



Afghan Resettlement Frequently Asked Questions

The Wales Strategic Migration Partnership (WSMP) was established in 2001 and is funded by the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to facilitate strategic leadership, advice and coordination on migration. The WSMP is hosted by the [Welsh Local Government Association](#) (WLGA) to reflect the Partnership's All-Wales role around migration.

The Refugee Resettlement Coordinator at the [WSMP](#) leads on the Wales-wide Coordination of the UK Government resettlement schemes and Community Sponsorship, acting as a single point of contact for the Home Office, 22 Welsh councils, voluntary and community sector and other partners. In June 2019, the UK Government announced that a new consolidated [UK Resettlement Scheme \(UKRS\)](#) would replace other existing resettlement programmes from April 2020. The new scheme would aim to resettle around 5,000 refugees each year. The roll out of UKRS was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

What are the UK Resettlement Schemes?

Since 1st March 2025 [The Afghan Resettlement Programme \(ARP\)](#) brings together existing Afghan resettlement schemes into a single pipeline to improve efficiency, value for money and outcomes across Afghan Resettlement. The UK Government intends to reach an eventual ending of UK Afghan resettlement schemes. Existing schemes that will be brought under the ARP include:

1. [The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy \(ARAP\)](#). This is for Afghan citizens who worked for or with the UK Government in Afghanistan in exposed or meaningful roles and may include an offer of relocation to the UK for those deemed eligible by the Ministry of Defence and who are deemed suitable for relocation by the Home Office.
2. [The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme \(ACRS\)](#). This is a referral-based resettlement scheme which prioritises vulnerable people and those who assisted UK efforts in Afghanistan.

All arrivals have *indefinite leave to remain* as granted by the UK Government. Indefinite leave to remain means that the UK is now the permanent home for these families and they are regarded as settled in the UK, and will have entitlement to public funds, employment opportunities and able to seek housing in the private rented sector.

For further information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-resettlement-programme>



The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) applications

- All ARAP applications received before the scheme closed will be processed, but the UKG will not be accepting new principal applications after this point. Those who are found eligible will still have their immediate family members – such as one spouse and children under 18 – automatically considered for relocation. They will also have thirty days from accepting their ARAP offer to make an application to relocate any additional family members to the UK.
- Those who have already applied for resettlement in the UK do not need to do anything and should wait to hear from their caseworker. Contacting the UK Government will not speed up the process.
- Some applications are incredibly complex, and it may take some time to ensure that those who are eligible are identified and relocated quickly once eligibility is confirmed. UKG are committed to making and communicating eligibility decisions as quickly as possible.

Afghanistan Response Route (ARR) - (discontinued)

The ARR was created by the previous government in response to [a data incident](#) that occurred in February 2022 (“the data incident”). It provided for certain individuals to be considered for eligibility for relocation to the UK. The ARR also enabled eligible principals to apply for their immediate and additional family members to relocate to the UK.

Eligibility

The ARR had a two-stage process:

- Eligibility Stage: Conducted by the MOD.
- Entry Clearance Stage: Conducted by the Home Office.

Although the ARR is now discontinued, the eligibility stage for family members and the entry clearance stage for all will remain open for individuals who received an invitation letter before 4 July 2025.

All individuals relocated under the ARR undergo strict security checks, including national security checks, before entering the UK.

[Afghanistan Response Route - GOV.UK](#)



Transitional accommodation

- All arrivals on the **Afghan Resettlement Programme** are offered transitional accommodation for up to 9 months. This is intended to provide time for families to acclimatise to life in the UK, fostering a culture of independent living, without dependency or incurring excessive costs.
- Transitional accommodation is a vital part of the support offer to Afghan arrivals, allowing them to orient themselves and set themselves up for success for their new lives in the UK.
- Transitional accommodation will continue to be a mixture of serviced accommodation and hotels alongside reduced use of the Defence Estate. This will be spread across the country.
- Sites on the Defence estate used as transitional accommodation will be returned to their previous use in due course, and UK Government are working to minimise the impact of resettlement work on Service personnel, Service families and key Defence outputs.

Settled accommodation

- All Afghan arrivals will be encouraged to source their own settled accommodation through a 'Find Your Own pathway.'
- In recognition of the pressures on housing supply and the unique challenges facing this cohort, the Government commits to continuing to fund and support a pipeline of settled housing to support around half of these arrivals, who are the hardest to house.
- This will be through additional capital funding, community sponsorship and some Service Family Accommodation. This will ensure that there is a pipeline of settled accommodation to support delivery of the Afghan Resettlement Programme.
- Those Afghan families who have moved into settled accommodation are unaffected by these changes and will be free to stay there for the duration of their tenancies.

What is the Community Sponsorship Scheme?

[Community Sponsorship](#) is part of UK Government-UNHCR resettlement programme which allows community groups to directly welcome and support a resettled family into their local community. It is designed to operate in partnership with local communities and promotes positive outcomes for both resettled families and those who support them.



Refugees resettled through the Community Sponsorship are in addition to those resettled to councils through other resettlement schemes.

[RESET charity](#) provides advice, support and assistance with practical requirements for groups wanting to register and become sponsors.

