



Information specific to where you live - United Kingdom



December 2009

A Welcome from The Deputy Head of Operations Housing (Housing Delivery)

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to your new home and trust that the allocation and Move-In process was relatively stress-free. We are continually striving to improve our processes so that they are user friendly and customer focused. Any suggestions you care to make about how we can further improve our services are also welcome.

Defence Estates Operations Housing (DE Ops Housing) manages the provision of housing services in the United Kingdom having assumed responsibility for management of the Northern Ireland estate in April 2008. The Housing Information Centres (HICs) are the 'one stop shop' responsible for all housing matters (other than repairs and maintenance), which includes the allocation process, booking Move-Ins, Move-Outs and Pre Move-Out Advisory Visits, resident consultation and complaints - in effect all issues that arise on a daily basis when living in Service Family Accommodation (SFA). Repairs are now delivered by the Housing Prime Contract (HPC) in England and Wales, the Regional Prime Contract (RPC) in Scotland and approved contractors in Northern Ireland. These three bodies are responsible to DE Ops Housing for providing occupants with all repair services via a Helpdesk. A more detailed explanation of these respective services is detailed in Chapter 3.

If you are living in SFA in England and Wales you will already have a copy of the MHS Maintenance Guide, which provides a comprehensive summary to the maintenance services provided by MODern Housing Solutions (MHS). The guide, along with this publication has been specifically prepared to provide you with all the information you need about SFA in the United Kingdom. If however, you would like to know anything further, please contact staff at your local Housing Information Centre who will be happy to provide help and assistance.

My staff and I are committed to provide an excellent housing service for Service families. We will do everything we can to meet this commitment.

Alison Edwards

Deputy Head of Operations Housing
(Housing Delivery)
December 2009

Contents

A Welcome from Deputy Head of Operations Housing	F - 1
Chapter 1 - Customer Care	
DE Operations Housing's Customers	F - 4
Our Staff	F - 4
Our Vision and Mission Statement	F - 5
Consultation	F - 6
Chapter 2 - Housing Information Centres (HICs)	F - 7
Housing Information Centre Locations	F - 8
Housing Information Centre Contact Numbers	F - 8
Housing Information Centre Addresses	F - 9
Chapter 3 - Repairs	F - 11
England and Wales - The Housing Prime Contract (HPC)	F - 11
Scotland - The Regional Prime Contract (RPC)	F - 12
Northern Ireland - Maintenance Provider	F - 13
Maintenance Contractor's Responsibilities	F - 15
Chapter 4 - Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA)	F - 16
Chapter 5 - Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	F - 17
Chapter 6 - Useful Estate Management Information	F - 18
Chapter 7 - Complaints	F - 23
Part 1 - DE Ops Housing Complaints Procedure	F - 23
Part 2 - Housing Prime Contract (HPC) Complaints Procedure (England and Wales)	F - 25
Part 3 - Regional Prime Contract (RPC) Complaints Procedure (Scotland)	F - 26
Part 4 - Maintenance Providers (MP) Complaints Procedure (Northern Ireland)	F - 27
Chapter 8 - Welfare Agencies	F - 28

Chapter 1

Customer Care

DE Operations Housing's Customers

Our customers are mainly Service personnel and their dependants who qualify for housing as part of their Terms and Conditions of Service.

Our aim is to provide a high quality and efficient housing service to customers without compromising on quality. We place great importance on customers' views and therefore appreciate feedback on the services provided. These help to indicate the level of customer satisfaction and highlight areas that need to be improved.

Our Staff

DE Ops Housing staff members are trained to respond in a professional, helpful and polite manner. If they fail to do so you may wish to complain (see Chapter 7). Equally it is not acceptable for them to be subjected to abusive language or rudeness during the course of their duties. We will take any measures necessary to ensure staff members are able to work in a safe environment and without hindrance.

Our Vision and Mission Statement

The Vision

“Working together to provide an excellent housing service for Service families”

The Mission

- To deliver an optimised housing service to Service families
- As DE's housing specialists, to contribute to and influence the formulation of MOD housing policy
- Contribute to local Service community support

Consultation

DE Ops Housing is committed to consult both with Service families, Chains of Command and Service Family Federations to actively encourage families to participate in the decision making process. The principal ways we achieve this are:

Joint Customer Board (JCB) - The JCB meets 4 times a year to discuss the provision of housing and the performance of DE Ops Housing against published key targets. It is chaired by Director General DCDS Pers SCW Accommodation Policy, and attended by Director Operations Housing. Representatives of the 3 Services, and the 3 Service Family Federations, also attend, among others.

