



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

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To Whom It May Concern

I am happy to provide a reference for Rauf Bashir.

I have come to know Rauf through his work with the Building Bridges Network and through wider engagement on community cohesion issues. This has included interactions with colleagues in the Community Cohesion Unit, attending the Building Bridges conference in Pendle on responding to divisive ideologies, and subsequent conversations about cohesion challenges and the role of community organisations in supporting stronger and more resilient communities.

While I have not worked directly with Rauf on a day-to-day basis, my experience of him has been consistently positive. He strikes me as someone who is thoughtful, committed and genuinely motivated by improving outcomes for the communities he works with.

I have been particularly impressed by his ability to bring people together to discuss difficult issues in a constructive way. Community cohesion often requires engagement across different perspectives and experiences, and my sense is that Rauf approaches this with both sensitivity and a practical focus on what can actually be achieved. He appears comfortable creating space for challenge and debate while maintaining positive working relationships.

I have also found him to be reflective and willing to engage thoughtfully with complex issues. In our conversations, he has demonstrated a strong understanding of the challenges facing communities and community organisations, alongside a clear commitment to finding practical solutions rather than simply describing problems.

On a personal level, I have always found Rauf professional, approachable and easy to work with. He is clearly passionate about his work and brings energy and commitment to the issues he is involved in

Based on my experience and interactions with him, I would be happy to recommend Rauf and wish him every success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SJ', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Simon Jones

Assistant Director, Community Cohesion Unit