

RT HON DR ANDREW MURRISON MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER
FOR DEFENCE PEOPLE, VETERANS AND SERVICE FAMILIES

MSU 4.4.1.12

10 November 2023

Dear Service Personnel and Families,

ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED BY MOD FOR ARAP AFGHAN FAMILIES

I am writing to provide you with an update on His Majesty's Government's (HMG) efforts to house those who have come to the UK via the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). You may recall the attached letter sent by Chief of Defence People in March that explained that ARAP families would be housed in Service Family Accommodation (SFA).

We owe a debt of gratitude to those who worked for and alongside the British Armed Forces in Afghanistan, and MOD is therefore contributing to cross-Government efforts to house ARAP families. Recent developments in the region have caused HMG to re-evaluate the risks to ARAP Families, leading to a recently agreed change of policy increasing the pace of relocations.

To ensure that ARAP families can begin a settled life in the UK, HMG is offering transitional and settled accommodation from the Defence estate and the Private Rental Sector, as follows:

Transitional Accommodation:

- **Large Sites:** Two Defence training sites to hold ARAP families for short periods as they arrive from overseas, and before moving to leased SFA or commercially sourced accommodation.
- **Transitional SFA:** SFA to be used for around six-week periods to accommodate ARAP families arriving from overseas. As above, this will provide temporary accommodation for ARAP families while settled accommodation is sourced. It will operate on a rolling basis.

Leased Accommodation:

- **Void SFA:** void SFA (additional to the transitional SFA) leased to Afghan families for three-year periods (for those with two to four bed requirements). All SFA offered is 'outside the wire'.
- **Commercially sourced accommodation:** Accommodation in the Private Rental Sector to house those with a one bed or a five-plus bed requirement.

This is being coordinated by MOD's Directorate of Defence Afghan Relocation and Resettlement with support from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and Standing Joint Command (SJC).

Whilst there are already over 200 Afghan families living in SFA, I recognise the concerns this letter may give rise to and MOD will work closely with Housing Colonels and the local Chain of Command to minimise any impact. More of you will have ARAP families as neighbours over the coming years, and I would encourage you to give them a warm welcome, whether in transitional or leased SFA. It is however worth noting that the overall responsibility for delivering welfare support and settling ARAP families into their local community will mostly sit with the Local Authority. If you would like to contribute to this work to help people settle into their new lives in the UK, please visit the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/help-afghanistan>

I assure you that every effort will be made to ensure that this transition is as smooth as possible, and I am grateful for your understanding. If you have any questions, please speak to your Chain of Command who can escalate your query as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew Murrison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

RT HON DR ANDREW MURRISON MP