

A Quick Guide to getting involved in Syrian Resettlement

Understandably there has been a huge focus on people fleeing the devastation in Syria in the last few years, but the reality is that there are relatively few Syrian refugees in the UK compared to other European countries. Those who manage to get here under their own steam are treated just like other asylum seekers, and given accommodation while their claim is considered. The government pledged in December 2015 to extend the [Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme](#), which has been running since 2014, and take 20,000 vulnerable Syrians direct from refugee camps in the Middle East by 2020.

Initially councils were approached to help with accommodation, but the housing shortage meant that many felt unable to sign up to the scheme. Since then Citizens UK has launched the [National Refugee Welcome Board](#). This includes a scheme for landlords to let their houses to resettled families.

Even with this initiative the target of 20,000 is unlikely to be reached, so churches and community groups are being encouraged to sign up to the Community Sponsorship scheme, loosely based on the long-standing and very successful Canadian sponsorship model.

The Church of England's *Mission and Public Affairs Division* has produced some very informative and useful [Refugee Resettlement Factsheets](#). They explain in greater depth exactly what is being done, and ways in which you can be involved.

If you want to find out more about Community Sponsorship, full details of the government scheme are [here](#) in the Resources Section. Catholics in particular may be interested in how [Caritas](#) is getting involved in Community Sponsorship in the North West.

[*ABOUNDING IN LOVE: The vital role of the church in befriending and loving Syrian refugees*](#) is an excellent guide to ways of showing God's love to Syrian refugees, either here or abroad.