

Extra healthcare and housing support for those arriving from Afghanistan

- First dose of COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to everyone arriving from Afghanistan
- Rapid access to support for mental wellbeing

Additional healthcare provision, access to COVID-19 vaccinations and funding for housing will be provided to support Afghans coming to the UK via the Afghanistan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme.

Councils in England, Scotland and Wales will have access to a share of £5 million to help them provide the necessary housing and support to Afghans who have worked for this country in Afghanistan, but who now face threats of persecution or worse.

The Afghan LES (Locally Employed Staff) Housing Costs Fund will provide a top up to help councils meet the costs of renting properties for those that need it, including larger homes for families. This will help give councils the security to make a firm offer of support to take people into their communities and help them build a new life.

So far the UK has secured the evacuation of 1,615 people since Saturday, including 399 British Nationals and their dependants, 320 embassy staff, and 402 Afghan nationals under ARAP. The UK is doubling the amount of humanitarian aid to the region, up to £286 million with immediate effect, and our new bespoke resettlement scheme will be one of the most generous in British history, set to relocate up to 20,000 vulnerable Afghans.

As President of the G7 the UK is working to unite the international community behind a clear plan for dealing with this regime and we are asking our international partners to match our commitments and work with us to offer a lifeline to Afghanistan's most vulnerable people.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Our immediate focus is to evacuate the Afghans who risked their lives supporting us over the past twenty years and to whom we owe so much.

We are proud to bring them to the UK, and this additional support will help make sure that those arriving from Afghanistan receive the housing and healthcare that they need as they start to build a new life here.

We will do everything we can in the days, weeks and months ahead to

protect the most vulnerable, which is why we're doubling our humanitarian aid to the region and setting up a new bespoke resettlement scheme to give up to 20,000 of those most in need of refuge here in the UK.

Additional healthcare provision has also been put in place. All those who have fled Afghanistan are also being offered the COVID-19 vaccine on arrival, if they haven't received one already, and will be issued with a vaccine card.

New vaccination points will also be set up at each managed quarantine hotel and those arriving will be invited to get their jab after they have received a negative Day 2 PCR test. Enhanced healthcare support to Afghan refugees will also include:

- Doubling our medical provision to ensure everyone can access medical support 24/7;
- Providing rapid access to support for mental well-being in the wake of experiencing trauma;
- Reuniting family members who arrive on different flights where possible;
- Allowing people to stay in large family groups in quarantine for comfort and support;
- Providing regular information check-ins with local services to prepare refugees for resettlement with additional translators to support engagement with the services being provided;
- Providing toys to keep children entertained; and
- Giving appropriate clothes for people who may have left Afghanistan with very little.

This is on top of the robust health and wellbeing support already in place at managed quarantine hotels. As part of existing support, those entering quarantine hotels from Afghanistan will also have access to:

- Medical support to ensure all evacuees undergo a health check;
- 24/7 on-site medical team;
- Care links to local care providers where needed;
- Access to both female and male health professionals; and
- Daily health and wellbeing checks, either through doctors safely visiting hotel rooms or through a guest telephone calling system, with all call handlers speaking both Pushto and Dari.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

In response to this unfolding tragedy, we are committed to ensuring those who are being resettled here in the UK under our Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy have our full support.

As Health Secretary, my focus is on the health and wellbeing of families from the moment they touch down in the UK. I was very pleased today to be able to meet one such family who arrived

recently and learn from their experience of the healthcare we have provided so far.

We are boosting our health and wellbeing services to evacuees during their 10 day quarantine. This includes giving everyone a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, if they have not already received one, doubling our medical provision to ensure everyone can access support round the clock and reuniting families who arrive on different flights where we can.

Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick said:

There is already an enormous effort underway to support those arriving from Afghanistan with close to a third of councils already stepping up to support new arrivals.

However, we urgently need more offers of support to welcome Afghan families who have stood shoulder to shoulder with the UK, serving our troops and our country so bravely in recent years.

With this extra support in place, I'm calling on all councils who have not yet come forward, to contact us with a firm offer of support to help our Afghan friends and their families as they build a new life in safety here.

The ARAP scheme launched on 01 April 2021. Under the scheme, any current or former Locally Employed Staff who worked in Afghanistan for the UK Embassy assessed to be at serious risk of threat to life are offered priority relocation to the UK regardless of their employment status, rank or role, or length of time served.

Thanks to the efforts of over a quarter of councils across the UK and vital delivery partners, hundreds of Afghan nationals who have worked alongside British forces and diplomats in Afghanistan have already been welcomed by councils across the country.

This work is happening at pace and, with many more Afghan families set to arrive, there is still more to do to ensure we are supporting new arrivals as best we can.

Earlier this week, the government set out its ambition for the new Afghanistan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme – a new plan to resettle 5,000 Afghan nationals in its first year, with priority given to those most in need due to the current crisis – including women and girls, and religious and other minorities, who are most at risk of human rights abuses and

dehumanising treatment.

