

Promotional material

Factsheet: MoD Wethersfield asylum accommodation (accessible)

Updated 5 April 2023

Contents

[What is MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[Who will be accommodated at the asylum accommodation large site at MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[Why MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[How long will asylum seekers be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[How many asylum seekers will be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[What about local people living near MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[Are people able to come and go as they please?](#)

[Is MoD Wethersfield suitable for accommodating people?](#)

[Will vulnerable people be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield?](#)

[Who is running the MoD Wethersfield site?](#)

[What kind of security measures will be put in place?](#)

[Has a final decision been made on the asylum accommodation site at MoD Wethersfield?](#)

When will MoD Wethersfield open?

How will this impact local services, including health?

Are transport services being provided?

General Q&A

Background



© Crown copyright 2023

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-factsheets/factsheet-mod-wethersfield-asylum-accommodation-accessible>

What is MoD Wethersfield?

- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) Wethersfield site is in Braintree, Essex.
- The Home Office, supported by the MoD, is working on proposals which will see the current MoD Wethersfield site used for suitable accommodation for asylum seekers.
- We are working closely with stakeholders, including local authorities and our contractors, to ensure that accommodation for those seeking asylum is suitable.

Who will be accommodated at the asylum accommodation large site at MoD Wethersfield?

- The site will accommodate single adult male asylum seekers.

Why MoD Wethersfield?

- MoD Wethersfield has been identified as a surplus military site that is suitable for the purposes of asylum accommodation.
- The site will create new jobs and bring investment into the area, following the draw-down of the facility.
- MoD Wethersfield will provide accommodation for asylum seekers and is designed to be as self-sufficient as possible, helping to minimise the impact on local communities and services.

How long will asylum seekers be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield?

- We are assessing how long asylum seekers will be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield.

How many asylum seekers will be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield?

- The Home Office plan to use a phased approach to moving people on site starting with c.200 people and increasing to 1,700 people over time.
- The Home Office is working with the service provider to ensure the site is runs smoothly and minimises any impact on the wider community.

What about local people living near MoD Wethersfield?

- The site is designed to minimise the impact on local communities and services, e.g. catering facilities and basic primary care will be available on site.
- We continue to work closely with key local stakeholders to address their concerns and minimise any potential impacts on the local area.

Are people able to come and go as they please?

- The site is self-contained, although those living at the site would be free to come and go.
- If an asylum seeker were not back on site by 11pm the team would make a call to the individual to ensure they are alright and do not need assistance. This would not be under curfew conditions; it would be based on following up on the safety and welfare of the individual.

Is MoD Wethersfield suitable for accommodating people?

- Under Sections 95 and 98 of the Immigration Act 1999, the Home Secretary has a statutory obligation to provide destitute asylum seekers with accommodation.
- Accommodation and onsite facilities at MoD Wethersfield are designed to ensure the essential needs of those accommodated there are met.
- There will be robust processes in place to assess and manage the requirements of anyone who would be accommodated at the site.
- We will work with the service provider and local transport companies to ensure anyone housed at MoD Wethersfield would be able to obtain all their essential needs.

Will vulnerable people be accommodated at MoD Wethersfield?

- We will assess individual's suitability to reside at MoD Wethersfield and will only accommodate single adult males who are considered suitable to reside there.
- Each person's suitability will be assessed at regular intervals.
- There are plans for medical services to be provided onsite at MoD Wethersfield.
- All asylum seekers in the UK may contact Migrant Help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year if they need help, advice, or guidance, that includes raising issues relating to safeguarding.

Who is running the MoD Wethersfield site?

- MoD Wethersfield will be operated under the supervision of the Home Office by an existing asylum accommodation provider.

What kind of security measures will be put in place?

- To ensure security forms an integral part of the proposed site, a specialist security provider will be working on site 24/7, introducing measures such as mobile CCTV units.
- We are working closely with local police forces and MoD teams to ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place. The safety and security of the local communities, those asylum seekers on the sites and the sites themselves are of the utmost importance.

Has a final decision been made on the asylum accommodation site at MoD Wethersfield?

- The Home Office is currently developing the site at MoD Wethersfield to be used for asylum accommodation. Physical works to mobilise the site will begin shortly.
- It is our intention to use a phased approach, gradually increasing the number of asylum seekers accommodated at the site over time.

When will MoD Wethersfield open?

- The Home Office is currently developing the site at MoD Wethersfield to be used for asylum accommodation. Physical works to mobilise the site will begin shortly.
- It is our intention to use a phased approach, gradually increasing the number of asylum seekers accommodated at the site over time.

How will this impact local services, including health?

- For all sites, we are considering the impact on local services including the NHS, police and fire services and working with local partners to develop bespoke plans that take account of local environmental issues, heritage and any risks associated with each site. This includes basic on-site healthcare to limit pressures on local NHS services. All sites will have 24/7 security.
- The government currently provides £3,500 to local authorities for new and occupied dispersal beds. This £3,500 funding for local authorities will be

extended to sites at Wethersfield and Scampton.

Are transport services being provided?

- When off-site services are required, transport services will be available, linking up to the nearest town or city.

General Q&A

What happens to migrants once they arrive in the UK via small boat?

- Small boat crossings are dangerous, unnecessary and put lives at risk. There have been appalling and preventable tragedies in the Channel which must stop.
- We aim to deter illegal entry to the UK, break the business model of people smugglers and protect the lives of those they endanger.
- Migrants are intercepted by Border Force and brought to facilities in Dover to begin processing their asylum claims.
- Full screening of people's identity, security checks, initial asylum screening and processing is undertaken at the Western Jet Foil in Dover and Manston, Kent.
- Migrants are then securely moved to suitable accommodation locations as quickly as possible.

What are large scale accommodation sites?

- The introduction of new asylum accommodation large sites will look to provide safe, suitable and more cost-effective accommodation for asylum seekers. In doing so, they will help to reduce the government's dependency on the use of hotels to accommodate migrants who have entered the UK illegally.

How much is this going to cost the UK taxpayer?

- The use of contingency accommodation for asylum seekers, such as hotels, is costing the taxpayer £6 million a day.
- Plans to develop these large-scale sites will ensure cheaper and more accommodation is provided for people crossing in small boats.

Background

- The unprecedented and unacceptable rise in dangerous small boat crossings continues to put huge pressure on the UK's broken asylum system.
- The sharp increase in crossings means there are currently 45,000 asylum seekers living in hotels around the country. These hotels cost the taxpayer more

than £6 million a day.

- These illegal, unnecessary and dangerous crossings divert our finite resources from those in genuine need.
- The aim is to fix this broken asylum system, allowing us to support those in genuine need while preventing abuse of the system and deterring illegal entry to the UK.

[↑ Back to top](#)

OGI

All content is available under the Open Government Licence v3.0, except where otherwise stated

© Crown copyright