Occupants Consultative Meetings (OCMs) - OCMs are initiated by local groups of occupants, welfare agencies and the Services to represent the views of families living in SFA. The primary role of the OCM is to enable us to receive direct feedback from Service personnel and families on current issues affecting their homes and estates. The role of the OCM is to:-

- Seek the views of occupants on key housing issues
- Assist DE Ops Housing in developing priorities for the modernisation and upgrading of SFA stock
- Assist DE Ops Housing in conducting surveys of Service Personnel and their families
- Collate ideas on general housing issues and improving the service provided to occupants
- Assist with the flow of communications concerning housing programmes and policies

The local composition of the OCM may vary but typically will comprise a DE Ops Housing representative, a repair/maintenance provider, Chair and Secretary, a HIVE organiser, Service Personnel and/or their spouse/civil partner, and representatives from the Local Service Command.

Chapter 2

Housing Information Centres

Housing Information Centres (HICs) deliver and manage DE Ops Housing's requirements to a defined geographical area and are the primary points of contact with the customer offering a 'one stop shop' on all housing issues including the allocation of SFA at your new duty station.

HICs can be contacted in the UK through the free-phone telephone number listed on page F - 8 of this guide and are open from 0830 to 1630 hrs, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 0900 to 1630 hrs Wednesday, 0830 to 1530 Friday and are manned by experienced DE staff. If your call is specific to a particular location (such as the need to arrange a Move-In or Out) you will need to select the relevant HIC from the seven options available which are:-

Option 1	Aldershot	Option 5	Scotland & Northern Ireland
Option 2	Thetford	Option 6	York
Option 3	Warminster	Option 7	Telford
Option 4	High Wycombe		

Some of their main responsibilities are to manage the application process in accordance with the rules and regulations laid down in JSP 464 Chapter 5 and in particular to:-

- Acknowledge receipt of the application form (MOD Form 1132) and allocate SFA in accordance with the applicant's entitlement and availability
- To liaise with prospective occupants and identify any additional needs or disability requirements and liaise with appropriate welfare authorities
- Manage the provision of Non-Availability Certificates (NAC) in cases where SSFA needs to be utilised
- Input data onto JPA to start and stop appropriate accommodation charges
- Consider and action requests for retention of SFA
- Deal with enquiries from prospective occupants on any aspect of the allocation process

Housing Information Centre Locations



Housing Information Centre Contact Numbers

HIC Telephone Number (all locations):
0800 169 6322

Military Network:
94510 8000

Callers from Overseas:
0044 1904 418 000

Housing Information Centre Addresses

ALDERSHOT E-Mail: south.allocations@hd.de.mod.uk
Building 3, ABRO, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2AA

Locations covered: Aldershot, Arborfield, Bordon, Camberley, Canterbury, Chatham, Church Crookham, Dover, Gosport, Maidstone, Odiham, Pirbright/Deepcut, Portsmouth, Sandhurst, Shornecliffe, Shrivenham, Thatcham, Winchester

THETFORD E-Mail: anglia.allocations@hd.de.mod.uk
Building 29, Barnham Camp, Thetford Road, Barnham, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2DJ

Locations covered: Bassingbourn, Brampton, Chicksands, Chilwell, Colchester, Cottesmore, Grantham, Henlow, Honington, Loughborough, North Luffenham, Marham, Melton Mowbray, Norwich, Old Dalby, Waterbeach, Wattisham, Wigston, Wimbish, Wittering, Woodbridge, Wyton

WARMINSTER E-Mail: south-west.allocations@hd.de.mod.uk
401/423 Pepper Place, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0DG

Locations covered: Andover, Blandford, Boscombe Down, Bovington, Bulford, Chivenor, Colerne, Corsham, Cudrose, Dartmouth, Exeter, Hullavington, Ilchester, Larkhill, Lympstone, Plymouth, Poole, Salisbury, South Cerney, St Mawgan, Taunton, Tidworth, Upavon, Warminster, West Moors

HIGH WYCOMBE E-Mail: central.allocations@hd.de.mod.uk
156-158 Greenwood, Walters Ash, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP14 4XE

Locations covered: Abingdon, Beaconsfield, Benson, Bicester, Brize Norton, Didcot, Halton, High Wycombe, Maidenhead, Medmenham, and ALL London locations

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

E-Mail: scotlandhic@hd.de.mod.uk

1st Floor, Caledonia House, Innova Campus, Rosyth Europarc, Rosyth, KY11 2UU.

