

# UK co-hosts Afghanistan Pledging Conference 2022: Foreign Secretary's speech

Secretary-General, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for joining this critical event.

As a direct result of the Taliban's violent takeover, Afghanistan is the scene of the world's largest humanitarian crisis.

...More than twenty million people in dire need of humanitarian support...Over one million children at risk of dying from hunger.

Even while we respond urgently to the crisis in Ukraine, we can't neglect the people of Afghanistan.

That is why the United Kingdom is proud to be co-hosting this conference with the United Nations, Qatar, and Germany, to strengthen the international response which has already saved lives this winter.

The UK has led by example.

Under our G7 Presidency, we rallied our allies in calling on the Taliban to respect the freedom and human rights of all Afghans.

We've doubled UK aid to Afghanistan, disbursing £286 million – \$380 million – this financial year. And I am pleased to announce that we will match that with the same amount in the financial year which starts tomorrow.

As part of a global effort, we have provided health services for over 300,000 people.

We have provided over 6 million people with emergency health, food, water, shelter and education support through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund.

I want to thank the UN agencies and NGOs for working hard to deliver in these tough times.

We worked closely with partners in the UN Security Council to agree the humanitarian exception to the UN Afghanistan sanctions regime.

But there is more we can, and must, do together.

Now is the time to dig deep by pledging to support the Afghan population, particularly those most in need.

The UN has launched its largest ever appeal, for Afghanistan this year.

We need to work through the UN to deliver real change for the Afghan people,

upholding their rights and holding the Taliban to account.

Our friends and partners in the region continue to play a critical role.

I'd like to thank countries across the region that have offered support and delivered urgent humanitarian aid. I especially welcome the OIC's new trust fund.

We know there are no easy fixes to Afghanistan's problems.

Whilst humanitarian assistance is vital now, it won't be enough to restart Afghanistan's economy.

All Afghans have the right to basic services like education and health.

And we want to see Afghanistan able to grow so it can in time finance its own development.

But our potential to provide support will depend on how constructively the Taliban engage on key issues like the rights of women and girls and also ethnic and religious minorities.

Women and girls are amongst the most marginalised groups. They have been denied opportunities in education and employment – which are key drivers of equality.

No nation can succeed if half of its population is held back.

Women and girls must be allowed the chance to study at all levels. Children have the right, regardless of where they are born, to build their own future through education.

Most Afghan women suffer violence in their lifetime, and more girls are being pushed into early marriages.

That isn't acceptable, and it is why we must put women and girls at the heart of our response.

Afghan women are fierce advocates for their country and deserve the opportunity to realise their potential.

The UK is committed that at least 50% of those we reach with our aid should be women and girls.

We'll continue to monitor the Taliban's actions, especially in this area.

We have to work in unison to deliver a better future for Afghanistan.

And by stepping up to the plate, we can enable freedom to flourish.

Our aim cannot be merely for the Afghan people to survive – we want them to thrive.

And that's the key to building a better and safer future for us all.

Thank you for your support.

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## [New housing services for thousands of UK military families comes into force](#)

Five contracts, which provide a new national call centre and enhanced maintenance and repair services to military homes, were awarded last June by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

The contracts are worth £640-million in total and make up part of the MOD's £3-billion Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS) programme, which has replaced the previous National Housing Prime contract.

The new accommodation contracts will directly benefit the many families who live in military homes across the UK, providing a step-change in how services are delivered to them.

In developing the new contracts, DIO collaborated closely with military personnel, their families and the Service Families Federations to ensure that their needs were fully considered.

From today, Pinnacle Group Ltd will operate the National Service Centre, which will be the single point of contact for Service families.

The £141-million contract is expected to create or sustain 350 jobs and will deliver more responsive and accessible accommodation services through greater use of modern communications technology. Families will be able to make service requests and track their progress in real time and will also have more choice when arranging appointments.

Four Regional Accommodation Maintenance Services (RAMS) contracts have also started today. Jointly worth £499-million, they will provide repair and maintenance services to military homes. They are being delivered by Amey in the Northern Region, which includes Scotland, Northern Ireland and North Wales, and in the Central Region, which includes Mid and South Wales; and by VIVO in the South East and South West of England.

The contracts require suppliers to adopt recognised industry standards and incentives will be introduced for suppliers to ensure that the interests of customers come first. These will be supported by robust mechanisms to address poor performance. This includes specific targets for 'first time fixes' for repairs, and quicker response times for most repairs, both of which should reduce disruption for Service families.

It also includes targets for customer satisfaction that, for the first time, will directly impact on the profit suppliers make. As well as setting minimum

standards, the contracts will reward suppliers for exceeding the minimum.

**Defence Procurement Minister Jeremy Quin said:**

These contracts are critical to the delivery of key services to our Armed Forces and Service Personnel.

They also support hundreds of jobs and community prosperity and will provide a crucial step towards modernising our Defence estates.

**Air Commodore James Savage, DIO Head of Accommodation, said:**

Our Armed Forces and their families have no real choice where they serve, no matter how remote, and when and how frequently they move, so it's vital we ensure their homes are of the right quality and available for them wherever and whenever they are assigned.

Their needs must be at the heart of what we do.

These contracts are designed to be very different. They have been developed with Service Personnel and families firmly in mind to better meet their needs.

