

Scope & Specification

Delivery of an East Midlands focused digital advertising campaign for the recruitment of UASC specific foster carers & supported lodgings hosts

December 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to invite qualified and experienced marketing professionals and/or agencies to bid for a contract for the delivery of an East Midlands focused digital media buy-in campaign for the regional recruitment of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) specific Foster Carers and Supported Lodgings Carers.

This campaign is expected to utilise our existing recruitment website, branding, and digital marketing materials.

Introduction

Introduction to East Midlands Councils (EMC)

EMC represents the interests of local councils to Government and national organisations, fostering collaboration on key issues and providing advice and services on employment, training and development, housing, health, transport, planning and asylum and refugee resettlement.

East Midlands Councils provide the opportunity for this collaboration to take place. It is the consultative forum for local authorities in the East Midlands, providing a strong voice for the region. It gives support to councils to help them develop their workforce and leadership and improve their services.

East Midlands Councils hosts the Strategic Migration Partnership for the East Midlands, one of twelve regional partnerships across the UK funded by the Home Office.

The aim of the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (EMSMP) is to provide a regional advisory, development, and consultation function for member organisations from the statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors - for the co-ordination and provision of advice, support, and services for migrants.

EMSMP covers the following local authorities:

- Derbyshire
- Leicestershire
- Lincolnshire
- Nottinghamshire
- Rutland
- Derby City
- Leicester City
- Nottingham City
- West Northamptonshire
- North Northamptonshire

EMSMP is led by our Regional Migration Board, supported by six task groups: Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), No Recourse to Public Funds, Asylum Dispersal, Resettlement Programmes, Regional ESOL Programme and HKBN(O) Visa Programme. Other thematic and geographical sub-groups and workshops will be established by the Regional Migration Board as required.

Campaign Targets

The targets described within this section are split into 'core targets' and 'campaign ambitions', where the non-achievement of core targets will result in payments being withheld either temporarily or permanently.

Core Targets

- Generate 50 UASC fostering and/or Supported Lodgings enquiries from East Midlands residents over a 4-to-6-month campaign as a minimum position, with 60 qualified UASC fostering and/or Supported Lodgings enquiries from East Midlands residents as a stretch target.
- Achieve at least 70% of all website visitors and enquiry submissions generated through the campaign come from within the East Midlands, with 80% as the stretch target.
- Achieve a minimum of a 20% form start rate and a 10% form completion rate from East Midlands based paid campaign traffic by month three, tracked via GA4 events.
- Deliver accurate tracking of 100% of campaign traffic, form starts, and form completions, captured in GA4 with correct UTM parameters.
- Delivery of a paid advertising campaign of at least 4 months in duration with a stretch target of 6 months.

Campaign Ambitions

- Improve cost efficiency over time, reducing cost per qualified enquiry by at least 15% between month one and month four through optimisation of targeting, placements, and remarketing.
- Maintain consistent visibility across priority platforms through search, programmatic, contextual placements, and remarketing.
- Increase understanding and awareness of UASC fostering and supported lodgings provision within key community groups, measured by engagement and returning visitors.

Campaign Inputs

The maximum budget is £15,000, exclusive of VAT, which will be used exclusively for the paid campaign and agency delivery.

The following assets are also available for the campaign:

- Existing case study videos.
- Existing copy, brand assets and campaign website.

No other assets are expected to be required for this programme of work, and EMC's communications and marketing manager will facilitate new digital assets on a needs must basis.

Audience Definition

Primary Audience

Adults aged 25 to 65 living in the East Midlands (Nottinghamshire, Nottingham City, Derbyshire, Derby City, Leicestershire, Leicester City, Lincolnshire, North Northamptonshire, West Northamptonshire and Rutland) who show digital behaviours indicating interest in supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

These behaviours include:

- Searching for fostering, supported lodgings, UASC, or refugee support terms.
- Visiting refugee support websites or UASC pages from fostering providers.
- Engaging with previous UASC campaign content.
- Demonstrating interest in safeguarding, youth support, community care, or volunteering.
- Engaging with VCSE sector content or community support material.
- Currently working or having previously worked in the public sector or community-facing roles.
- Consuming diaspora, overseas community, or faith-based community media.
- Being active in community, cultural, or faith groups.