Locations covered: Aldergrove, Arbroath, Ballykinler, Benbecula, Buchan, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Helensburgh, Holywood, Inverness, Kinloss, Leuchars, Lisburn, Lossiemouth, Perth, Prestwick, Rosyth.

YORK

E-Mail: northern.allocations@hd.de.mod.uk

Bacchus House, Link Business Park, Osbaldwick Link Road, Osbaldwick, York, YO10 3JB

Locations covered: Boulmer, Brampton (Cumbria), Catterick, Coningsby, Cranwell, Digby, Dishforth, Driffield, Harrogate, Kirton in Lindsey, Leconfield, Leeming, Linton-on-Ouse, Newcastle, Ripon, Scampton, Sheffield, South and West Yorkshire, Strensall, Topcliffe, Tyne Tees, Waddington, York.

TELFORD

E-Mail: west.allocations@hd.de.mod.uk

Sapphire House, Stafford Park 10, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 3AD

Locations covered: Ashchurch, Bramcote, Brecon, Cardiff, Chepstow, Chester, Cosford, Crickhowell, Donnington, Haverfordwest, Hereford, Holyhead, Innsworth, Kineton, Lichfield, Malvern, Shawbury, Stafford, St Athan, Tern Hill, Weeton

Chapter 3

Repairs

Prime Contracts are in place to manage the repair and maintenance of your SFA and estate. These contracts are responsible for providing all aspects of property maintenance. The 3 contracts operate geographically and are:-

ENGLAND AND WALES - The Housing Prime Contract (HPC)

The HPC is contracted to MODern Housing Solutions (MHS).

Reporting Defects - To report defects you should contact the MHS Helpdesk on Tel: **0800 707 6000** giving:

- Your name, address and daytime telephone number
- Details of the defect
- Access availability

The Helpdesk is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. A range of appointments will be offered to enable you to agree a suitable date and time for the contractor to carry out the repair. This will be either the morning or afternoon on an agreed day. Once you report your defect, you will receive a reference number that should be quoted in any future communication with the Helpdesk.

Your defect will be given a priority status which will determine the timeframe in which it will be done. The 3 categories are:-

Emergency - The contractor will arrive on site within three hours of the Helpdesk being notified and complete the make-safe process within 24 hours. Subsequent response and rectification, temporary or permanent, is in accordance with Urgent and Routine procedures.

Urgent - The repair should be carried out within 5 working days of the Helpdesk being notified.

Routine - The repair should be carried out within 20 working days of the Helpdesk being notified.

You must ensure that all repairs are reported to MHS as they occur. Failure to report damages/faults in this way may result in charges being raised on Move-Out.

More detailed guidance on the services provided by MODern Housing Solutions can be found in the MHS Maintenance Guide, a copy of which should be held by all occupants. Please contact MHS at www.modernhousingsolutions.com if you require a copy.

SCOTLAND - The Regional Prime Contract (RPC)

The RPC is contracted to Turners Estate Solutions Ltd.

Reporting Defects - To report defects you should contact the RPC Helpdesk on Tel: **0800 328 6337** giving:-

- Your name, address and daytime telephone number
- Details of the defect
- Access availability

Again, the Helpdesk operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and a range of appointments will be offered to you to suit your needs. Once you report your defect, you will receive a job reference number which should always be quoted in any further communication with the Helpdesk.

Your defect will be given a priority status which will determine the speed with which it will be carried out. The 3 categories are:-

Emergency - The repair will be carried out within 24 hours of the Helpdesk being notified.

Urgent - The repair should be carried out within 5 working days of the Helpdesk being notified.

Routine - The repair should be carried out within 20 working days of the Helpdesk being notified.

NORTHERN IRELAND - Maintenance Provider (MP)

Contracted to Henry Bros (Lisburn and Ballykinler) and Grahams (Aldergrove and Holywood).

