

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN NAME OF COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP GROUP AND CITIZENS UK (SPONSOR REFUGEES)**

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The purpose of this document is to agree the partnership between the Community Sponsorship Group **NAME OF GROUP** and its Lead Sponsor Citizens UK (**Sponsor Refugees)** and to set out terms of reference to manage and deliver the community sponsorship scheme to resettle a refugee family in **PLACE.**

This document outlines each party’s key roles and responsibilities and a process for governance.

1. **PARTIES TO THIS AGREEMENT**

Community Sponsorship allows community groups made up of volunteers to welcome and support a refugee family into their neighbourhood. Groups must either register themselves as a charity or partner with a registered charity who is willing to take on the legal responsibility for overseeing the activities of the Group.

Within this agreement, the registered charity Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees) agrees to act as the ‘Lead Sponsor’ and the Community Sponsorship Group **NAME OF GROUP** will act as the ‘delivery partner’.

**ABOUT NAME OF GROUP**

Include here a brief summary of the group outlining the make-up and competences of the group, e.g.:

* History and character of group (i.e. multi-faith group, local neighbourhood group)
* Number of volunteers, areas of expertise
* Finances, whether house found, agreement of local authority obtained etc
* Links to website or social media pages if any
* If you have a group constitution, add to Appendix B. at the end of this document. You can find information about and a template constitution here: <https://citizens-Uk.teachable.com/courses/1033060/lectures/21639794>

**ABOUT CITIZENS UK / SPONSOR REFUGEES**

**Citizens UK** organises communities to act together for power, social justice and the common good. We are the home of community organising in the UK, with diverse civil society alliances across the UK. We develop the leadership capacity of our members so they can act on the issues that matter to them. Community organising is democracy in action: winning victories that change lives and transform communities. For more information, see Appendix A

**Sponsor Refugees** is a project of Citizens UK. It was launched inOctober 2017 and it works to promote community sponsorship and to provide advice and support to community groups wanting to take on the responsibility of raising funds, finding and home and then welcoming and settling refugee families in their neighbourhoods. As of February 2021, Sponsor Refugees is working with more than 100 sponsorship groups across the UK and works in partnership with the Home Office, Reset and other organisations to grow and strengthen the community sponsorship scheme. <http://www.sponsorrefugees.org/>

Details of our team and their experience can be found here: <http://www.sponsorrefugees.org/our_people>

Citizens UK is Registered Charity 1107264

Citizens UK, 136 Cavell Street, London, E1 2JA

1. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section outlines how division of roles and responsibility between the Community Sponsorship Group, **NAME OF GROUP**, and the Lead Sponsor, Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees).

**3a. Community Sponsorship Group:**

**NAME OF GROUP** is responsible for the delivery of the scheme:

(i). **Financial Commitment:**

Fundraise**:**

* Fundraise a minimum of £9,000 per family in line with Home Office requirement
* Undertake further fundraising activities if required to deliver the community sponsorship successfully (no money will be raised by or donated by the Lead Sponsor
* Comply with any requirements on fundraising from the Lead Sponsor, such as where the funds raised are deposited
* Pay Lead Sponsorship Dues to the Lead Sponsor of : £1,500; Agreed payment plan.

(January 2021 rates: £1,500 per application; £1,000 for members of Citizens UK)

Budget:

* Prepare a detailed and robust budget estimating the amounts of expenditure the Group is likely to make to help the refugee family with various aspects of their resettlement and integration of each part.
* Review and revise this budget on a regular basis, with input and advise from the Lead Sponsor if required, and in line with any auditing requirements.

Financial administration:

* Appoint a Finance lead for the Group (with appropriate experience or expertise) to provide regular financial information in line with the requirements of the Lead Sponsor
* Set out a financial policy and detailed financial processes to record all income and expenditure by the Group
* Be responsible for all day to day spending on the family resettlement, and accounting for that spending

**(ii). Housing:**

* Take all responsibility for sourcing and securing suitable and sustainable accommodation for a refugee family for a minimum of two years
* Ensure that the accommodation is affordable, such that the refugee family’s income and additional money provided by the Group will fully cover the rent and any other costs for the two-year tenancy
* Consult with the local police’s Safer Neighbourhood team to determine whether the area poses any particular risks for the family
* Organise the tenancy agreement, taking guidance from bodies such as the Residential Landlords Association and the Local Authority
* Ensure that the house meets Decent Homes standards and has all appropriate appliances and furniture

**(iii). Local Authority Permission to Apply:**

* Obtain written permission to apply from the relevant Local Authority to support the application to become sponsors; approve the property; and secure school places for children

**(iv). The Application Form and other plans**

* Draft and deliver the required application form, liaising with and getting final ‘sign off’ on the plan from the Lead Sponsor
* Draw up other plans and policies for the delivery of a successful community sponsorship as required by the Home Office and deemed necessary by the Lead Sponsor in consultation with the Group.

