workers go above and beyond to help those who have been forced to flee their homeland and to leave loved ones behind. I am extremely proud that our staff are helping communities beyond their own and am inspired by their generosity.”*

Ambient Support is a registered UK charity with over 25 years’ experience in providing care and support services for older people, people with a mental health need and people with a learning disability. Ambient believe that everyone is unique, and they should be able to lead valued lives in their communities, treated with dignity and respect no matter their age, health condition or disability.

**Image captions:** *Julie Houldersaw is sponsoring a Ukrainian mother and her 7-year-old-boy*

**Ambient Support team hard at work packing donations. Left to right:**

*Julie Houldersaw (Support Worker) Christine Short (tenant) Chloe Hall (Support Worker), Debbie Wilkins and Laura Jackson (Staffing Lead)*

***~ENDS~***

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**Notes to Editors**

**About Ambient Support:** [www.ambient.org.uk](http://www.ambient.org.uk) @ambientsupport

* One of the Top 20 generic Not-For-Profit Health & Social Care Providers in the UK, Ambient Support (formerly known as Heritage Care and Community Options) is a registered UK charity with over 25 years’ experience
* They deliver services that meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable adults in society. Operating in over 130 locations, they provide over 30 thousand hours of care to people on a weekly basis to support a range of needs due to the ageing process, learning disability or mental illness
* Their wide range of quality specialist services are delivered by dedicated, professional, and passionate staff and their success is built on supporting people to live a full and meaningful life
* Latest results from Ambient Support’s 2021- Satisfaction Survey show: 97% of people supported in Learning Disability services said Ambient have helped to make their life better, 95% are happy with the support Ambient give them and 94% of relatives and friends said their loved one is safely supported by Ambient.
In Mental Health Services 93% said that staff believe in their wellbeing and recovery, 91% of people said they knew how to provide feedback or make a complaint and 89% report being given information and support to make choices
In services for Older People, 98% report being treated with kindness, dignity and respect and 97% of relatives agree, 91% of friends and relatives report that their loved one’s life has got better since Ambient started supporting them and 97% said that they are happy with the care and support they receive
* Ambient currently employs around 1,325 people across the UK in a number of settings
* Ambient can also help young adults who are transitioning from Children’s to Adult Learning Disability Services
* The Charity has an above industry average with 88% Registered Services rated as Outstanding and GOOD by CQC.