Reporting Defects - To report defects you should contact the Helpdesk on Tel: 0800 030 4651 giving:-

- Your name, address and daytime telephone number
- Details of the defect
- Access availability

The Helpdesk operates from 0830 to 1630 Monday to Friday. For out of hours problems you should contact your local guardroom. A range of appointments will be offered to suit your needs.

Your defect will be given a priority status which will determine the speed at which it will be carried out. The 3 categories are:-

Emergency - The repair will be made safe within 4 hours and completed within 24 hours of the Helpdesk being notified.

Urgent - The repair should be carried out within 5 working days of the Helpdesk being notified.

Routine - The repair should be carried out within 20 working days of the Helpdesk being notified.

Priority Status Definitions - While the HPC, MP and RPC will afford your defect a priority status, the guide below should assist you in determining if it should be categorised as an Emergency, Urgent or Routine priority.

Emergency Defects - These are problems that could carry an imminent risk of injury, extensive damage to your home or its environment, or give rise to severe inconvenience or hardship. If the defect is complicated it will be made safe until permanent repair can be arranged. Emergencies include:-

- Total loss of electrical power or light
- Loss of gas supply

- Loss of heating in cold weather (31 Oct to 1 May) with no other heating available, especially where children or elderly people are affected
- Blockage of your only toilet
- Burst pipes or taps that will not turn off
- Severe roof leaks
- Total loss of cooking facilities

Urgent Defect - These are defects that may cause either serious discomfort to you, or may lead to serious damage to your home or fittings. They include:-

- Substantial loss of electrical power or light
- Faults to power, lighting or electrical sockets
- Loss or partial loss of central or water heating during winter months (31 Oct to 1 May)
- Toilet blocked or not flushing where you have more than one toilet
- Leaking pipes, tank or cistern (containable leaks)
- Loss of oven functionality

Routine Defect - The majority of defects will fall under this category. They include minor problems, such as:-

- Bathroom or toilet fittings
- Doors or windows sticking
- Plaster repairs and brickwork
- One broken cooker ring
- Other non-urgent internal and external repairs

Maintenance Contractors Responsibilities

The HPC (England and Wales), RPC (Scotland) and approved Maintenance Providers in Northern Ireland are responsible for:-

- Statutory Gas and Electricity Testing
- The internal and external fabric, painting and decorating
- Basins, sinks, toilets, showers and flushing systems. Internal drains and waste pipes (excluding blockages caused by misuse)
- Electric wiring, gas and internal water pipes
- Water and heating systems, fireplaces and fitted fires (excluding adjusting/resetting pilot controls etc)
- Fences, steps, paths and garages
- Entrances, lifts, rubbish chutes and all communal areas to flats and maisonettes
- Gutter clearance
- Litter and fly tipping in non-adopted areas
- Playground maintenance and inspections
- Pest control

Chapter 4

Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA)

DE Ops Housing is responsible for the provision of SFA in the UK to entitled and eligible Service personnel in accordance with the regulations laid down in JSP 464.

There may be occasions when suitable SFA is not available at or near your place of duty. In these instances if you are entitled to SFA you may become entitled to Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA). Should this be the case your local HIC will issue you with a Non-Availability Certificate (NAC) and an application form for SSFA.

The MOD Accommodation Agency Contractor will source SSFA from the commercial rental market. SSFA should broadly equate to your equivalent SFA entitlement and will be located within an appropriate radius of your place of work. If you decline the NAC you will remain on the waiting list until suitable SFA becomes available.

The rules on the provision of SSFA are contained in Part 1 Chapter 6 of JSP 464.

Chapter 5

Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

MOD has over 1800 properties that have been procured under the Government's Private Finance Initiative (PFI). These properties are not covered by the Housing Prime Contract (HPC), Regional Prime Contract (RPC) or Maintenance Providers (MP) but are dealt with directly by a facilities management company, responsible to a PFI Contractor contracted by the MOD to maintain the properties through a programme of planned, cyclical and response maintenance. The contracts usually last 25 years in England and Wales and 20 years in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Current completed PFI projects include sites at Lossiemouth, Edinburgh and Paisley, Ilchester, Market Drayton and Telford, Wattisham, Bristol and Trowbridge, Gosport and Fareham, Shrivenham, Harrogate and Colchester.

As an occupant of a PFI property you will have recourse to a Helpdesk for problems arising with the properties, much in the same way as with the HPC/RPC/MP. The PFI contract includes incentives that will ensure the Contractor performs to agreed standards in order to keep the properties in good order.

If you are allocated a PFI property you will be issued with a separate Handbook prepared especially by the PFI Contractor, or the facilities management company. This will provide occupants with specific information about the contracted services, as well as Helpdesk and other useful contact phone numbers.

Chapter 6

Useful Estate Management Information

Carpets and Curtains - Carpets will normally be cleaned every 3 years for lounge/dining rooms/hallway and stairs and every 5 years for bedrooms. Carpets are expected to have a life cycle of 10 years. Curtains have a minimum allotted life span of 8 years and will be cleaned at public expense on change of occupant or at 3 yearly intervals.

Chimney Sweeping - Occupants with open fires are advised that in England and Wales, the Housing Prime Contract (HPC) only allows for one sweep per year to be undertaken. Therefore only smokeless coal should be used as advised on the chimney sweep certificate. If you wish to burn bituminous coal or wood then additional sweeps as stated on the certificate are required and these will have to be funded by occupants as and when necessary.

In Scotland, chimneys are swept once a year under the Regional Prime Contract (RPC). In Northern Ireland the arrangement is also for one sweep per year.

It is important to remember that lack of sweeps and differing fuels may cause the chimney to become dangerous and possibly catch fire which may make you liable for any associated repair costs, and will also put your family at risk.

Council Tax - The MOD pays Council Tax on UK properties to the local authority. This cost is shared between all SFA licence-holders worldwide who pay a standard Contribution In Lieu of Council Tax (CILOCT) in addition to the accommodation charge. Rates charged are published annually in Service publications and can also be obtained at your UAO.

Electrical Safety - It is important that electrical appliances carry the British Electrical Approval Board (BEAB) safety sign. In the event of electrical failure you are advised to contact your relevant Helpdesk in the first instance (see Chapter 3).

Gas Safety - By UK law, all gas appliances must be inspected and certified by a Gas Safe registered gas engineer. If you smell gas you should evacuate the property immediately and telephone The National Grid Emergency Number on Tel: 0800 111999. More information is available on the National Grid website www.nationalgrid.com/uk/gas. General rules concerning gas safety are contained within Booklet C.

Insurance - You are strongly advised to arrange insurance for your liability to DE Ops Housing. You need to be aware that there is no pre-determined limit on your potential liability and you should arrange insurance cover for an appropriate sum based on your personal circumstances. You are also advised to arrange insurance for your personal property and that of any spouse/civil partner or child(ren) and for your liability to third parties in respect of injury to them and damage to their property.

Pre Move-Out Standard - The Pre Move-Out Advisory Visit (PMOAV) is a mandatory requirement as part of the Move-Out process and is an ideal opportunity to discuss with your Housing Officer (HO) the standard of cleanliness expected when you eventually Move-Out of your SFA.

Those areas to which the Move-Out standard applies are outlined below.

General

- **Carpets** - Vacuumed, stain free and free of infestation
- **Floors** - Clean and free of marks
- **Walls** - No stains or marks, all holes filled and made good where picture hooks have been removed except where agreement has been given for the hooks to be left
- **Woodwork** - No dust or finger marks
- **Windows/Frames** - Glass to be clean inside and out and frames free of mildew

Bathroom

- **Sanitary Ware** - Clean and free of lime scale inside and out
- **Tiles** - No finger or splash marks and free from mildew between the tiles

Kitchen

- **Cookers** - Clean and grease free inside and out and free of carbon deposits. Cooker hoods and filters clean and grease free.
- **Cooker Recesses** - Clean and grease free, underneath and behind
- **Work Surfaces** - Clean (including the edges and underneath)
- **Tiles** - No finger, splash or grease marks

Outside

- **Gardens** - Tidy, with grass cut, hedges trimmed and flower beds weed-free
- **Paths** - Swept
- **Garages** - Swept and empty
- **Garden Waste** - None anywhere – you are required to dispose of it prior to Move-Out
- **Rubbish Bins** - Empty and clean

Pest Control - Your Helpdesk will be able to advise you about preventive measures and elimination of household pests. In most cases they will arrange for the prompt resolution of such problems. If, however, you are found to be responsible for having caused the infestation you will be liable for resolving the matter and for any costs incurred.

