



RESETTLED FAMILIES

Refugee families who feel they cannot return home or their current living conditions are too difficult, can apply to the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) to be resettled to another country that can offer them a better chance of rebuilding their lives.

The UK Government partners with UNHCR to identify the most vulnerable people around the world, and they prioritise those who cannot be supported effectively in their region of origin. This includes women and children at risk, people in severe need of medical care and survivors of torture and violence amongst others.

Until recently, the scheme focused on resettling people who were displaced by the Syrian conflict, and living in camps and cities in the countries bordering Syria. The resettlement scheme is now broadening to include refugees across the world, in response to world events and the global context. For 2021 - 2022, we anticipate that the majority of resettled families will continue to be from Syria or the MENA region.

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP GROUPS

Community Sponsorship Groups come in all shapes and sizes. There are more than 250 Community Sponsorship groups across the UK. Some are long-established groups, such as faith institutions, colleges or workplaces. Others began as a group of friends with a common interest. Some are groups of neighbours who had never met before but came together through their shared desire to transform the life of a vulnerable refugee family.

Community Sponsorship groups apply to the UK Home Office to be matched with a refugee family that is in urgent need of resettlement. They welcome their new neighbours at the airport and bring them to their new home, which they'll have furnished and stocked with food. Over the next year, they will walk beside the family as they navigate the local community, register with local services, learn English, find work, make friends, and rebuild their lives.

[Become a Community Sponsor today.](#)





[Reset](#) is the UK's Community Sponsorship Learning Hub. They receive funding from the Home Office and philanthropic organisations.

They were set up in 2018 to coordinate the growth of the Community Sponsorship movement across the UK in order that it could realise its full, transformative potential. They deliver training that all sponsorship groups must attend before welcoming a family.

Their work has 4 key strands:

- Training and support for sponsors and sponsored refugees
- Advice for Local Authorities, Lead Sponsors and other stakeholders
- Research, monitoring and evaluation aimed at understanding how Community Sponsorship works best
- Policy development and advocacy to ensure the evolution of the scheme in a way that works for sponsored refugees and host communities



[UNHCR](#), the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. UNHCR work in host countries to identify the most vulnerable refugees and refer them to the UK and other countries for resettlement.



[IOM UK](#) has been facilitating the resettlement of refugees to the UK since 2004. They provide individuals and families with pre-departure and travel assistance, including health assessments, provision of travel documents and visas, pre-departure orientation and operational and/or medical escorts, before refugees are helped to settle in communities across the UK by local authorities and NGOs. They also offer [cultural awareness training to Community sponsorship groups](#)



"Ghofran, making breakfast, heard shouting; Ismael leapt out of bed with the news. 'It was the UN lady!', he told her. UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency, had facilitated their resettlement to England. It was a stroke of fortune they scarcely dared believe." [Read more here](#)

HOME OFFICE

The Home Office Resettlement, Asylum Support & Integration team are responsible for managing the Community Sponsorship scheme. The Home Office:

- Design the policy and procedures of Community Sponsorship
- Screen and approve refugees referred by UNHCR to be resettled
- Review and approve Community Sponsorship applications
- Match refugee families to Community Sponsorship groups
- Monitor and evaluate the scheme
- Home Office Contact Officers provide on-the-ground support to families and sponsorship groups where necessary

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local Authorities are a key partner for Community Sponsorship groups. Local authorities

- Provide permission to apply for Community Sponsorship groups
- Review and approve groups' Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Approve the family who have been matched to the group, and confirm they can be suitably supported in the area
- Check and approve the housing for the resettled family
- Provide access to local services, such as schools, Job Centre and GPs
- In the very unlikely event that a Community Sponsorship breaks-down, the LA would step in to provide support

There is more information [here](#)



Winners of the Local Authority of the Year 2019 at the

LEAD SPONSORS

There are a number of well-established **Lead Sponsors** in the UK. They meet regularly and work together to share knowledge, and to grow, protect and improve the Community Sponsorship movement in the UK. Lead Sponsors connect through the [Lead Sponsor Network](#).

What is a Lead Sponsor? In order to apply to welcome a family through Community Sponsorship, the Home Office require that community groups partner with a registered charity, known as the "Lead Sponsor Organisation". The Lead Sponsor signs a legal agreement with the Home Office, agreeing to take responsibility for the family, provide insurance, oversee the governance of the group, and ensure that all volunteers are suitable and safely vetted. Any registered charity can act as a Lead Sponsor - but we recommend that you choose an experienced Lead Sponsor, as they will have ready-made structures in place, and the necessary resources to support you throughout the process



[SponsorRefugees](#) - a project of [Citizens UK](#) - the home of Community Organising - is the largest Lead Sponsor in the UK.

They led the Refugees Welcome movement in 2015-16 and successfully campaigned to introduce Community Sponsorship in the UK.

They continue to work with partners to protect and improve the scheme. They are growing the Community Sponsorship movement through their membership of over 450 civil society institutions, and through direct outreach, events, and partnerships.

They are directly supporting over 100 Community Sponsorship groups, and currently the Lead Sponsor to more than 40 in all four nations of the UK.

They bring over 30-years of Community Organising experience to Community Sponsorship, developing strong groups who have deep links in their local communities.



The Launch of SponsorRefugees in 2017. A Jewish sukka at the Alnabulsi Family, one of the first families to resettle through the scheme.

LEAD SPONSORS continued



CHARIS are Lead Sponsor to several Community Sponsorship groups in the South West of England. They are working in partnership with Reset to provide training, advice and application workshops for Community Sponsorship groups in the South West. CHARIS also supports Local Authorities in the region with Community Sponsorship opportunities, and co-hosts the Lead Sponsor Network with Reset.



There are a number of Catholic organisations across the UK who are promoting sponsorship among their church members, and acting as Lead Sponsor. These include Caritas groups (inc. Salford, Westminster, Shrewsbury, & Portsmouth), Catholic Care (Leeds) and Nugent (Liverpool). They are coordinated by Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN).



The Pickwell Foundation were one of the first sponsors in the UK. They are now Lead Sponsor to several groups in North Devon, and are working to grow the scheme in their local area.



The Salvation Army: are Lead Sponsor to a growing number of groups with links to Salvation Army churches.



Hillsong: are well on their way to welcoming a family through every Hillsong church in the country.

Additional Lead Sponsors

There are also smaller charities that are Lead Sponsor to a smaller number of families, such as **Bath Welcomes Refugees, Ashstead Churches Community Trusts, Malvern Welcomes, Kings Arms Project, Falmouth & Penryn Welcome Syrian Families, Waltham Forest Community Sponsorship Partnership, and Tyneside Welcomes.**



St. Michael's & St. Bernadette's Community Sponsorship group in Bury, (Lead Sponsor Caritas Salford), Pictured here with mother Nour.
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