

Landmark Report Reveals Dire State of UK Armed Forces Accommodation

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[/EINPresswire.com/](#) -- A new report by the Kerslake Commission on Armed Forces Housing has highlighted severe deficiencies in the accommodation provided to UK Armed Forces personnel and their families, describing the situation as a “tax on the goodwill” of those serving. Chaired by the late Lord Bob Kerslake, former Head of the Civil Service, the commission has raised serious concerns over the impact of inadequate housing on military effectiveness and personnel retention.

The Kerslake Commission
on Armed Forces Housing

Homes unfit for heroes
The poor condition of armed
forces accommodation
and what needs to change

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Key Findings of the Report:

Widespread Issues: Service accommodations are plagued by persistent problems, including dampness, mould, gas and electrical faults, and pest infestations. These issues not only compromise the health and well-being of service families but also severely damage morale, impacting recruitment and retention within the Armed Forces.

Inadequate MOD Investment: The report criticises the Ministry of Defence’s current accommodation investment programme as insufficient, failing to rectify a longstanding legacy of underfunding.

Potential Impact on Service Commitment: The commission warns that the quality of life offered by current service accommodations may deter skilled personnel from long-term commitments to the Armed Forces.

Commission Composition:

The Kerslake Commission on Armed Forces Housing was launched in February 2023 and included the late Lord Bob Kerslake (chair), crossbench peer and former head of the Civil Service; General Sir Richard Barrons, former head of Joint Forces Command; Terrie Alafat, former chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing, Professor Nicola Fear, Co-director of the King's Centre for Military Health Research, King's College London; Brendan Sarsfield, former chief executive of the Peabody housing association; and, Darren Rodwell, leader of Barking and Dagenham Council.

Lord Kerslake was asked to conduct an independent review of armed forces housing, covering the Army, RAF and Royal Navy, following longstanding concerns about the state of service accommodation by shadow defence secretary John Healey as an independent contribution to improving the lives of serving personnel.

Statements from Commission Members:

General Sir Richard Barrons, "Decent and affordable accommodation is crucial for the wellbeing of our Armed Forces personnel and is essential for maintaining the operational effectiveness of our national defence. Yet for many years the accommodation for many Service personnel and their families has been poor, and in many cases unacceptable. Substandard accommodation has effectively become a tax on the goodwill of highly prized people that directly undermines operational effectiveness and retention of our Armed Forces. The longstanding neglect of service housing is a disservice to our highly valued service personnel and undermines our military capabilities."

Terrie Alafat, "Too many Service personnel are expected to put up with poor accommodation as if it were somehow a reasonable expectation of Service life. The Commission heard that some Service personnel feel they should not complain for fear of repercussions. More should be done to empower Service personnel to have a voice in how they are housed. This means the Service having clear accommodation standards and an effective and independent means for Service personnel to raise their concerns."

The Kerslake Commission calls for immediate action to improve conditions and ensure that Armed Forces personnel are provided with the standard of living they deserve. The full report is



"It was the final straw . They left 2 inches of the street's crap flowing through the garage and kitchen for 12 hours before they came out. That's why we moved into our home after 25 years of following the flag".

a critical step towards understanding and rectifying the housing challenges faced by those who serve.

CTA: Download the full report, 'The Kerlake Commission on Armed Forces Housing - Homes unfit for heroes. The poor condition of armed forces accommodation and what needs to change'.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For Op-ed requests, pre-recorded or live interviews with General Sir Richard Barrons or other members of the Kerlake Commission, please contact: meredyth@charliecharlieone.co.uk or call +44 (0) 7496 725286

Case studies:

Clare Mahoney, former military spouse (Army) and can talk on experience of married quarters in Colchester in Essex, Hereford, Bordon in Hampshire, Lyneham in Wiltshire, Maidstone in Kent and Catterick in North Yorkshire.

KB, military spouse (Army) currently living in military accommodation and can talk on experience of married quarters in Maidstone in Kent, Swanton Morley in Norwich and Lyneham in Wiltshire. Anonymous interview as husband still serving.

Rachael Bailey, RAF veteran and RAF military spouse. Can talk on single accommodation and married quarters in Benson, Halton, Marham, Cranwell and Cosford.

Corinne, partner of Rachael Bailey, Acting Flight Sergeant RAF. Can talk on single accommodation and married quarters in Lossiemouth, Lemming, Wattisham, Benson, Halton, Henlow, Cranwell and Cosford. Anonymous interview as still serving.

Cpl PS, Army can talk about unavailability of housing for 9yr old autistic son. Can talk on housing issues in Andover. He is currently sharing a bed with his son during visitation, the issue has been ongoing since Sept 2022. Anonymous interview as still serving.

Meghane Bambridge, military spouse and daughter of a retired officer. Can talk on housing across the UK and abroad.

Lt Col LP, Army, married to a retired Brigadier. Can talk extensively about issues at a senior level. Anonymous interview.

Spouse, Army. Had to move into a hotel when 9 months pregnant due to no heating or hot water

for 2wks. Experience of housing in Swanton Morley, Norfolk. Anonymous interview, partner currently serving.

To speak to any of these individuals please contact Meredyth Grant
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Quotes:

From anonymous:

“It was the final straw. They left 2 inches of the street's crap flowing through the garage and kitchen for 12 hours before they came out. That's why we moved into our home after 25 years of following the flag”.

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