Please be aware that the HPC (England and Wales) will deal with Pest Control issues concerning rats, silverfish, mice, wasps, ants, bees, bedbugs, bats, carpet beetle (woolly bear), squirrels, cockroaches, moles, fleas and house flies.

For Pest Control issues in Scotland or Northern Ireland you should contact your Helpdesk who will advise you of the appropriate course of action.

Storage Facilities - Occupants are not permitted to use the loft space in SFA for storage purposes. Secure garages can however be used for this purpose. Care should be taken to ensure that all items stored in the garage are safe and suitable for such storage. No inflammable materials should be stored in the garage. You are reminded that private vehicles and/or personal effects are stored in the garage at your sole risk and the department and/or its agents will not accept any liability for loss or damage to such property.

Pre-Payment Cleaning Scheme - The pre-payment cleaning scheme is an optional arrangement where you pay in advance for your SFA to be cleaned prior to Move-Out. In England and Wales arrangements are currently being put in place to transfer this service to the HPC. Your Housing Officer should provide you with details of the scheme at your Pre Move-Out Advisory Visit.

Redecoration - The planned cycle is to redecorate exteriors every 3-5 years, dependant upon climatic conditions, and interiors every 4 years.

Refuse/Recycling - You must dispose of all of your household rubbish in accordance with local procedures. Local authorities will empty bins on a regular basis. You are encouraged to recycle as much of your waste as possible. Please contact your local authority for more information about the services they provide.

Temporary Absence - Where possible you are advised to leave a key with a neighbour in order that access can be obtained to your SFA in an emergency. It is also advisable to inform the local (Military/MDP/Civil) police of your absence.

TV Licence - You are responsible for purchasing a TV licence if you have a television when living in SFA.

Vehicle retention in UK whilst posted overseas - Service personnel posted overseas may leave behind a motor vehicle which is still subject to Road Tax, Insurance and MOT. By law, contact must be made at least once a year with the DVLA through either renewal of tax or the Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN) declaration. The owner cannot change the address on the log book to the BFPO equivalent as the address must be UK based with a valid postcode. If you are posted on operations, you have three options: - Carry on

as normal, declare the vehicle as 'off the road' or leave the vehicle with a family member or friend. For more information on all of these options, please contact DVLA at www.dvla.gov.uk .

Chapter 7

Complaints

DE Ops Housing aims to provide a high quality and efficient service to all customers and we take complaints about our service very seriously. This chapter explains the procedure to make a complaint and how it will be dealt with by us or on our behalf by our HPC, RPC and MP.

When to Complain - You should use the complaints procedure if you are dissatisfied with the service you receive from us. It is not, however, intended to cover everyday enquiries. For example, a question about your SFA is regarded as an enquiry. If we fail to deal with the enquiry to your satisfaction, it becomes a complaint.

How to Make a Complaint - The complaints procedure takes into account the introduction of the HPC in England and Wales and the RPC in Scotland and Northern Ireland. It is essential that any complaints about repairs or maintenance are directed to the relevant Helpdesk, details of which are included at Parts 2, 3 and 4 of this process.

Part 1 - DE Ops Housing Complaints Procedure

If your complaint concerns the allocation of your SFA, the Move-In/Out procedure or any other issue other than a repair you should report it to us using the two stage system outlined below:-

Stage 1: Formal Complaint to Housing Information Centre (HIC) - This could be in any form (telephone/letter/e-mail/fax) and will be recorded. This stage is split into 2 levels:

- **Level 1:** If you wish to complain by telephone, you should contact your local HIC (see pages F - 9 and F - 10 for details). You will be given a point of contact for your complaint and assigned a reference number. The Centre will attempt to resolve the problem and notify you within 10 working days.

- **Level 2:** Should the level 1 response not be acceptable, you should register the complaint in writing (letter/e-mail/fax) and forward it to the HIC. Level 1 is bypassed if you choose to write, e-mail or fax your complaint in the first instance. Again the HIC will try and resolve the problem within 10 working days.

Should you be dissatisfied with the HIC response, you can request that the complaint is passed to Head of Operations Housing at the address below.

