

**WELCOME TO U.S. AFRICA COMMAND  
INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE  
RAF MOLESWORTH (J2-M), UNITED KINGDOM**



*Please save this welcome packet to your phone or other device for reference purposes. If you notice a hyperlink is broken or incorrect, please contact your sponsor.*

## Contents

Base History.....	4
Local Area Overview.....	5
Budgets, Banks, Finance, Housing.....	6
Passport and Visa Information.....	7
Vehicles.....	8
Vehicle Pickup, Inspection, Registration.....	8
Driving License / Fuel Card.....	9
Driving Conditions.....	9
Internet Service Providers and Cable / Television.....	9
Phone / Cellular / Mobile.....	10
Post Offices.....	10
Medical/Dental/TRICARE.....	10
Other Base Facilities.....	11
Child Services/Schools.....	11
Colleges.....	11
Pets.....	12
Getting Here.....	12
RAF Alconbury Map.....	12

## Base History

The 303rd Bomb Group, equipped with B-17 Flying Fortresses, arrived at RAF Molesworth on 12 September 1943. They would later become known as “Hell’s Angels” and would carry the badge “Might in Flight”. The 303rd Bomb Group was involved in most major attacks carried out by the 8th Air Force, to include: the historic bombing raid on Wilhelmshaven, Germany on 27 January 1943, the invasion of Normandy in June 1944, and the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

All told, Hell’s Angels carried out 364 bombing sorties against Nazi targets in Europe and 10,721 operational sorties before departing RAF Molesworth in June 1945; more than any other Group in the 8th Air Force. 841 Airmen in the 303rd lost their lives in operations during World War II, and another 747 men endured captivity as prisoners of war. Two service members were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during their stay at RAF Molesworth: 1Lt Jack N. Mathis and TSgt Forrest L. Vosler.

During the Cold War, RAF Molesworth was home to Ground Launched Cruise Missiles as part of NATO’s strategic deterrence mission. This mission ended in 1989.

For more information about RAF Molesworth, click this link: [Why Molesworth?](#)



## Local Area Overview

Being assigned to the J2-M, located on Royal Air Force Base (RAF) Molesworth, United Kingdom (UK) is a unique and rewarding experience. RAF Molesworth is about 70 miles north of England's capital city, London and 25 miles northwest of the historic university town of Cambridge. The closest town to the base is Huntingdon, located about ten miles southeast. The UK is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), 5 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST) in the United States. The weather is temperate, with moderate summers and mild winters. Annual rainfall is 22” per year, making the county of Cambridgeshire one of the driest in England.



**RAF Molesworth** services include: DEERS, Pass & ID, Passport Office, Chapel, Bank, Post Office, Gym, Shoppette, Gas, and an on-base eatery. However, for services such as childcare and finance, you will need to visit RAF Alconbury.

**RAF Alconbury** is located ten miles east of RAF Molesworth and three miles northwest of Huntingdon. It is home to the 423rd Force Support Squadron. The majority of services needed for you and your family will be housed on RAF Alconbury, to include: the Medical/Dental Clinic, Housing Office, Lodging (Britannia Inn), Childcare, Elementary School/Middle/High School, Finance, ITT (Information, Tickets, and Tours), Gym, Education Center, Airman Family Readiness Center, Commissary, Troop Store, Mail Room, and Library.

Nearby bases include RAF Lakenheath and Mildenhall. Services at Lakenheath and Mildenhall are more robust and include larger BXs, commissaries, a hospital, etc.

## Budgets, Banks, Finance, Housing

Relocating to the UK can be expensive. Although you will be reimbursed for many of these expenses upon filing your travel voucher, try to save between \$5,000 to \$8,000 USD for the move, especially if you intend to live off base. This is just an estimate to cover the essential costs of the move, but if you will require additional items – such as cars or pet travel– the number may be higher. Keep in mind the exchange rate may impact your dollar-for-pound value. You may be able to use the readiness center on your current installation to help you prepare a financial plan for your PCS. The table to the right can give you an idea of how quickly costs can add up.

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Possible Cost</b>
Road Tax, 2 cars	\$800
Pet transport	\$2,000
1st Car	\$2,000
2nd Car	\$2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,800</b>

There are 2 banks on Alconbury: [Keesler Federal Union](#) and [Community Bank](#). Molesworth just has Community Bank. They provide US and Pound Sterling accounts, along with loans and other banking services. You will need a Pound account to pay rent and utilities for living off base. You can also use it to pay for internet and phone services. Your bank may be able to provide alternate payment methods as well. Services like [TransferWise](#) are able to send money to a UK bank via your US bank account for a fee.

Check your credit and debit cards to see how they'll work overseas. Some banks charge foreign conversion fees, some don't.

The Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) is a little bit different from what you may be used to with BAH. For BAH, you receive the entire amount every month. For OHA, you have a cap. If your cap is 1200, and you sign a lease for 1100, you will only receive 1100 per month to pay the rent. You can go above your cap, but that extra amount will come out of your pocket. [How to calculate the Cost of Living Allowance](#) and [How to calculate OHA and Move In Housing Allowance](#)

It is mandatory to visit the [Alconbury Housing Management Office](#) (Bldg 62, located near the main gate, directly across from the Britannia Inn) within 2 days of arrival. Failure to do so may jeopardize [Temporary Lodging Allowance](#) (TLA) eligibility. TLA reimbursement is based on availability of either government controlled quarters or economy housing (whichever is earlier). If government housing is not immediately available, you must receive an off base briefing before seeking economy housing. Additionally, you are required to seek readily available rentals, and report to the Housing Office every 10 days to file your claim. Local policy limits reimbursement for temporary lodging to 30 days, so house hunting should be your primary focus until secured. If base housing is available and you decline it, you will only receive 10 days of paid TLA.

Government housing on Alconbury has both US and UK power outlets and appliances.

The housing office can make the transition a smooth process by providing individual counseling for on-base housing, as well as additional information on the local area and off-base housing availability. They offer weekly indoc classes, required before signing a lease. The [Automated](#)

[Housing Referral Network](#) (AHRN) lists houses available for rent from the housing office. [Homes.mil](#) is another website listing houses that often rent to US military OCONUS.

Housing Office: Bldg 62, Alconbury. DSN 312-268-3518; Commercial 011-44-1480843518  
For inquiries about the dormitory for E1-E4, please contact DSN 314-268-3115.

[The Furnishing Management Office](#) provides British appliances (washer, dryer, fridge, transformers) for use off base, as well as short-term loaner furniture. DSN: 314-268-3505

The [Airman and Family Readiness Center](#) can provide a foot-locker with temporary cookware and other kitchen essentials while you wait for your household goods to arrive (active duty military and government civilians).

Rental housing websites: [RightMove](#), [Zoopla](#), [On The Market](#)

## Passport and Visa Information

# Passport/Visa Information

## PCSing to any base in the U.K.

**Do not PCS to the UK without the required documentation.  
Failure to obtain the required documents can result in  
denied entry or deportation.**

Military members do not need a visa, but must have valid NATO orders.

Military dependents, civilians, and civilian dependents require a  
US no-fee passport.

Contractors and contractor dependents require a  
US tourist passport and a UK visa.

The process for obtaining a passport and visa can take 2-3 months.  
It is important to start the application process as soon as possible.

Click on the buttons below for more information



Military Dependents



US Government Civilians  
and their Dependents



DoD Sponsored Contractors  
and their Dependents



Frequently  
Asked Questions

## Vehicles

You are allotted one vehicle per orders to ship to the UK. There is a lemon lot on RAF Alconbury, and numerous car dealers and private sellers are accessible via websites such as Facebook Marketplace, [Gumtree](#), and [AutoTrader.co.uk](#). As always, when buying a vehicle from an internet seller, watch out for warning signs of scams. Generally speaking, the cost of mechanic labor is higher than you may be accustomed to. When budgeting, it is also important to consider the size, fuel efficiency and reliability of the vehicle you are shipping. It will likely take 6-8 weeks for the vehicle to arrive in the UK.

If you decide to ship your vehicle, remember that if you are carrying a loan you must contact the lienholder prior to shipping. You will need a letter of release that states the lienholder is giving you permission to take the vehicle out of country. This letter will be required for out-processing, shipping your vehicle, and meeting your lender's additional shipping requirements, if applicable. Also, check to ensure all your extended coverages or warranties will transfer (most do not), so you may be able to sell your extended coverages prior to your departure.

## Vehicle Pickup, Inspection, Registration

You can contact the port at Brandon (01842813999) or call TMO (01480843723 or DSN 312-268-3723) to determine the status of your vehicle. You can also use <https://www.pcsmypov.com>. To pick up your vehicle you will need: Proof of UK insurance (policy letter or green card does not count), ID card, and DD Form 788 (shipping document). Make sure you receive the original C&E Form 941 from the port.

Report to Pass & Registration within 72 hrs of picking up the vehicle. Bring your original copy of the C&E form 941 (or certificate of registration if you drove into the UK). You will be given a 30-day base pass. After receiving your temp pass, you can report to the Information Management office to obtain a fuel card in building 344. Remove any previous base installation decals from your vehicle. If your vehicle does not have any license plates (British or American), it can ONLY be driven from the port to home and from home to a scheduled MOT site. Driving without plates will get you fined.