Communities for Afghans

- Communities for Afghans is a sponsorship route for individuals from the Afghan Resettlement Programme. As set out by Ministers in Parliament there is now a single [Afghan Resettlement Programme](#) for all eligible Afghans who arrive in the UK.
- It is designed to quickly deliver safe, affordable homes, based on a community sponsorship model, enabling local community groups to welcome and support refugees directly in their local communities. As such, it operates differently from other resettlement programmes. Responsibility for the resettlement of households is shared between HM Government, Principal Sponsors, Sponsor Groups and councils. Successful sponsorship arrangements will therefore rely on positive engagement and collaborative working relationships between these groups.
- Principal Sponsors have overall responsibility for the effectiveness of the Sponsor Group in supporting the household for the duration of the scheme and will provide direct support to both the household and the Sponsor Group to make sure that the resettlement goes to plan. They will recruit, train and support Sponsor Groups through the scheme and provide ongoing support. They will work in tandem with the council; however, they will be the first port of call if there are any issues or challenges. Principal Sponsors are there to support the council and Sponsor Group in agreeing their joint approach.
- Sponsor Groups will provide much of the day-to-day assistance across the 3-years of the scheme. They are responsible for sourcing accommodation and welcoming a household as well as supporting them to settle into their new community and starting to lead independent lives. Sponsor Groups are supported by funding but also have the option to fundraise should they wish to do this.
- Councils will play a key role in administering funding from HM Government to the Sponsor Group, providing longer-term integration support and statutory responsibilities including homelessness, safeguarding and social care provision. Within these guidelines, the scheme and the funding are designed to enable the council to respond flexibly to the needs of the family, and the local situation to deliver the overall outcome. Councils will receive tariff funding to be able to fulfil these responsibilities.



The **Communities for Afghans (CfA)** phase 2 aims to accommodate 500 Afghan households (approximately 2,750 individuals) on the Afghan Resettlement Programme by the end of March 2031. The aim is to provide households with the tools that they need to integrate into society and promote cohesion between guests and their local communities so that they can participate fully in UK life.

Purpose: To deliver a service through voluntary and community groups to provide accommodation and support for Afghans who have arrived through a Government resettlement route so that they can come to the UK and settle here successfully.

Eligibility: Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations based in the UK.

- **Funding available:**
- £4.145 million for Principal Sponsors. Funding will be split across financial years 2025/26 to 2030/31. This funding will be provided to administer the project.
- There will also be an upfront costs fund for things like deposits and upfront rent for the Principal Sponsor to manage, and a monthly Sponsor Group fund paid via their council particularly to help with housing costs, as well as a tariff per arrival paid to their council where the family settles.
- Funding of £909 per person is available to Sponsor Groups for upfront costs including deposits, first month's rent and other initial costs. There is no cap on household size for funding. Principal Sponsors will be asked to distribute this money to Sponsor Groups.
- Funding of £136 per person per month for 3 years is available for ongoing monthly costs, including help with rental costs for example. There is no cap on household size for funding. This will be paid via their council.

For further information please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/communities-for-afghans-project-dluhc-policy-update/communities-for-afghans-phase-2-supporting-information>

How do people get selected for resettlement?

The [UN Refugee Agency \(UNHCR\)](#) identifies people who are most at risk of **serious harm** in the country where they are registered, and also in their home country, usually because of **threats to their life, freedom or physical safety, or other serious violations of human rights**.



These risks are assessed when responding to the specific needs of individuals and families, taking due account of the local context, the availability of legal and physical protection, the accessibility of relevant services, the prospects for returning safely to their home country and the principle of family unity.

Women, men, girls and boys may be considered for resettlement, as well as persons of diverse gender identity or sexual orientation, people living with a disability, stateless individuals and others who are assessed to be in need of international protection. Factors such as nationality, ethnicity, political opinion, religious beliefs, education, work experience and language are not relevant to whether UNHCR will consider people for resettlement.

Resettlement is not a right. The UNHCR will prioritize **the most urgent cases for referral to a resettlement country**. Refugees cannot choose the country which UNHCR will ask to consider their case, although they have the right to decide whether or not they wish to be resettled.

What is the role of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)?

The IOM provides resettlement support which broadly falls under five areas:

1. Facilitating selection missions and visa processing

The IOM can provide logistical support to the resettlement states' authorities, facilitating their selection missions as well as the visa processing and travel document procedures in the countries from where refugees are resettled.

2. Providing pre-departure health assessment

The IOM's pre-departure health assessment as well as health assistance during travel is to ensure that refugees' health needs are addressed prior to departure, that they are fit to travel, and that appropriate arrangements can be made for reception and continuity of care when needed.

3. Carrying out pre-departure orientation sessions

Pre-departure orientation sessions are paramount to address integration aspects at the earliest possible stage of a refugee's resettlement journey. They aim to help refugees develop practical skills and attitudes that contribute to their early integration in the receiving country.

4. Providing post-arrival integration support

The IOM can also provide post-arrival integration support to resettled refugees. Their aim is to facilitate early integration, examples include post-arrival orientation sessions, the provision of direct support, or the facilitation of enhanced engagement with the receiving community.



5. Implementing movement management and travel operations

To assist refugees in need of resettlement, the IOM provides comprehensive movement assistance that includes in-country and international transportation. While most refugees travel by scheduled commercial air service, certain operations need tailor made arrangements and the use of charter flights.

What is the role of councils?

Every council across Wales has resettled refugee families to date. Council participation is essential to the resettlement of families.

The first aspect is for the council to secure a property to offer to the resettlement scheme.

They must furnish the property accordingly and ensure food and equipment is provided for the family arriving. The matching process, managed by the WSMP Refugee Resettlement Coordinator, ensures formal acceptances of families for the property, including liaison with police, health, and education colleagues.

Upon arrival the council or the support organisation commissioned by the council, must provide an orientation of the property and appliances, and obtain a signed tenancy agreement by the family.

The following day the family will begin their integration support. This support includes registration with GP services, school admissions, registration with dentists, assistance in setting up utilities and attending an appointment with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Bank accounts will also be set-up and orientation of the area will be provided.

Financial support is provided by UK Government for family support for a 3-year period for [ARAP and ACRS](#), and 5 years for [UKRS](#).

What are your contact details for further information?

Please email WSMPComms@wlga.gov.uk and adding 'refugee resettlement query' in the subject line.