Defence Estates Operations Housing
Room S112, Building 351
RAF Brampton
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE28 2EA

Stage 2: Formal Complaint to Head of Operations Housing - Head of Operations Housing will review the complaint and decide if the Stage 1 response was correct. The Head of Ops Housing may, at this point, invite Assistant Head of Ops Housing to respond on their behalf within 10 working days. Should it be considered that the case is of a sensitive nature, or that the response may elicit further action, Head of Operations Housing may wish to notify you that, exceptionally, Chief Executive - Defence Estates (CE-DE) will review the decision.

Stage 3: Formal complaint to Independent Housing Review Panel (IHRP) - If you are still dissatisfied with the response, you can refer the complaint to the Independent Housing Review Panel (IHRP) which consists of housing management experts, some of whom are drawn from outside housing providers and a member of the complainant's Service. The complaint may be reviewed independently by each Panel member and the findings passed to the Panel Chair. Complaints should be referred in the first instance to the Secretary to the IHRP – DCDS Pers SCW Accommodation Policy at the address given on the inside front cover of Booklet A.

Part 2 - Housing Prime Contract Complaints Procedure (England and Wales)

If your complaint is about repair or maintenance work contracted to the HPC in England and Wales, you should contact the Customer Care Centre MHS Helpdesk:

MODern Housing Solutions
The Matchworks
Speke Road
Garston
Liverpool
L19 2PH

Helpdesk Tel no: [Tel: 0800 707 6000](tel:08007076000)
E-mail address: Customercare@mhs.mod.uk

- **Stage One** - You can telephone, write, or e-mail the MHS Helpdesk to complain about an existing job or a job already carried out. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing by return. For all complaints the Helpdesk will investigate the matter and you will receive a written response within 10 working days. The response will include a customer reference number and an explanation as to the resolution of the complaint.
- **Stage Two** - Should you still be dissatisfied with the response from MHS, you can escalate the complaint further, in writing to Defence Estates Operations Housing at:-

Customer Services Manager
Defence Estates Operations Housing
Room S112, Building 351
RAF Brampton
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE28 2EA

We will deal with the complaint in line with the Stage 2 process detailed on page F-24.

Part 3 - Regional Prime Contract Complaints Procedure (Scotland)

If your complaint is about repair or maintenance work contracted to the RPC in Scotland you should contact the RPC Helpdesk on

Tel: 0800 328 6337

and provide them with the repairs order number, details of the complaint and a contact telephone number. The helpdesk will investigate your complaint and respond to you within 24 hours. If the complaint is of a more serious nature and at your specific request the complaint will be logged and escalated to the Customer Services Manager who will investigate the case and respond within 10 working days. If you wish to put the complaint in writing your correspondence should be directed to:

Customer Services Manager
Turners Estate Solutions Ltd
Forthview House 30
Hilton Road
Rosyth
KY11 2BL

If you are still dissatisfied, you should then write to:

Area Housing Manager (Scotland)
Caledonia House
Innova Campus
Rosyth Europarc
Rosyth
KY11 2UU

Should this not resolve the matter to your satisfaction, we will deal with the complaint in line with the Stage 2 process detailed on page F-24.

Part 4 - Northern Ireland Complaints Procedure

If your complaint is about repair or maintenance work carried out by the contracted maintenance provider in Northern Ireland you should contact the Repairs Helpdesk on

Tel: 0800 030 4651

and provide them with the repairs order number, details of the complaint and a contact telephone number. The complaint will be logged and then passed to the Helpdesk Manager, who will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days.

If the complaint is of a more serious nature and at the specific request of the occupant, the complaint will be escalated to the Area Housing Manager.

All initial written complaints should be directed to

The Helpdesk Manager
DE Ops Housing (NI)
Thiepval Barracks
BFPO 801

Should this not resolve the matter to your satisfaction, we will deal with the complaint in line with the Stage 2 process detailed on page F-24.

Chapter 8

Welfare Agencies

There are a number of agencies and organisations designed to provide welfare support and advice to Service families on a variety of different issues. Welfare support, in one form or another, can extend to everyone; spouse, civil partner, mother, father, son or daughter. The list of phone numbers and websites detailed below may therefore prove useful.

