

UK Surrogacy Terminology

Surrogate

A person who agrees to carry a baby for intended parent(s).

Host Surrogacy

The surrogate carries an embryo created from the intended parent(s)' and/or donor gametes.

Traditional Surrogacy

The surrogate donates their own egg. Can be via artificial at home insemination, IUI or IVF.

Intended Parent(s) (IPs)

The individual(s) who will become the baby's legal parents through a Parental Order. May be couples or single applicants.

Intended Mother (IM)/Intended Father (IF)

Parents through surrogacy.

Parental Order

The legal process transferring parenthood from the surrogate to the intended parent(s) after birth.

Surrogacy Agreement

A written understanding between surrogate and intended parent(s). Not legally binding in the UK but serves as an ethical and practical framework for the journey. Can not be drafted by a solicitor.

Journey

Informal term describing the shared process of surrogacy, from creating a team, through to birth and postnatal relationship.

Team

The relationship between a surrogate and IPs who are on a surrogacy journey together (they may have a team name).

Get to Know (GTK)

Getting to Know period, where intended parents and a surrogate are exclusively getting to know each other with a view to creating a team.

Sibling Journey

A subsequent surrogacy arrangement between the same team, involving additional reflection and updated agreements.

Known Egg Donor (KED)

A person who donates their eggs to someone they know or have met through SurrogacyUK.

Altruistic Surrogacy

Permitted in the UK; only reasonable expenses may be reimbursed, not profit.

Language to Avoid

Surrogate Mother/Host/Carrier

Surrogate's preference is just "surrogate" which is clear and respectful.

Commissioning Parent

Intended Parents do not commission or procure a surrogate, so this phrase is inaccurate.

Payment/Fee

Surrogate is not for profit in the UK, so expenses or reimbursement should be used.

Contract

There are no legally binding contracts in the UK, agreement is the preferred term.

"Use" a Surrogate/Known Egg Donor

This can come across as dehumanising and isn't reflective of the relationship between surrogates/known egg donors and intended parents.

Giving away the baby

Surrogates consider it giving the baby back to it's parents.