

RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

UK Community Sponsorship Scheme

Community Sponsorship

- **Launched** in the UK in July 2016
- Enables **community groups** to be directly involved in supporting the resettlement of vulnerable people fleeing conflict
- A **collaborative effort** between local community, local authority and central government to support and integrate vulnerable resettled families.

Why do it?

- Harness the goodwill and generosity of citizens to help those in need
- Positive outcomes for refugees
- Positive outcomes for communities

Designing Community Sponsorship

- Co-design with civil society
- Local authority consultation
- Start small then grow
- Balance safeguards vs ease of access for community groups
- Framework with criteria and approval process
- Blended approach with Government and community group input

Overview of UK's Resettlement Process

Referral

- Refugee follows established UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) process to be considered for resettlement based on vulnerability criteria
- UNHCR considers requests and refers families to particular countries for resettlement

Case working

- Resettlement Programme considers families recommended for resettlement in the UK
- Decision is reached to accept or reject referral

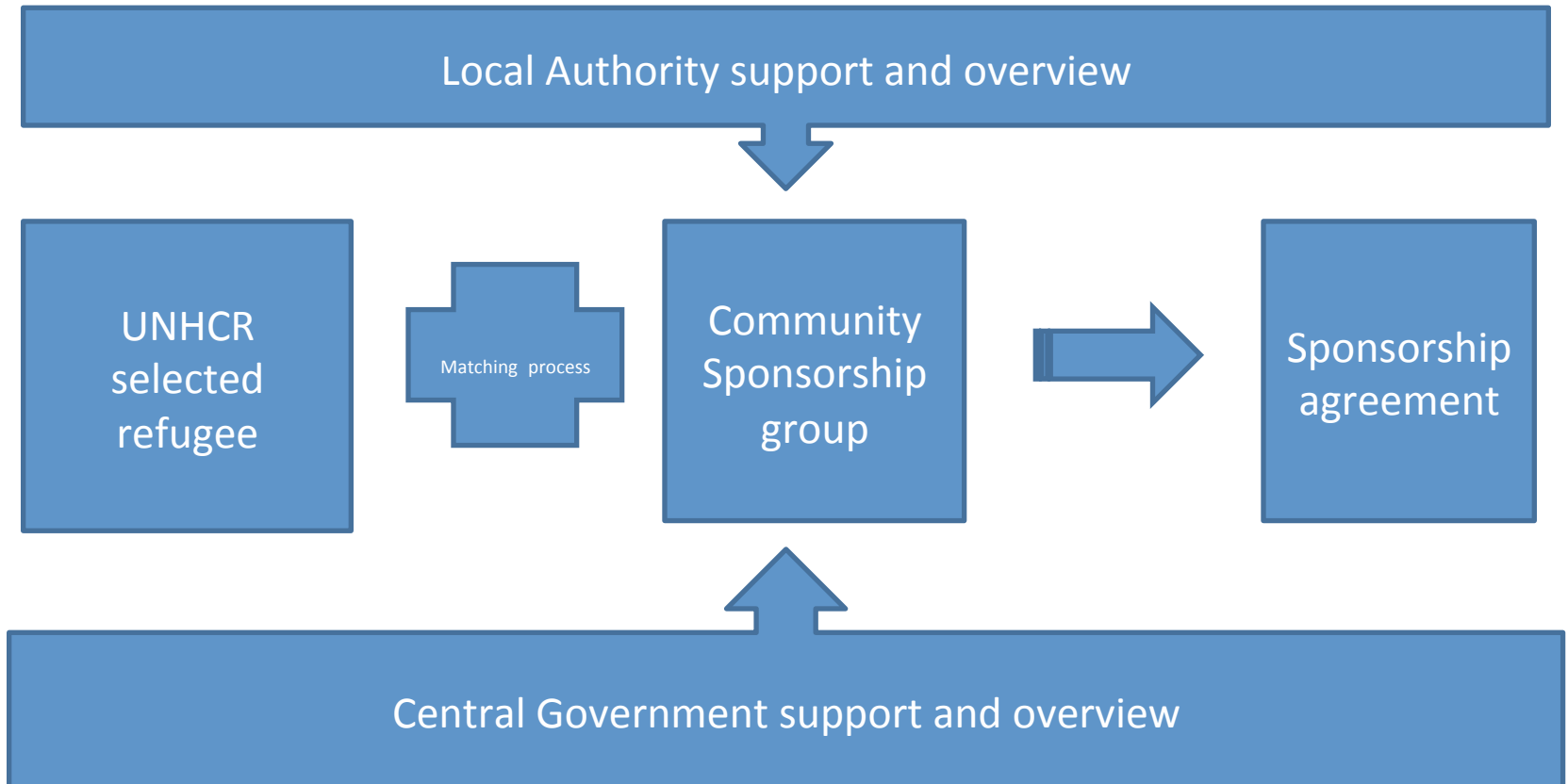
Matching

- Family matched via traditional resettlement model to **local authority or regional area**
- Family matched via new model to **Community sponsor**

Arrival

- Resettlement Programme complete exit arrangements in conjunction with International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
- Family arrive in UK, met by **local authority representative or Community Sponsor**

How community sponsorship works



The challenges of resettlement

Families selected by UNHCR are those considered to be the most vulnerable

- Forced to flee conflict most likely having lost homes and separated from loved ones
- Often with physical and mental health needs
- Face a steep learning curve to settle into a new country including a language barrier

What does a Community Sponsor do?

Community Sponsors will be responsible for:

- Pre-arrival planning such as making arrangements to meet the family at the airport in the UK;
- **Housing** arrangement for a minimum of **two years**;
- Providing wrap around **integration support** for **one year** facilitating access to medical, social services, education, as well as interpreters and English Language tuition provisions;
- On going assistance and support to encourage progression towards **integration**, employment and eventual **self-sufficiency**.
- Community Sponsors may choose to provide support beyond this, according to the needs of the resettled family.

Who can be a Community Sponsor?

An approval process is designed to establish that the prospective Sponsor:

- has **sufficient resources** (housing, financial and personnel) to support a resettled family;
