Duke of Cambridge meets Afghan refugees in Yorkshire



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Press release from Migration Yorkshire and the Refugee Council

Duke of Cambridge meets Afghan refugees in Yorkshire, as local councils pledge to resettle 1,000 people

The Duke of Cambridge has today visited a hotel in Leeds being used to accommodate refugees evacuated from Afghanistan, to learn how local authorities and charities are working together to support people to rebuild their lives. The Duke has spoken directly to Afghans who have newly arrived and those more settled in the community, about their experiences and challenges as they have fled Afghanistan and have arrived in Yorkshire. He has also met staff from the hotel, Leeds City Council and charities including the Refugee Council, who have responded to the crisis by providing practical help, food, clothes, integration in the local community and mental health support.

The Duke of Cambridge visits Yorkshire and Humber on the same day that Councils in the region announce their pledge to welcome around 1,000 refugees under the Afghan resettlement programmes. All 15 Councils in the Yorkshire and Humber region have pledged to resettle Afghans who have supported the British

forces or are refugees whose lives were in imminent danger in Afghanistan. So far 300 people have been resettled in the Yorkshire and Humber region. With 12,000 refugees from Afghanistan currently in hotels across the country, this work is critical in helping families resettle and rebuild their lives.

Yorkshire and Humber has been at the forefront of the UK's refugee resettlement for over 20 years, being the first region in the UK to accept every major group of refugees since the first Kosovans arrived into Leeds Bradford airport under the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme in 1999. Resettlement in Yorkshire and Humber is delivered by Migration Yorkshire and local authorities working closely with the Refugee Council and other charities.

Dave Brown, Head of Migration Yorkshire said:

'For those people who had to flee for their lives from Afghanistan, it was an incredible boost and an honour seeing the Duke of Cambridge, and also for all those who have worked tirelessly to support them. Yorkshire and Humber always responds well where there is humanitarian need, and I'm proud to see us welcoming our fair share of people to help them find safety and rebuild their lives.'

Enver Solomon, Chief Executive of Refugee Council said:

'It was a real privilege to meet with the Duke of Cambridge today and show him the work the Refugee Council have been doing to support families who had to flee Afghanistan. It's truly

heart-breaking that so many men, women and children had to leave their whole lives behind to escape terror and persecution through no fault of their own. Every day our vital support services are helping people rebuild their lives here in the UK and we should be proud as a nation that we have given them the safety and security they so desperately needed.'



Notes

About the Afghan refugee programmes

The Afghan Resettlement Programmes in the Yorkshire and Humber are managed regionally by Migration Yorkshire and delivered by each of the Local Authorities, in partnership with Refugee Council and a number of smaller voluntary and community sector organisations. The resettlement pledge for Yorkshire and Humber is the proportional split by population size for the region out of the estimated national total of Afghans needing resettlement. The hotel in Leeds that the Duke visited today, is a ‘holding hotel’ arranged by government departments for Afghans while they await allocation to local areas for resettlement. The wrap-around support for the Afghans in the hotel is provided by Leeds City Council. There are two simultaneous Afghan resettlement programmes:

- Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy [ARAP] for any people who worked for the British Government assessed to be at serious risk of threat to life, and their families.
- Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme [ACRS] will prioritise women, girls, children and those most in need, who are likely to face human rights abuses and dehumanising treatment by the Taliban.

About Migration Yorkshire

Migration Yorkshire is a local authority led partnership provides strategic leadership and local support across the Yorkshire and Humber region working with national, regional and local partners Migration Yorkshire manages the regional Afghan resettlement programmes and is hosting today’s visit with the Duke of

Cambridge.

www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk

Resettlement - more information from Migration Yorkshire

@MigrationYorks

About Refugee Council

The Refugee Council works to transform the lives of those who are seeking safety in Britain. For 70 years, we have directly supported and empowered refugees in Britain to lead safe, dignified and fulfilling lives. For more information go to www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

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