**(v). Safeguarding:**

* Use Citizens UK’s policy template to draw up a Safeguarding Policy, that ensures the safety and well-being of all members of the refugee family
* Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to lead on all aspects of safeguarding and who will liaise and take guidance from the Lead Sponsor where necessary
* Ensure that all volunteers in the Group are familiar with the Safeguarding policy and procedures, adhere to them, and those who provide direct support to the family are appropriately screened (including DBS checks, Volunteer Registration, and references for relevant volunteers)
* Create a Complaints Policy so that the family can raise concerns with an outside body (initially the Lead Sponsor) if they have problem with volunteers in the Group itself, and the Group cannot resolve them

**(vi).** **Publicity and media**

* Draw up protocols for media and publicity, taking into account issues of informed consent from refugee family, privacy and safeguarding, on how the Group handles publicising its activities and any approaches by the media
* Ensure that Lead Sponsor is fully informed of activities to celebrate and promote community sponsorship, while adhering to the requirements of the scheme.

**(vii).** **Group conduct & values**

* Group members will park divisive issues at the door, so that beliefs held by others can be respected.
* Whilst acting in the name of Citizens UK or of **NAME OF GROUP** no member should use their membership as a vehicle to promote views and opinions which are outside the charitable remit of Citizens UK or its core values of mutual respect, democracy, and the pursuit of the common good.
* We are committed to celebrating and respecting diversity and promoting tolerance and solidarity between communities. As such we require that our members engaging in Citizens UK do so in the spirit of the common good.
* **NAME OF GROUP** are required to safeguard against hatred and all forms of terrorism or support for violence and take care that their delegates speaking or participating at a Citizens UK or **NAME OF GROUP** event honour and respect our shared values. Where advised (for example, your delegate could be viewed as representing Citizens UK) you may be asked for more information and your delegate/speaker to sign Citizens UK’s Speakers’ Form.
* If there are any concerns that omissions, actions or statements of **NAME OF GROUP**, or an individual(s) who is part of this group, conflict with the constitution and values of Citizens UK and/or brings Citizens UK into disrepute, or in the exceptional circumstance that the Sponsorship Agreement with the Home Office is not being fulfilled to the Lead Sponsor’s satisfaction and **NAME OF GROUP** fails to resolve the situation, the Executive Management of Citizens UK/Sponsor Refugees will direct staff to oversee the management of the sponsorship directly as a last resort.

**3b. Lead Sponsor**

Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees) is responsible for the oversight of the community sponsorship scheme and stands as guarantor of its delivery:

1. **Overall legal and financial responsibility for the community sponsorship**
* Ensure that policies, processes and structures of the Group are in line with legal standards and best practice
* Be responsible for the quality of application and supporting plans and be named as the Lead Sponsor
* Oversee the financial aspects of the application and its delivery
* Sign agreement with Home Office as Lead Sponsor of the Community Sponsorship Group
1. **Guarantor**
* Act as ultimate guarantor of the delivery of the community sponsorship
* In the (unlikely) event of the community sponsorship group falling apart or relationship with family breaking down or other severe breakdown, be in a position to assume responsibility for the delivery of support to the refugee family until such time as the Home Office and Local Authority can make other arrangements
1. **Guidance to Group and approval of application and plans**
* Provide guidance to the Group where appropriate on all aspects of their community sponsorship
* Sign off application, plans and policy when as Lead Sponsor you are satisfied they are of the appropriate standard and rigour
1. **Monitoring and evaluation**
* In conjunction with the Group, set out processes for on-going monitoring of the community sponsorship to ensure it is being delivered well
* In conjunction with the Group, establish a process for evaluating the community sponsorship scheme so that future sponsorship groups can draw on the learning
1. **Insurance**
* Provide insurance cover for key volunteers of the Group or assist Group in taking out appropriate insurance to cover the scheme, including providing public liability insurance to key members of the Group where relevant.
1. **GOVERNANCE**