Army Families Federation (AFF) - The AFF exists to make life better for serving families by raising issues that cause concern with the chain of command. More information about the services they provide are available on the website www.aff.org.uk or Tel: 01980 615525

Army Welfare Service (AWS) - The AWS provides professional and confidential welfare support for Service personnel and their families wherever they are located. For welfare enquiries contact: The Army Welfare Information Service, HQ LAND FORCES, Louisburg Block, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury, SP2 0AG. Tel: 01722 436569, Fax: 01722 436307 or e-mail: awis@hqland.army.mod.uk
Website: <http://www.army.mod.uk/soldierwelfare/supportagencies/aws/index.htm>

Connexions - This organisation supports teenagers and can help with all types of teenage problems. Counselling can also be arranged if necessary. Website www.connexions-direct.com or Tel: 0808 0013219

Home-Start - Home-Start is a national voluntary organisation that offers support, friendship and practical help to young families under stress in their own homes. Website www.home-start.org.uk or Tel: 0800 0686368

HIVE Information Service (HIVEs) - The HIVE Information Service supports the Chain of Command and tri-Service communities through the provision of information and is recognised and valued across the Armed Forces as a professional tri-Service organisation which takes pride in delivering the right information, to the right people at the right time.

Networked through the Internet, HIVE information centres worldwide are able to deliver information quickly and efficiently. The range of information is extensive focusing on enquiries on posting, education, housing, employment and training, health care facilities and the local area.

Managed by professional information officers, the HIVE information centres are an integral welfare support asset to their employing units, where a bespoke information service for the local Service community is assured. Enquiries can be received through a visit, by mail, telephone or e-mail. Whichever option is chosen the answer is only a question away. More information is available on the website www.hive.mod.uk

Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) - The JCCC provides emergency casualty and compassionate support in the case of death, injury or illness to the Service person or their immediate family. Tel: +44 (0)1452 519951, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.

Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) - JSHAO provides a central contact point for information and advice on Local Authority (Council) and Housing Association accommodation, shared ownership and house purchase in UK. They can also help re-house applicants in Housing Association rented accommodation via the MOD Referral Scheme. Service personnel and their dependants can use the service, as can separated partners occupying SFA. For more information about rehousing options contact them at: Joint Service Housing Advice Office, Headquarters Land Forces, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP2 0AG, Tel: 01722 436575

National Domestic Violence Helpline - A freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge can be contacted on **0808 2000 247**. Your local Housing Office will be able to provide telephone numbers for other local welfare and support agencies who are professionally trained to deal with such matters.

Naval Families Federation (NFF) - The NFF represents the views and concerns of all naval families and acts as the communication channel between families and the chain of command. Website www.nff.org.uk or Tel: 02392 654374

RAF Families Federation (RAF FF) - The RAF Families Federation exists to represent the concerns of RAF personnel and their families on the issues that affect them as part of a Service family. They operate entirely outside the RAF chain of Command and therefore promise an independent and confidential service. The Federation is parented by the RAF Association RAFA. More information can be found on their website www.raf-families-federation.org.uk

Relate - Relate offers counselling for relationship problems, either face-to-face or on the phone. Relate also offers Relateen, which is counselling for children aged 10-16 years of age. Website www.relate.org.uk or Tel: 0845 1304016

Royal British Legion - The Royal British Legion is the UK's leading charity safeguarding the welfare, interests and memory of those who have served in the Armed Forces and their dependents. It provides financial, social and emotional support to millions and its benevolence spans all age groups from the oldest to the very young. Website www.britishlegion.org.uk

SSAFA Forces Help - SSAFA Forces Help's Housing Advisory Service offers advice and guidance to ex-Service personnel and their families on a range of housing issues such as housing options, relocation, specialist housing, applying to local authorities, private rental and house purchase. They have contacts with a wide variety of housing providers including organisations that provide accommodation exclusively for ex-Service personnel.

A range of other assistance, including financial, is available from SSAFA Forces Help. In addition to its social workers, in-Service committees and community volunteers in many Port/Garrison /Station areas, SSAFA Forces Help has a network of branches throughout the UK which supports serving, ex-Service personnel and their families. Addresses of these branches are in Service and BT telephone directories and are also available on their website www.ssafa.org.uk.

Unit Welfare Office - Where available your Unit Welfare Office should be your first point of contact for advice on welfare issues. If you do not know who this is, ask your current administering unit, which should be able to give you the contact details.

