

<b>Report title: Written Partner Update:</b> Afghan relocation and assistance policy & Afghan Citizens resettlement scheme	
<b>Report to:</b> Essex Health and Wellbeing Board	
<b>Report author:</b> Christopher White	
<b>Date:</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2022	<b>For:</b> Information
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Christopher White, <a href="mailto:christopher.white@essex.gov.uk">christopher.white@essex.gov.uk</a>	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	


### Afghan relocation and assistance policy & Afghan Citizens resettlement scheme

Now just over one year since first refugee arrivals into the County Councils administrative area so data is for a 12 month period.



According to the East of England LGA figures, which was 764 individuals at end of June 22, Team Essex collective humanitarian response contributed to just under 25% of regional total – which considering challenge is positive.

This diagram shows where families have been supported to move into homes and receive resettlement and integration support from commissioned delivery support provider.

#### ARAP & ACRS Team Essex Response Highlights

Key	Note
	❖ Number of <b>properties offered resulting in families</b> arriving under managed resettlement from July 2021 to June 2022
	❖ Period covers pre & post mass evacuation from Afghanistan in August 2021
	❖ Total <b>number of people</b> housed & resettled across the District, Borough or City Council localities
	❖ July 2021 through to June 2022



Local Housing Authority		
Basildon	1	6
Braintree	3	12
Brentwood		
Castle Point		
Colchester	16	92
Chelmsford	3	14
Epping Forest	2	6
Harlow	1	6
Maldon	1	5
Rochford	2	6
Tendring	4	15
Uttlesford	2	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>174</b>

❖ There have been no new property offers since May 2022



Correct as 15<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022

**Key points:**


1. Tragic events in Ukraine and impact of LAs responding to the 2 visa schemes, in particular H4U visa scheme, has caused an understandable slowing of accommodation offers from Local Housing Authorities (LHAs). No further accommodation offers have come forward since May 22.
2. The last resettlement into homes where in June 22.

### **HO bridging facilities (hotels) operating in Essex (excluding Southend and Thurrock)**

The following show the data of Afghan arrivals in 2 x HO bridging facilities - as at 15<sup>th</sup> August – *but subject to change as Home Office are managing the closure of some bridging facilities e.g. London and Luton and having to move (decant) families out to other bridging facilities.*

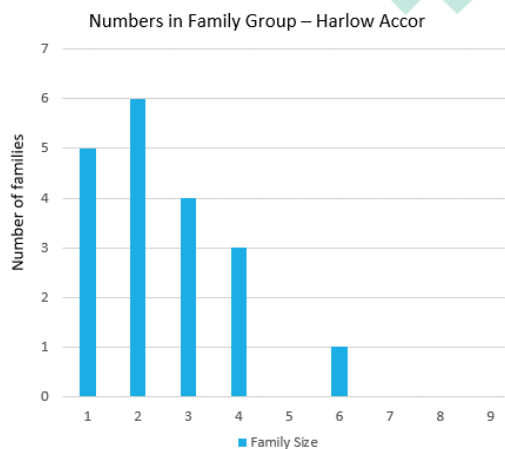
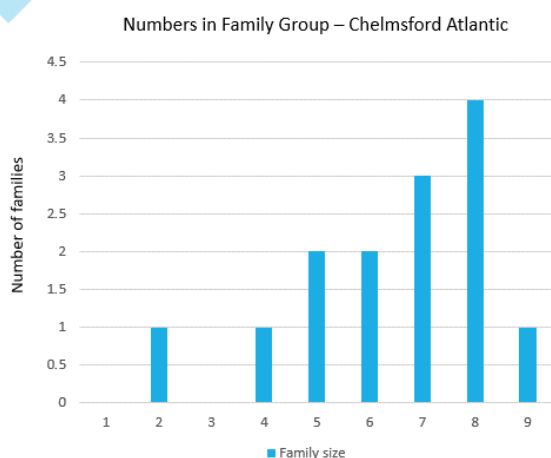


Hotel	Total No. Of Families	Total No. Of People
Atlantic Hotel (Chelmsford)	14	90
Accor Hotel (Harlow)	19	47



Correct as of 15th August 2022

## Breakdown of family sizes in the Home Office bridging facilities/hotels as of 15th August



Correct as of 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Details on length of stay in the Home Office bridging facilities/hotels & proposed contract end dates

Hotel name	Numbers of families / (including lone person with no family)	Arrived at hotel in Month / Year	Home Office Contracts with hotels extended until
Atlantic	2	December 2021	End of December 2023
	2	January 2022	
	8	February 2022	
	1	May 2022	
	1	July 2022	
Accor	10	September 2021	End of January 2023
	1	December 2021	
	1	January 2022	
	1	February 2022	
	2	April 2022	
	4	July 2022	

Correct as of 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022

### Key points:

1. Challenge for LHAs to identify and offer affordable housing to 'home' families who may wish to remain in or around the local area to hotel, the LHA area or wider Essex the region or UK.
2. The expectations and aspirations of families.

3. Some capacity challenges for key services e.g. NHS primary and specialist care; educational providers for children / young people and adults (ESOL).
4. Challenges posed by welfare system and particularly affordability of rents especially in the private rented sector (PRS) across Essex.

DLUCH have initiated a policy called 'find your own accommodation pathway' for families in bridging facilities – summary of the govt policy below:

*The find your own accommodation pathway aims to allow families to source their own accommodation without losing support and funding. This gives families more agency in the housing process and empowerment over their accommodation options. The overall aim is to enable families to be more involved in the process of finding their own accommodation and still be able to receive integration support once they move in, as well as support with deposits and furniture for example. Families will still need support beyond housing, including help with schools, healthcare and benefits etc. The pathway will be delivered through case-working by bridging support staff as part of the 'moving on' wraparound support and supported by Home Office Hotel Liaison Officers.*

There are certain challenges that may arise under the PRS scheme in Essex. The majority of people in bridging hotels in Chelmsford and Harlow as at 15<sup>th</sup> Aug would like to move out of Essex. There are five families, one from the Harlow hotel, and four from Chelmsford who would like to stay in the Chelmsford/Colchester area specifically. Two of these families are a family of eight, and one is a family of nine. Unfortunately, having already discussed housing issues with CBC and CCC it is apparent that there is no availability in either district for 4/5 bedroom houses for these families

ECC Resettlement Programme Manager is working through with key stakeholders at local, regional and national level on how best to implement the policy utilising the associated Govt grant which ECC manages.