Within the duration of the 30-day base pass you need to ensure your vehicle is roadworthy and adjust your lights to conform to UK requirements. You may accomplish the work at garages out in the community or contact the Auto Hobby Shop (DSN: 312-268-3701). The approximate cost will be \$200, but some vehicles may cost significantly more.

Once you've made the adjustments, you'll need to have a Ministry of Transport inspection (MOT). Once complete, return to Pass & Registration with the following original documents for UK registration.

\*C&E Form 941 (pink form)

\*UK Certificate of Insurance (Not green cards or policy paperwork)

\*Inspection Certificate (MOT or SVA) \*\*check VIN is accurate\*\*

\*Certificate of Registration or Title (marriage certificate required if not in sponsor's name)

You must register the vehicle by the 6th day of the month following the month you picked up the vehicle. This means that if you picked up your vehicle on the 10th of August, you have until the 6 September to register. Once your vehicle is registered you will need to have plates made for it. This can be done at many auto stores or garages if your car accepts European style rectangular plates. You will need to have your letters from DVLA with you to order the plates.

Finally, return to Pass & Registration with your UK plate number, V-5 registration form, proof of insurance, ID card, 3AF driver's license, and MOT/SVA Certification to obtain your permanent base registration. For questions, call DSN 312-268-2525 or 01480842525.

All vehicles driving in the UK are required to pay a **road tax**. Imported vehicles from the US may be exempt for the first year. Contact the Pass & Registration office for more details. You can pay the road tax online or at any Royal Post Office location. <https://www.gov.uk/vehicle-tax>

## Driving License / Fuel Card

All personnel who wish to drive must obtain the 3rd Air Force driver's license / fuel card within 30 days of arrival. If you purchase/rent a vehicle prior to getting the license, [you may still drive in the UK on your US license](#). Remember to get insurance for your vehicle **before** you begin driving it. Practice tests are available [here](#), the Highway Code is available [here](#). Upon arrival you can take the test at the Alconbury Library, Education Center, Britannia Inn Reception area. Pass the test, print out the certificate, and take it to the [RAF Alconbury Newcomers Orientation](#) to be stamped; make sure you have your valid US driver's license and military ID with you. If you're a motorcyclist, you must also have proof of completing a certified motorcycle safety course within the last 3 years; refresher courses are available at RAF Feltwell.

Alconbury and Molesworth only provide gas (petrol), not diesel. You can acquire a fuel card from the Bx that will allow you to purchase up to 400 liters per month of diesel or 100 liters per month of petrol off base at select gas stations. You will need a Star Card to get the fuel card.

## Driving Conditions

The British drive on the left side of the road, so the steering wheel in British vehicles is on the right side of the car. If driving a US/Euro Spec car, be aware that your ability to see oncoming traffic will be impaired when passing on smaller roads. While major roads and motorways have decent-sized lanes, country roads tend to be narrow and without shoulders. They will often have ditches on one or both sides of the road. At the peak of winter, the sun will be up by 0800 and down before 1600; that's only 8 hours of daylight. At the peak of summer, the sun will be up by 0430 and down by 2130; that's 17 hours of daylight. Be aware that some portions of back roads never get enough sun during the day to melt ice on those cold winter days.

## Internet Service Providers and Cable / Television

There are three primary means of terrestrial internet access (often called broadband) in the UK: ADSL, Cable, and Fiber (fibre). ADSL is very slow, but is capable of streaming HD media. Cable is fast, but not common in all areas. Fiber is fastest, and is becoming more and more



available throughout the UK. Television services are available from most internet service providers as well. In general, it will take 2-4 weeks to get internet service at your new house. You can check what broadband packages are available here:

<https://www.bt.com/broadband/availability/>

TV licenses: they are mandatory if you meet certain requirements. Those requirements are listed here: <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/check-if-you-need-one> If you meet those requirements, you must pay the tax. Penalties for not paying are significant, and enforcement units do regular patrols.

## Phone / Cellular / Mobile

Many services are available for web-based phone calls. Skype, Magic Jack, and Google all provide free or charge-based services. A popular communication app used throughout the command is WhatsApp. Skype, for example, provides free calls to toll-free US numbers.

If you already have a phone, make sure it is unlocked by your carrier prior to moving. Most unlocked phones will function in the UK and Europe, but you can check here:

<https://willmyphonework.net/> There are 4 primary mobile networks in the UK. They are managed by EE, O2, Vodafone, and Three. There are a multitude of other carriers who rent space on the above networks. They all have various levels of service for cost, but a general rule of thumb is a SIM card plan for 5-10Gb of data with unlimited talk and text should cost between \$12-25 per month. Plans vary between pay-as-you-go or monthly contracts. Some providers will accept US credit cards. Most UK providers will accept direct debit payments from a UK bank.

