



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about Commonwealth soldiers and citizenship fees.

I welcome the fact that Commonwealth citizens, including Gurkhas, are exempt from immigration control under the Immigration Act 1971, throughout their service. The consequence of this exemption means that they are free from immigration conditions during the time they remain enlisted in HM Forces.

I understand that those who have served as regulars are in a position to apply for settlement upon discharge, under Appendix Armed Forces of the Immigration Rules. In order to meet the requirements of the rules for indefinite leave to enter or remain, the veterans must meet certain requirements of the immigration rules, which include an application and the payment of fees.

The Home Office has said that while some veterans may want to apply to become British, there is no requirement for those wishing to remain indefinitely in the UK to naturalise as British citizens. It is good news that when an individual settles in the UK and as a consequence ceases to be subject to immigration conditions, they are free to remain in the UK indefinitely.

I support the need for the Home Office to set visa, immigration and citizenship fees at a level that provides the resources needed to operate the border, immigration and citizenship (BIC) system. It is worth noting that general public taxation provides the remainder of the funding for the system. I believe the Government should continue to ensure the system is fair and equitable. Therefore, it is only right that those who use and benefit from the BIC system should make an appropriate contribution towards meeting the associated costs.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY