

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Minister of State for Immigration
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
United Kingdom

18 September 2018

Dear Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP,

British Citizenship Fees for Young People

We join the mounting campaign to urge you to reduce the cost of attaining British citizenship especially for young people.

Thousands of young people who have lived in the UK for most or all of their lives find themselves without citizenship and when they attempt to become citizens, are met with a huge fee of £1012. Some families are forced to make huge sacrifices to afford the fee and many must live with the sad reality that their children are not citizens in their country they know as home. Without citizenship, many young people cannot access healthcare, travel abroad or go to university.

The fee of citizenship is disproportionate to the actual administrative cost. The government shamefully profits off children attempting to gain an equality with their peers. This practice flies in the face of the UK's commitment to equality and fairness, and must stop.

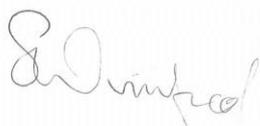
In addition, local authorities must pay for the applications of children in their care which is unfair in a context of increasing cuts from central government to local authorities, so we urge to waive the fee completely for looked after children.

Earlier this year, the country was shaken by the Windrush scandal in which members of the Windrush generation were treated as outsiders in their own country. Many British people found themselves unable to access healthcare, jobs and some even faced deportation. Following public uproar, the government has worked to mitigate and reverse some of the awful practices, and has sent a welcoming message by establishing an annual Windrush day.

Yet, the government still has more to do to ensure that the UK welcomes and celebrates immigrants. The UK may face another scandal if the government does not act to remove the indefensible barrier of the cost of citizenship.

We urge the Home Office to apply the principles of compassion and fairness in considering the cost of citizenship and reduce the cost of British citizenship, especially for young people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Winifred', written in a cursive style.

Cllr Sonia Winifred
Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture
Lambeth Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Lury', written in a cursive style.

Cllr Rebecca Lury
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Equalities and Communities
Southwark Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Braund Merton', written in a cursive style.

Cllr Kelly Braund Merton
Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Merton Council