To ensure good governance and best practice, **NAME OF GROUP** and Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees) agree to the following principles:

* **Sticking to assigned roles:** Both parties agree to stick to their respective roles and not encroach on the other’s areas of responsibility or expect the other party to take on tasks that are not its responsibility
* **Transparency & Accountability:** Both parties will draw up protocols and procedures that are mutually agreed to ensure that both parties are provided with the appropriate and timely levels of information and support so as to maintain a strong and trusting relationship.
* **Listen and respond to the needs of the family:** The needs of the families must be respected at all times and will take priority over other considerations. The relationship between the two parties should always reflect this fact.
* **Be proud advocates for community sponsorship:** Together **NAME OF GROUP** and Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees) will promote community sponsorship in an appropriate and measured way, looking to encourage other groups to take it up, to advance refugee resettlement in the UK and to improve the narrative of refugee welcome across the country
1. **MANAGING RISKS**
2. **Reputational risk**
* In the event of a complete breakdown of the community sponsorship or serious problems with its delivery, there is a risk – most significantly to the established charity: the Lead Sponsor – of reputational damage. This MOU and the plans mentioned in it are designed to mitigate this risk, by ensuring that if problems arise they can be dealt with quickly and successfully and do not become critical.
1. **Financial liability**
* The Lead Sponsor, Citizens UK is taking on some financial liabilities in its position as guarantor of the work of the Community Sponsorship Group **NAME OF GROUP.** In the event of the breakdown of the Group, the Lead Sponsor could be left having to meet unforeseen costs. This risk should be mitigated by careful budgeting and a commitment from the Group to raise additional funds for the purposes of the sponsorship if they are required.
1. **Breakdown in relationship between Group and family**
* If there was such a breakdown in relations, the Lead Sponsor would be required to do the first round of mediation, not withstanding its own relationship to the Group. The Group should therefore draw up a complaints policy and the family should be made aware of it so that they can make a complaint about the scheme or about a volunteer if the circumstances should arise
1. **TERMINATION**
* The arrangement comes to an end **two years** after the family arrives in the UK.
* In the event of changes in the way the Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees) programme is run or delivered, Citizens UK will ensure an orderly transfer of the scheme and funds to another Lead Sponsor.
* In the event of changes to Home Office rules governing Community Sponsorship, CUK and **NAME OF GROUP** must agree a way forward which best protects the interests of the family.
1. **DECLARATION & SIGN**

The parties affirm to know, understand and agree to all articles of this MoU as negotiated together.

**NAME OF GROUP**

Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date:

**Citizens UK/Sponsor Refugees**

Name: Jonathan Cox

Signature:

Position: Deputy Director of Citizens UK

Date:

**Appendix A: About Citizens UK**

Citizens UK is the nation’s largest and most diverse alliance of active citizens and leaders from local institutions who are committed to working together for the common good.

We are a growing organisation. Currently, there are over 450 local institutions in dues-paying membership. Community organising starts with the recognition that real change can only come when community- rooted organisations pool resources and learn the art of public action – building enough power to oblige the State and the Market to consider and respond to the real needs of ordinary people whilst also leading the way ourselves on the issues and good practices which are the responsibility of Civil Society.

In the last 30 years, since our Founding, Citizens UK has trained more than 7,000 community leaders in community organising and leadership techniques and built strong and permanent relationships of trust between diverse organisations. Through this training and by putting it into public action, Citizens UK has given citizens the confidence to participate in public life for the good of their institution and communities as well as to enhance the safe and peaceful governance of the UK, their nation, region, city, town and neighbourhood.

The charitable aim of Citizens UK is ‘to develop the capacity of the citizens of Britain and Ireland to participate more fully in society and to strengthen their institutions and groups in the process’.

Our Vision is ‘A healthy democracy with Civil Society at its heart’.

The Citizens UK Board of Trustees is elected in part from the membership and is accountable to all Members through an Annual General Meeting and Special General Meetings. The Board of Trustees holds ultimate liability and governance responsibility for the legal, financial and operational management of the charity according to the law of England and Wales. The Board is the final arbiter of disputes, membership requests and determining the strategic direction and decisions of the organisation.

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**Appendix B: ADD GROUP CONSITUTION HERE IF HAVE ONE**

**(You can find a template constitution here:**

[**https://citizens-uk.teachable.com/courses/1033060/lectures/21639794**](https://citizens-uk.teachable.com/courses/1033060/lectures/21639794)**)**