Remarketing Audience:

Users who have shown intent but have not yet converted, including:

- Users who have watched campaign videos.
- Users who start but do not complete the enquiry form.

Audience Insight

Evidence from the previous campaign shows that the most engaged users were adults aged 35 to 65 with community involvement, volunteering experience, or an interest in supporting vulnerable young people.

The audience pool is geographically limited to the East Midlands, which significantly affects reach and cost and means the campaign must be optimised for a tightly defined location radius.

Analysis of Meta performance and GA4 data showed that broad awareness targeting drove high volumes of low-quality traffic, with weak form engagement and almost no completed enquiries, indicating that this approach is not suitable for such a niche audience.

The lack of meaningful conversions suggests that the audience requires more precise targeting methods that capture stronger intent signals than Meta's broad interest categories can provide.

Barriers identified include low awareness of the UASC fostering role, long decision-making timelines, and inconsistent follow-up approaches, all of which affect enquiry completion and must be addressed through improved funnel design and tracking.

These insights highlight the need to shift away from mass reach tactics and towards a more targeted, intent-led approach that allows better control over geography, relevance, and remarketing.

Campaign Activities

The activities required for the successful bidder, which can be considered as the deliverables for the campaign, are outlined within the ITT Notice, listed below are the activities which will be delivered by EMC to support the successful bidder in realising those activities listed within the ITT Notice.

1. Coordinate with Local Authorities to ensure timely lead follow-up.
 - Provide Local Authorities with leads as they are generated through completed enquiry forms on the website.
 - Request feedback within four weeks on lead quality and suitability.
 - Use Local Authority feedback to refine targeting and messaging.
2. Reinforce owned channels to support conversion.
 - Conduct a pre-launch landing page review to ensure clarity, accessibility, and mobile performance.
 - Ensure all GA4 events, UTMs, and geo tracking are fully functioning.
 - Review and update the FAQ section addressing common misconceptions identified by councils.
 - Ensure clear next steps for prospective carers and councils after submitting an enquiry.
3. Engage partners to reinforce key messages.
 - Provide councils and VCSE partners with a simple signposting post and a single link to share on their channels.
 - Encourage community organisations to include the link in newsletters or volunteer bulletins.
 - Share case study clips and campaign messaging on EMC-owned channels and encourage light-touch amplification across LinkedIn networks.

Tender Compliance

In order for tenders to be considered compliant the following conditions must be met:

- Tenders must be submitted by the closing date and time.
- All relevant tender information must be provided within the application form and conform to the stated word count limits.
- Tenders must be submitted via email using the following email address: SMP@emcouncils.gov.uk, Tenders submitted by other means will not be considered.

Please see the tendering arrangements section within the ITT Notice for further guidance and note that the marking scheme and scoring criteria are provided within the application form.

Tenders that are not compliant will be disqualified from the process. We reserve the right to clarify any issues regarding a bidder's compliance. It will be at EMC's sole discretion that bids are progressed to the next stage of the tender process.

Process & Timetable

Invitation to tender issued	Friday 19 th December 2025
Deadline for tender questions	Monday 19 th January 2026 (5pm)
Publication of tender Q&A document	Thursday 22 nd January 2026
Deadline for submission of proposals	Friday 30 th January 2026 (5pm)
Shortlisted suppliers notified	Week Beginning 2 nd February 2026
Supplier interviews	Week Beginning 9 th February 2026
Contract Award Notice & Start of standstill period	Friday 13 th February 2026
End of standstill period, contract signing & appointment of successful bidder.	Monday 23 rd February 2026
Digital Media Buy-In campaign start.	No Later than 31 st March 2026

East Midlands Councils

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