

# Operation Warm Welcome

Work is underway across the whole of Government to ensure the Afghans who stood side by side with us in conflict, their families and those at highest risk who have been evacuated, are supported as they now rebuild their lives in the UK.

The plans, dubbed 'Operation Warm Welcome', will be overseen by Victoria Atkins as the new Minister for Afghan Resettlement.

The support provided will be similar to the commitments in the Syrian Resettlement Programme and ensure that those who worked closely with the British military and UK Government in Afghanistan, and risked their lives in doing so, get the vital health, education, support into employment and accommodation they need to fully integrate into society.

The UK has a proud history of providing safe haven to those in need and the plans to be set out next week will also harness that generosity of spirit and the offers of support which have already flooded in from charities, businesses and the British public.

This includes the creation of a central portal where people, organisations and businesses can register their offer of support, be it volunteering, a job opportunity, professional skills to help with integration and deal with trauma or donations of items like clothes and toys. Free English language courses will also be provided in recognition that many of the dependents of former staff and Afghan translators may need this.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

For those who have left their homes with no more than a small bag of belongings, and in fear for their lives, coming to the UK will no doubt have been a daunting experience, but also one of hope for the future.

I am determined that we welcome them with open arms and that my Government puts in place the support they need to rebuild their lives. We will never forget the brave sacrifice made by Afghans who chose to work with us, at great risk to themselves. We owe them, and their families, a huge debt.

Full details will be set out next week and build on the commitments already made. These include £5 million for local councils to provide housing support, an offer of a vaccine for everyone on arrival and access to rapid mental well-being and trauma support.