- has a **credible plan** for supporting a resettled family, backed by relevant experience; and
- **does not present a risk** to the resettled family.

Sponsoring organisations must have:

- **Charity** or **Community Interest Company** status
- **Experience**, or be working in partnership with people or organisations with experience in working with refugees or supporting vulnerable people
- **Funding** available of at least £9,000.
- Suitable and sustainable **accommodation** for a resettled family, and that it will be available for a resettled family to use for a minimum of two years.
- The written **consent** of the local authority in which they wish to operate.
- Robust **safeguarding** policy and procedures
- A detailed **resettlement plan**

How will applications be assessed?

The Resettlement Programme will:

- Assess the **evidence** provided to ensure **resettlement plan and safeguarding provisions** are of a suitably high standard;
- Conduct **security checks** on the organisation and the lead Sponsor to verify suitability;
- Conduct **pre-approval visits** to meet the Sponsor and members of the community group, test credibility and detail of evidence provided and view the accommodation.

What is the role of the Local Authority?

Before giving consent, the local authority will consider:

- Suitability of a particular community group to act as sponsor
- Capacity issues such as size, make up and requirements of a potential resettled family (location, school places)
- Specific health, medical and social care requirements
- Specific local issues relating to resettlement (danger of isolation or known local tensions)

What does the Resettlement Programme do?

- Consider applications from community groups seeking approval to become community sponsors.
- Ensure that security checks are carried out on all individuals to be resettled in the UK.
- Arrange for the resettled family's visa and travel to the UK.
- Work with the Sponsor and local authority to agree the allocation of a suitable family.
- Provide an induction workshop for new sponsors prior to the arrival of their family
- Conduct regular monitoring visits to both the family and the Sponsor for the duration of the sponsoring arrangement

Summary - approval process

- Prospective sponsor seeks consent of relevant local authority to operate as community sponsor in that area
- Prospective sponsor submits application for approval as community sponsor
- Application considered against criteria for approval
- Approval granted
- Agreement with sponsor signed
- Family to be resettled proposed for allocation to sponsor
- Sponsor and local authority jointly agree allocation
- Resettled family arrives (typically six weeks after allocation is agreed)

Further information

Guidance and information on how to apply can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship>

Future of Community Sponsorship

- Proof of concept
- Scale
- Build capacity of communities
- Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative
- A common form of resettlement in the future?