Enhancing customer service will be their focus, with clear customer satisfaction targets for suppliers to meet, financial consequences for falling short and incentives to exceed the minimum standards.

Each contract is for seven year's duration with an option to extend for up to three years, and to terminate after three years, depending on contractor performance.

In addition to the core services, the RAMS contracts will deliver further improvement projects and refurbishment work with an estimated value of up to £855-million.

Over the last two financial years, DIO has spent £350-million on improvement works to its housing stock and plans to deliver a further £171-million worth of upgrades this financial year.

[A guide for Service families about applying for, maintaining, moving in and out of and living in UK Service Family Accommodation](#)

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## Former Derbyshire farmer ordered to pay £24,120 for illegally burning waste

In a case at Derby Magistrates' Court on 29 March 2022, John Patrick Radford, aged 76, of Upper Hartshay, Heage, Belper, Derbyshire, admitted 2 offences of operating a regulated facility without an environmental permit.

He was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £14,000, plus a victim surcharge of £120.

Between September 2016 and 2018, Radford burned waste brought to the farm by third parties and continued to operate despite warnings from the Environment Agency to stop the activity.

He had registered an exemption under the regulations for the burning of waste, but this only allowed the burning of green waste (plant matter) or untreated wood waste produced on site. This did not allow waste to be brought in from elsewhere to be burnt.

The court was told that the burning waste produced large quantities of smoke which affected 2 neighbours who complained to the Environment Agency. The smoke also posed a danger to drivers on the main road outside the farm.

The smoke posed a danger to drivers on the main road outside the farm

In sentencing, the Judge said Radford's claim that he did not obtain any financial benefit from the activity was "incredulous".

He also stated that the defendant had ample opportunity to stop the unlawful activity before the prosecution was brought against him, but he chose not to do so.

The Judge stated that he would impose a financial penalty due to Radford's age, his lack of previous convictions, and the absence of any further offending.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

Any person or business who treats, stores or deposits waste without the required environmental permit is breaking the law.

The conditions of an environmental permit are designed to protect people and the environment.

Failure to comply with these legal requirements is a serious offence that can damage the environment, harm human health and undermine local legitimate waste companies.

We welcome this sentence which should act as a deterrent to others considering flouting the law.

If anyone is suspicious of waste activities they should call our 24/7 hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers anonymously and in confidence on 0800 555 111.

## **Charges**

Between 5 September 2016 and 31 December 2016 John Patrick Radford operated a regulated facility on land, namely Hartshay Hall Farm, Upper Hartshay, Heage, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 2HW, which was not authorised by an environmental permit, namely a non-exempt waste operation involving the deposit, storage and disposal of waste, contrary to Regulation 38(1)(a) and Regulation 12(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Between 1 January 2017 and 3 June 2018 John Patrick Radford operated a regulated facility on land, namely Hartshay Hall Farm, Upper Hartshay, Heage, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 2HW, which was not authorised by an environmental permit, namely a non-exempt waste operation involving the deposit, storage and disposal of waste, contrary to Regulation 38(1)(a) and Regulation 12(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

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## **[PM roundtable with industry leaders from the wind sector: 31 March 2022](#)**

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson chaired a roundtable of industry leaders from the wind sector.



The Prime Minister chaired a roundtable of industry leaders from the wind sector this afternoon. This was third in a series of business roundtables focussed on energy security.

He began by noting the huge natural potential for offshore wind as a secure and renewable energy source. Recent events, including Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, had shown how crucial it is that the UK builds a strong, home-grown renewable energy sector to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

While the UK was already a world leader in offshore wind, the Prime Minister told attendees that he had an insatiable desire to further maximise supply. This would support high-wage, high-skilled jobs, while ensuring the UK can deliver Net Zero by 2050 and meet its energy needs for the future.

Attendees discussed a range of issues relevant to the sector, including auctions, improving the resilience of the energy grid, reducing costs and exploring what more could be done to ensure that locally supported windfarms can be built in good time.

Energy Minister, Greg Hands, raised the work of Offshore Wind Acceleration Task Force which is currently leading a review in this area. He also set out the support that government is providing, including over £380 million for offshore wind technology.

The Prime Minister ended by reaffirming his commitment to ramp up the supply of wind power and thanked industry for their collaboration as part of this effort.

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## [Launch of the new DBS customer satisfaction survey](#)

News story

The survey will be used to measure customer satisfaction on an ongoing basis.



Today, Friday 1 April 2022, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has launched a new [customer satisfaction survey](#) to better understand the views and experiences of our customers.

The survey, which is available in both English and Welsh, will help gather valuable feedback from customers about DBS services. The insight from the survey will also be used to help identify areas for future improvement.

The survey is estimated to take no longer than a few minutes.

Eric Robinson, CEO at DBS, said:

In January, DBS was pleased to be named in the UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) as the highest-rated public sector organisation for customer satisfaction in the UK. We are now aiming to build on this achievement by launching a new customer survey. The survey will provide us with useful feedback on a continuous basis so as an organisation, we can continually improve and ensure our services meet the highest standards. We want to encourage all our customers – from individuals to large organisations – to complete the survey.

Everyone who completes the survey will also be given the opportunity to sign up to participate in future research with DBS.

The survey will run on an ongoing basis, and is available to complete from today. Access the survey here: [DBS customer satisfaction survey](#)

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