

# Resettling Refugees Proposal

The humanitarian crisis unfolding in the Mediterranean is a symptom of the worst refugee crisis in recent memory. With almost no legal avenues open to them, refugees are forced to take ever greater risks in their efforts to find a safe haven. Some are trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea, risking their lives. Refugee women who are on the move in search of safety are particularly vulnerable to rape and sexual violence. In response to this crisis, the UK government have announced the resettlement of 20,000 refugees by 2020. At Ashley Community and Housing Ltd we welcome and congratulate our government for this move.

Ashley Community and Housing Ltd is one of the leading social enterprises in the country specializing in resettling and transforming refugees lives. In the past 8 years we have supported thousands of homeless vulnerable refugees towards becoming independent citizens contributing towards the British economy. In this briefing, we are aiming to advise the central and local governments of how best we propose to resettle refugees.

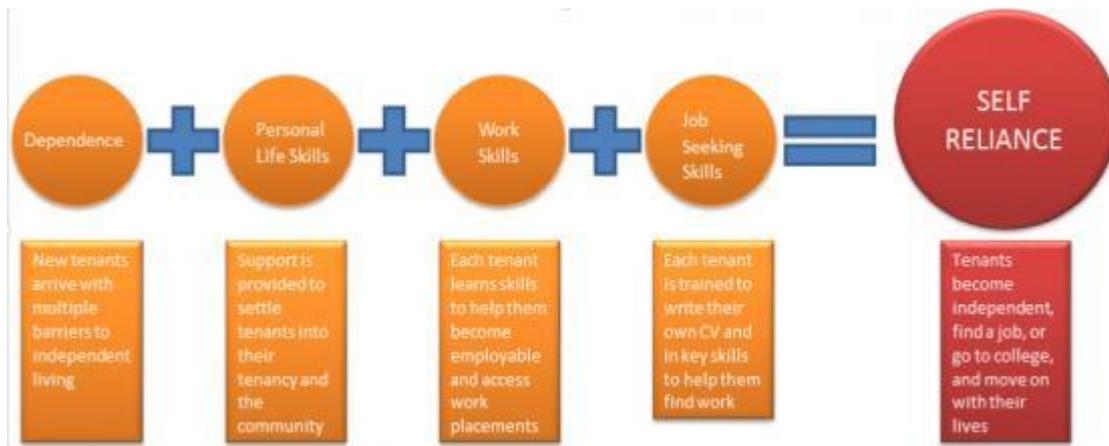
## **Our innovative model**

The mission of Ashley Community Housing (ACH) is to support the settlement and resettlement needs of refugees, vulnerable homeless and other displaced people, to develop their independence, promote positive contribution to the community and ease their integration into the UK life. Through this work we alleviate pressures on the public purse and ensure this transition takes place quicker. We work with national and local organizations such as Refugee Action, British Redcross, Refugee Council, Birmingham University and the British Council.

**Our Vision** is to be

***“recognised as the LEADING CULTURALLY SPECIFIC housing and training provider COMMITTED to bringing TRANSFORMATIVE change in our communities”.***

We have devised an award winning training and support model which deals with the trauma and emotional needs initially and then focuses on building skills and supporting refugees into sustainable employment. Our model consists of a combination of employability and personal life skills training as well as creating opportunities for independent living. Please see the below chart:



### What might now happen next?

It is anticipated the government will disperse 4000 or so refugees per year over the next 5 years into the various cities and towns around the country. It is expected this process to be voluntary rather than mandatory to local governments. The numbers of refugees to be resettled into each council is likely to be much below 100 people per year. However, the biggest concern lies with councils and mainstream agencies that predominantly do not understand or do not have the resources for the refugee resettlement process. The local councils will house refugees through the private sector. This is a short-term vision which without the right support framework could end up costing local government and the public purse more in the longer term. At Ashley Community and Housing Ltd we have the right support framework through our award-winning employment and training provision to provide a long-term solution. The key to success for us is our combined training & support model that promotes independent living. We do not just change refugees lives but transform them.

### Long term vision

Our long-term vision is one where we transform refugees into successful, integrated and contributing members of the British society. We are in the right position to do so as we are established in Bristol and the West Midlands. On average our tenants stay with us between 6 to 18 months during which they are taken through the training and support model. Once they secure employment they move on and start to live an independent lifestyle away from government support and our assistance. With the right support framework refugees can contribute successfully towards your city and create more cohesion in the community. Often refugees are of working age and can contribute towards the local employment market needs and infill vacancies in certain sectors. With your partnership we would like to make this happen in your city.

## ACH Recommendations

From our experience, we describe the components of a successful resettlement policy as:

- Establishing a safe and secure home in a supportive community to provide a feeling of permanence in contrast to the insecurity and absence of rights that typify the refugee experience
- Providing culturally responsive support services for refugee women
- Providing adequate support for physical and mental health needs
- Providing fast track language training to enable participation in society and access to services
- Providing fast track employment training by transferring existing skills and acquiring new skills, compatible with local employment needs

We have successfully worked with thousands of refugees over the years and have helped them integrate within the British society. If you would like to talk to us about how we can assist you with refugee resettlement in your area, please contact **[Fuad.Mahamed@ashleyhousing.com](mailto:Fuad.Mahamed@ashleyhousing.com)**