This resettlement scheme will be kept under further review for future years, with up to a total of 20,000 people potentially eligible in the long-term. The ambition to provide protection to thousands of people fleeing Afghanistan and the complex picture on the ground means there will be significant challenges in delivering the scheme, but the government is committed to doing all it can for those who need our support and is working at great speed to address these obstacles.

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We will do everything we can in the days, weeks and months ahead to protect the most vulnerable, which is why we're doubling our humanitarian aid to the region and setting up a new bespoke resettlement scheme to give up to 20,000 of those most in need of refuge here in the UK.

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[Foreign Secretary meets NATO Allies to discuss Afghanistan](#)

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab met NATO Allies virtually today (Friday 20 August), to call for a unified approach to counter the threat of terrorism in Afghanistan, and ensure unhindered humanitarian aid access, following the takeover of the Taliban.

NATO Allies also emphasised the need for an inclusive and representative government in Afghanistan, and for the international community to remain united in ensuring the Taliban uphold human rights for citizens across the country.

In order to safeguard regional stability, Allies pledged to continue working closely with regional partners.

NATO Allies are already coordinating operations to evacuate citizens, nationals from partner countries, and the most vulnerable Afghans, particularly those who have assisted NATO efforts.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The UK's immediate priorities are working alongside our NATO Allies to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe-haven for terrorists, ensuring that life-saving humanitarian aid can reach those who need it most, and working with international partners to safeguard stability in the region.

This week, the UK pledged to resettle 20,000 Afghan refugees over the next five years. This is in addition to the UK's ARAP scheme, which offers any current or former locally employed staff – who are assessed to be under serious threat to life – priority relocation to the UK. The UK also doubled its humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan, to provide urgent assistance to those suffering from the conflict, drought and COVID-19. This brings the total UK aid to Afghanistan for this year to £286 million.

On Thursday (19 August), the Foreign Secretary also met G7 counterparts where they agreed to engage with partners to pursue an inclusive political settlement, ensure the delivery of crucial humanitarian support to Afghanistan and the region, and prevent any further loss of life due to terrorism.

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[Lincolnshire man prosecuted for illegal waste activities](#)

A Lincolnshire man has been given a suspended prison sentence and his van and funds confiscated at Lincoln Crown Court, for storing and burning waste illegally at a site in Holbeach – despite repeated warnings from the Environment Agency.

Simon Mason, 51, of Bens Gate Road, Holbeach, Lincolnshire, was found to have burned a variety of waste at his property, without an environmental permit or registered waste exemption. He was also found to be storing more than 600 fridges at the site.

Some 700 cubic metres of waste were discovered at the site by Environment Agency officers

Mason's 8 month sentence was suspended for 2 years on condition he completes 250 hours of unpaid work and complies with a 3 month, 7pm to 7am curfew. His available assets of £8,317 were ordered to be confiscated after it was calculated he benefited from his illegal waste activities by £144,000. No order was made for costs because of Mason's limited means.

A registered waste carrier, Mason told Environment Agency officers that he had operated a waste business at the site for a number of years. He collected waste from house clearances and was paid by an electrical store to take away

waste fridges. He burned some of the waste and stored the rest at his property.

Mason burned waste at the site, including fridges, which are classed as hazardous material and require special disposal

Officers visited the site on 6 occasions, beginning in April 2018, and told Mason verbally and in writing to stop bringing waste to the site and burning it. They also told him to take the waste to an authorised waste site for recycling or disposal, and later issued him with statutory notices. However, on returning to the site, they found more waste had been brought to the site and burned.

Rubbish observed at the site during the multiple visits included household waste, furniture, mattresses, clothing, paint cans, toilets, televisions and numerous fridges. Some of the rubbish had been burned, prompting neighbours to complain about the smoke generated. Fridges are classed as hazardous waste and require specialist disposal.

Environment Agency Senior Lawyer Sarah Dunne said:

By November 2018, the Environment Agency's patience was largely exhausted. Officers attended at the site and found 634 fridges and over 700 cubic metres of other waste.

Judge John Pini QC told Mason:

You started running this waste disposal business. You went into it with staggering naivety. It's pretty obvious to absolutely anybody that you can't dispose of this waste by burning it, putting toxic fumes into the environment. I fail to understand why you did not grasp that.

Reminding Mason that he was operating what he knew to be an illegal business throughout 2019 and 2020, Judge Pini warned him that he would be imprisoned if he repeated his illegal activity.

Helen Clayton from the Environment Agency's Waste North Team said:

Storing and burning waste in this way saved the cost of legal disposal and put the environment at real risk. This result should serve as a warning for others that we take illegal waste activity extremely seriously and we will take enforcement action against those who flout the law.

Despite our advice, Mr Mason showed a deliberate disregard for the law and we welcome this sentence, which sends a powerful message to

anyone in Mr Mason's position that waste crime will not pay.

Environment Agency officers attending the site in November 2018 found 634 fridges being stored

Notes for editors

Simon Mason was prosecuted for operating a facility for the deposit, treatment and storage of waste between September 2015 and February 2021, contrary to Regulations 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

He was also prosecuted for the disposal of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health between April 2018 and February 2021, contrary to Section 33(1)(c) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended.