

*Strengthen ties in
your community*

**Welcome refugees by
becoming a Lead Sponsor**

A photograph of a family of four walking on a residential street. On the left, a woman in a patterned top and dark pants walks with a young child in a blue striped shirt. In the center, a man in a light blue polo shirt and light-colored trousers walks with the child. On the right, an older man in a light blue button-down shirt and dark trousers walks alongside them. The background shows brick houses and greenery. The text is overlaid on the image.

Community Sponsorship is a powerful way for local community groups to support refugee resettlement. But crucially, these groups rely on Lead Sponsors to support and guide them through the process of welcoming a refugee family.

Could your organisation play the valuable role of being a Lead Sponsor and support your community to welcome a refugee family?

“As Lead Sponsors we

strengthen the bonds

that tie us together by supporting groups to welcome refugees.”

Pickwell Foundation - Lead Sponsor in North Devon

What is refugee Community Sponsorship?

Community Sponsorship gives people the opportunity to welcome a refugee family to their area. It is a scheme supported by the UK government that provides a safe route for refugees to reach the UK. A group of volunteers support the family through their first year in the UK, helping them to lead independent lives, learn English, access schools, benefits, healthcare and employment and participate fully in the community.

What role does the Lead Sponsor play?

When a Community Sponsorship group forms, they will need to choose a Lead Sponsor, who will support them and take overall responsibility for the project. The Lead Sponsor has a legal responsibility to the Home Office to ensure that the family is resettled safely.

Who can be a Lead Sponsor?

Lead Sponsors need to be a registered legal entity, such as a charity, an exempt charity, or a Community Interest Company (CIC). Lead Sponsors range in size from local community initiatives and regional organisations, right up to big, UK-wide charities.

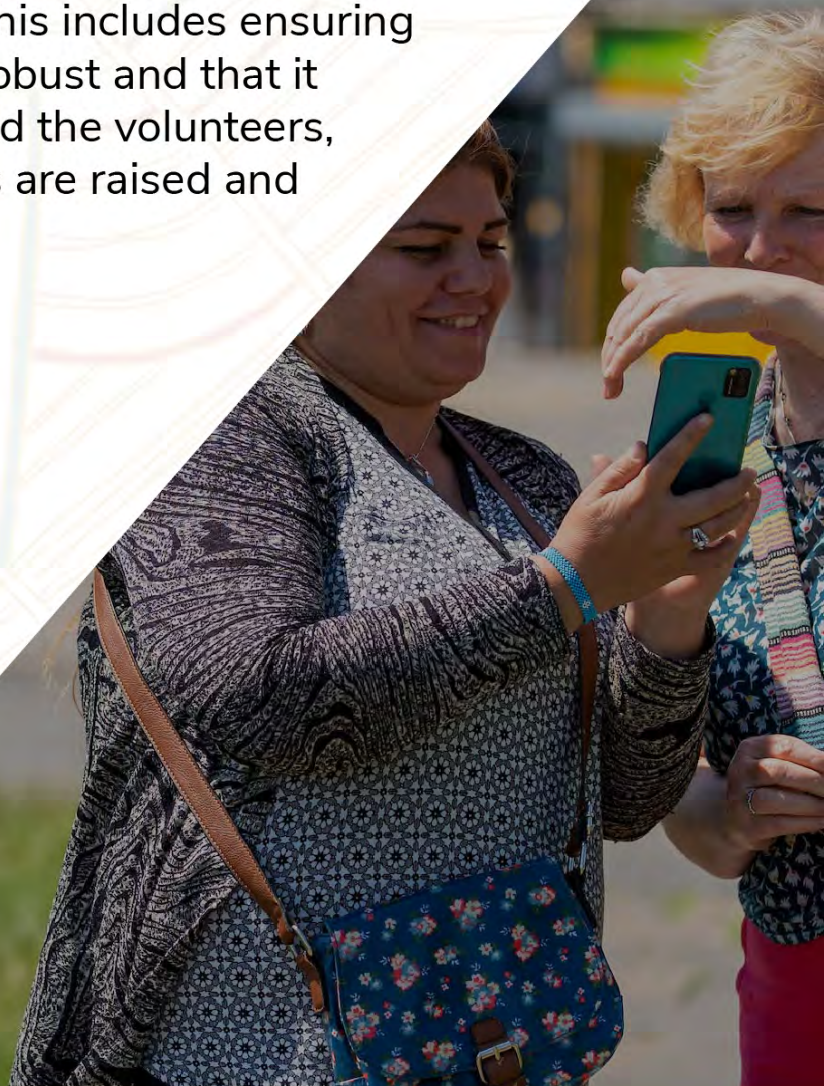
[Access our toolkit for Lead Sponsors](#)

Why become a Lead Sponsor?

Community Sponsorship would not be possible without Lead Sponsors and the essential work that they do to facilitate refugee resettlement. Many Lead Sponsor organisations are rooted in communities and find that the opportunity to support Community Sponsorship groups fits with their existing aims and is also tremendously rewarding.

What are the responsibilities of a Lead Sponsor?

Lead Sponsors are responsible for providing a framework in which a Community Sponsorship group can offer support to a refugee family. This includes ensuring that the support provided is robust and that it safeguards both the family and the volunteers, as well as ensuring that funds are raised and kept appropriately.



What support is available for Lead Sponsors?

Reset is a charity that works to connect newly arrived refugees with host communities. It has trained more than 3000 volunteers to welcome hundreds of refugees. Reset offers the following support to Lead Sponsor organisations:

Training for Lead Sponsors covering all stages of the Community Sponsorship process as well as sessions on relevant wider areas that will impact your work welcoming refugees.

Reset staff offer support and advice throughout the process, whether that's about the responsibilities of Lead Sponsors or offering practical advice once a family is resettled.

Lead Sponsor organisations can apply to register for the **Community Sponsorship Backstop Fund**, which is administered by Reset. The Backstop Fund provides access to grants for Lead Sponsors to support their work in the case of unforeseen events taking place once a refugee family arrives.

Reset coordinates the Lead Sponsor Network, which connects all Lead Sponsors to **share learning and best practice** with one another. Reset also provides regular updates including Community Sponsorship news and resources for Lead Sponsors.

Contact Reset for more information about becoming a Lead Sponsor: enquiries@resetuk.org

Susannah Baker
THE PICKWELL FOUNDATION
Our Lead Sponsor Journey

*Having that experience was so incredible,
it was so deeply fulfilling.*

“We got talking to an active book group and a local faith group, we put them together and we made our first sponsorship group. Having that experience was so incredible, it was so deeply fulfilling. We welcomed our first family in 2017 but decided we didn’t want to stop there and we started to seed multiple groups. Over the years we have guided groups through every step of the way. Now we have seven groups that we have worked with directly under our Foundation, and five families are here.”



The Pickwell Foundation is a grant making charity based in North Devon. Two families set up the foundation in 2012. It gives small to medium sized grants, by invitation, to charities that are working either with displaced people or in the area of climate change. A central part of its work is as a Lead Sponsor for Community Sponsorship groups in the North Devon area.

Richard Young & Lindsay Brigham
TYNESIDE WELCOMES
Our Lead Sponsor Journey

There has been so much interest, we wanted to expand so we could harness all that good will.

“Tyneside Welcomes started out as a Community Sponsorship group but we’ve developed into the role of being a Lead Sponsor and taking on that coordinating role. We started out with the intention to just welcome one family. But there has been so much interest, we wanted to expand so we could harness all that good will. As the Lead Sponsor we are like the trunk of a tree and each group we support is like one of the tree’s branches. Because the groups are connected in this way, through us as the Lead Sponsor, it means that if there is a problem someone can step across to provide support.”



Tyneside Welcomes started out as a small group of volunteers with no single political or faith-based affiliation. As a group they resettled one Syrian refugee family in their neighbourhood and set up as a Lead Sponsor so that they can work with a broader network of people across Tyneside to resettle other refugee families.

Anais Fahd
CARITAS SALFORD
Our Lead Sponsor Journey

Becoming a Lead Sponsor was a logical next step in terms of scaling up our impact.

“As a Catholic charity we were already involved in refugee support, but we wanted to take more of a lead. Becoming a Lead Sponsor was a logical next step in terms of scaling up our impact. Now we can support groups that want to welcome refugees through Community Sponsorship. Slowly it has grown and we have welcomed 11 families through the support of 11 groups.”



Caritas Diocese of Salford is the principal social action agency of the Catholic Diocese of Salford and supports people experiencing poverty or situations of crisis and challenge through a diverse range of projects and services. They are a part of a global Catholic charity working in grassroots communities to promote justice and equality so that people can live in peace and dignity. Caritas Salford works as a Lead Sponsor for groups across the North West, mainly within two dioceses: Salford and Lancaster.



Reset have been really helpful.

They've provided us with training and talked through the steps we should take to become a Lead Sponsor, including what's required from the Home Office and about good practice."

Edinburgh Refugee Sponsorship Circle - Lead Sponsor in Edinburgh