CASE STUDY

Supporting Resettled Families Through Accessible Language Support



LanguageLine Solutions®



Starting life in a new country means navigating unfamiliar systems, services, and everyday routines, often while dealing with the lasting impact of leaving home behind.

For families resettling in Dumfries and Galloway from countries including Syria, Afghanistan, and Ukraine, being able to communicate in their home language was essential. It enabled them to explain their needs, understand the support available, and begin building new lives in Scotland with greater confidence.

Through professional telephone and video interpreting, LanguageLine helped Dumfries and Galloway Council's Resettlement Team provide timely, meaningful support to the individuals and families in their care.

The Challenge

Resettlement Project Workers support people across almost every aspect of life, including healthcare, education, housing, employment, benefits, and access to third sector services. Each conversation can directly affect someone's ability to understand their options, make informed decisions, or access essential support.

Some meetings can be scheduled in advance. Others cannot. A medical concern, an unfamiliar letter or a question about housing or benefits may need to be addressed immediately, making access to interpreting at short notice and at different times of the day essential.

In-person interpreters had previously been used when available, but the need to book them in advance meant they were not always suitable for urgent or impromptu conversations.

Without reliable language support, even a small misunderstanding could become a significant barrier. Families risked missing important information, experiencing delays, or being unable to access the services they needed. The team required a flexible solution that would allow people to ask questions, express their concerns, and have a voice in the decisions affecting their lives.

How We Helped

The answer was to place flexible, professional language support directly in the hands of the Council's Resettlement Team, ready to use whenever a conversation arose.

The LanguageLine App was introduced—telephone and video interpreting together in one place—making it quicker and easier for the team to connect with a professional interpreter on demand.

Staff could choose the type of interpreting best suited to each conversation. Telephone interpreting provided straightforward access to language support, while video offered an additional sense of human connection. When discussing complex or unfamiliar subjects, being able to see the interpreter often helped conversations flow more naturally and gave families additional reassurance.

The app also allowed staff to specify the gender of the interpreter. This flexibility was particularly valuable when conversations involved personal or medical matters, helping the team respect individual, cultural or religious needs and making people more comfortable discussing sensitive information.

Staff also needed to feel confident using the service and understand how to work effectively with an interpreter. Following an initial demonstration, the team quickly became comfortable with the app. Additionally, practical training helped them structure conversations clearly, use interpreting time efficiently, and create a better experience for the families they supported.

The Result

With interpreting available on demand, the Resettlement Team could respond to questions and concerns as they arose. Clearer conversations reduced the risk of misunderstandings and repeated explanations, saving staff time and helping families access the right services more quickly.

Communicating in their home language gave people the freedom to explain not only their immediate needs, but also their worries, experiences, and hopes for the future. They could understand their options, participate more fully in decisions and approach unfamiliar aspects of life in Scotland with greater confidence.

Most importantly, professional interpreting helped the Resettlement Team build trust and develop meaningful relationships with the people they supported. For families beginning again in an unfamiliar country, being able to communicate in the language they knew best demonstrated that their voices mattered.

> "Being able to access a reliable interpreting service without notice was imperative to ensuring the needs of the families I supported were met. These families had already experienced the trauma of leaving their home countries for reasons beyond their control. Communicating with them in their home language helped them feel valued, included and welcome."
>
> — **Lynda Irving, Resettlement Project Worker,** Dumfries and Galloway Council





LanguageLine Solutions®

Help More People Feel Heard, Valued and Included

Whether your teams are supporting resettled families, helping people access essential public services or responding to urgent and unexpected needs, reliable interpreting can remove communication barriers when it matters most.

LanguageLine gives public sector organisations on-demand access to qualified telephone and video interpreters, helping staff communicate clearly and provide more accessible, inclusive services.

Let's discuss how language support could help your teams serve diverse communities.

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