

HOMES *for* AFGHANS

March 2022

It has been fantastic to see the tremendous outpouring of public support for the Homes for Ukraine scheme. We believe that this public desire to play a part in welcoming refugees is not restricted to Ukrainians alone but will often extend to others in need of sanctuary in Britain.

We would like the government to urgently commit to making faster progress on resettling properly the Afghans evacuated last summer from Kabul to whom Britain owes a debt of honour. It is impossible for people to rebuild their lives while still in temporary hotel accommodation. We propose that you should lead a new cross-governmental Taskforce to find the right solutions for these families. This should aim to complete its work in 100 days, redirecting the large amounts of public money being spent on hotel accommodation to rehouse people appropriately.

Different solutions will clearly be needed for Afghan families - for whom rooms in people's homes will rarely be an appropriate solution. But many of those who signed up to help Ukrainians, especially if they don't ultimately match with a family fleeing the invasion, will be keen to help in other ways to help refugees start a new life in Britain. We believe they should be given more opportunities, training, and support to do so. Alongside that, organisational offers of sponsorship that will be invited in 'phase two' of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, should incorporate a Homes for Afghans strand from the outset, so that businesses, civic and faith groups, military charities and others are invited to increase the supply of homes for both of these groups with urgent needs. Engaging with local councils to relocate groups of Afghan families together and mobilising the public desire to offer further community support, could especially help to address anxieties about potential isolation when moving to unfamiliar places.

While such bespoke schemes have been used to respond to immediate crises, we believe there is an important opportunity to knit these together into a long-term UK commitment to resettlement. We look forward to the government acting on its pledge for a consolidated UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), which we believe should, as advocated by the Red Cross and politicians of all parties, welcome at least 10,000 people a year, alongside an expanded community sponsorship programme. This would enable better planning nationally and locally of how to make welcoming work for those who come to Britain and the communities they join, as part of a sustained new era of welcoming in Britain.

Luke Tryl (UK Director, More in Common)

Sunder Katwala (Director, British Future)

HOMES *for* **AFGHANS**

Robert Buckland MP (Conservative)
Damian Green MP (Conservative)
Johnny Mercer MP (Conservative)
Caroline Nokes MP (Conservative)
Dan Jarvis MP (Labour)
Jon Cruddas MP (Labour)
Wendy Chamberlain MP (Liberal Democrat Chief Whip)
Tim Farron MP (Liberal Democrat)
Liz Saville Roberts MP (Plaid Cymru)
Baroness Morgan of Cotes (Conservative)
Lord Wei (Conservative)
Lord Purvis of Tweed (Liberal Democrat)
Baroness Smith of Newnham (Liberal Democrat)
Rory Stewart, former Secretary of State for International Development
Dr Julian Huppert, former MP for Cambridge and former Chair of the All-Party Group on Refugees
Sophie Walker, former Reuters journalist and Women's Equality Party (WEP) leader
Krish Kandiah, Sanctuary Foundation
Jill Rutter, British Future
Will Somerville, University of Sheffield
Zehra Zaidi, Action for Afghanistan and We Too Built Britain
Jo Broadwood, Belong, the Cohesion and Integration Network
Muniya Barua, London First
Brad Blitz, University College London
Dr Sara de Jong, Sulha Alliance
Chris Duckett, independent human rights consultant
Bobby Duffy, Kings College London
Darren Ferguson, Beyond Skin
Professor Rob Ford, University of Manchester
Dilwar Hussain, New Horizons in British Islam
Julia Goldsworthy, The Depolarization Project
Gwen Hines, Save the Children
Indy Johar, Dark Matter Labs
Daniel Korski, Welcoming Committee for Hong Kongers
Sarah Magill, Azadi Charity
Katherine Mulherm Action for Afghanistan and Restitution
Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini MBE, LSE and the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
Olga Onuch, University of Manchester
Dr Neelam Raina, Middlesex University, London.
Jenni Regan, IMIX
Jonathan Rutherford, Labour Together
Katherine Schofield, International Campaign for Afghanistan's Musicians
Mirwaiss Sidiqi, International Campaign for Afghanistan's Musicians
Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey, International Campaign for Afghanistan's Musicians
Dr Jawed Sadiqi, Daanish Foundation UK
Julie Siddiqi MBE, Together We Thrive
Dr Sunny Singh, London Metropolitan University
Shailesh Solanki, Asian Media Group
Enver Solomon, Refugee Council

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Professor Marc Stears, UCL

Elizabeth Winter, BAAG (British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group)

James Kirkup, Social Market Foundation

Ryan Shorthouse, BrightBlue

Akeela Ahmed MBE, She Speaks We Hear and the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group

Brad Blitz, UCL

Darren Ferguson, Beyond Skin

Horia Mosadiq, Director of Conflict Analysis Network (CAN)

Laure-Hélène Piron, The Policy Practice

Professor Patrick Vernon OBE, Windrush campaigner

George Cunningham, EU Deputy Ambassador to Afghanistan 2016-18

Dr Edie Friedman, The Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE)

Meena Lawar Hosham, formerly Office of the National Security Council, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Carys Roberts, IPPR

Flora Coleman, Tory Reform Group