The [Airman and Family Readiness Center](#) can provide basic cell phones to help bridge the gap while you're looking for a new phone or plan (active duty or government civilians).

## Post Offices

The post offices provide full postal service, including parcel post, postal insurance and money orders. Letter mail from the U.S. can take up to 10 days to arrive. Very large packages mailed from the U.S. may take several weeks, especially during the holidays. Priority Mail is strongly recommended for shipping items to reduce the shipping time. Some companies will not ship certain items to APO addresses. To receive those items, you may need to have a friend mail it to you or use a third-party shipping service.

Your sponsor can set up a mail box on either Alconbury or Molesworth prior to your arrival.  
RAF Alconbury: DSN 314-268-3539 or 01480 843 539  
RAF Molesworth: DSN 314-268-2990 or 01480 842 990

## Medical/Dental/TRICARE

The Alconbury Clinic is run by the 423rd Medical Squadron. Once registered in their system, you can make appointments by calling DSN 314-268-4503 or 01480844503. The clinic is a small facility and does not support emergency needs. The nearest military hospital is at RAF Lakenheath, roughly 1 hour away. Huntingdon and Peterborough have Accident and Emergency Room hospitals and are only 10-30 minutes from Alconbury. Routine dental services are provided at the clinic. Emergency dental care is provided by RAF Lakenheath.

## Other Base Facilities

[RAFAlconbury.com](http://RAFAlconbury.com) has a comprehensive list of services and facilities on base. They include but are not limited to, Outdoor Recreation; Arts and Crafts Center; Bowling Center; Community Center; Fitness Center; Information, Tickets, and Tours; Library; Airman and Family Readiness Center; Auto Hobby Shop; and Finance Office.

The Alconbury Base Exchange does not have a wide variety of items. For bigger items not available at the exchange, you can always make a trip to the larger Exchanges located on RAF Mildenhall (furniture, outdoor supplies) and RAF Lakenheath (sports equipment, toys, etc). Alconbury clothing sales only carries a limited selection of Air Force and Army uniforms, and some Navy rank/insignia.

## Child Services/Schools

RAF Molesworth does not have a Child Development Center (CDC), but RAF Alconbury does. The CDC is called [Paddington Station](#) and is near the schools. There is a waitlist to get in, so tell your sponsor if you need the CDC. There are some subsidized childcare facilities in the area.

RAF Alconbury has two schools: [Alconbury Middle/High School](#) and [Alconbury Elementary School](#). Dependents in grades K-5 will attend Alconbury Elementary, and dependents in grades 6-12 can attend Alconbury Middle/High School.

Information about off base schools can be found [here](#). State schools are free of charge and independent schools are fee-paying schools. An old term you may still hear for an independent or private school is a “public” school. British children may start full-time education during the first September after their 4th birthday. UK law requires children to be in school at the start of the first term after their 5th birthday. The school year starts at the beginning of September and is divided into three “terms” with holidays (vacations) of 2 weeks at Christmas and Easter and a 6-week holiday in the summer. Each term is subdivided into two “half-terms” by a 1-week vacation. Teaching is based on the National Curriculum and has a core of four subjects: English, Math, Science, and Information Technology. Other subjects, such as languages, are introduced at different stages.

The School Liaison Officer provides transition assistance and information for families moving to the RAF Alconbury/Molesworth area for both on and off base options, including home schooling. Information on how to contact the SLO is provided at the link below. The [School Liaison Office](#) can be reached at DSN 314-268-3232.

## Colleges

The [University of Maryland University College](#) has an office at the RAF Alconbury Education Center. The [National Intelligence University](#) offers a 2-year part time Master of Science in Strategic Intelligence at RAF Molesworth.

## Pets

Shipping a pet to the UK can be an expensive and difficult task, but it is doable. Rules and regulations frequently change, but currently **all pets must be shipped as cargo** and processed by an approved shipping agent. There are many brokers who can assist in the shipping of your pet(s) to the UK. [Silver Birch Pet Jets](#) is a service used by many personnel. Total cost of shipping a pet from the USA to the UK varies significantly by size, but \$2,000 isn't an uncommon total cost for a small dog. This [WikiHow Article](#) provides an excellent and recent overview of the process. The UK government site about pet transportation is [here](#). Be aware that some airlines may not ship certain breeds, or may not ship pets at all during the summer months.

## Getting Here

Due to the distance between RAF Alconbury and London Heathrow Airport, it is recommended to use a courier service. [Colin's Courier Service](#) is frequently used, easy to book, and can get on base. The cost will be reimbursed on your travel voucher.

## RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth Maps

Scroll down for the RAF Alconbury and Molesworth Maps.