Wiltshire Council is committed to do everything it can to help more Afghan refugees settle in Wiltshire. We were already in the process of welcoming three families to Wiltshire as part of the <u>Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy</u> (ARAP), which started in April, well before the recent crisis in Afghanistan made the situation more urgent.

We are working to provide accommodation and support for at least 20 more families under the Afghan resettlement scheme but we await further information from the Home Office to best asses how we can help.

We are grateful for the offers of accommodation from private landlords who have affordable properties and encourage more to send in details by completing a <u>survey</u> detailing types of property available or using the government <u>portal for housing</u> <u>offers</u>.

We are also talking to the Ministry of Defence about how we could support them using the 1350 empty MOD houses in the county as another option.

Some people have kindly offered a room in their own homes, but the government has said that shared houses and general lodgings are not suitable for the main Afghan support scheme. However, we are encouraging people making such generous offers to consider signing up with our <u>fostering</u> or <u>supported lodgings</u> teams.

Meanwhile people have also been generously offering support and donations. Wiltshire Council is asking people to hold onto these goods for the moment and will say where and when they can be delivered. The government has also set up a <u>national link</u> for those wanting to offer help in this way. Offers of support can also be emailed to <u>refugees@wiltshire.gov.uk</u>.

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