



Families First Newsletter

Issue: 09 | Date: September 26 2023

Welcome to DIO's *Families First* newsletter designed to provide families living in SFA with useful updates and information on their homes.

Included in this issue of Families First:

- New Accommodation Offer Announcement
- Improved compensation system
- Investment across the SFA estate
- Useful links
- Key Dates to note

New Accommodation Offer Announcement

On 19 September, the Minister of Defence People, Veterans and Service Families, Dr Andrew Murrison, announced the New Accommodation Offer for the Armed Forces from 11 March 2024. You can find more information on the New Accommodation Offer on [Defence Connect](#) and [GOV.uk](#).

How the New Accommodation Offer will impact DIO, its contractors and families currently living in SFA

DIO has worked closely with the People Accommodation Policy team to understand the impact of the New Accommodation Offer on its services. DIO, Pinnacle, Amey and VIVO will remain key in the provision of Service Family Accommodation (SFA), and the implementation of the New Accommodation Offer.

The policy decision to widen entitlement to SFA will inevitably lead to an increase in demand. On behalf of DIO, Pinnacle will continue to process applications for Family Accommodation. SFA will remain the primary form of subsidised Family Accommodation. However, from 11 March 2024, should DIO be unable to offer a suitable SFA home for your need, applicants will be provided with an allowance to source accommodation in the Private Rental Sector (PRS). Support for those directed into the PRS route will be provided by the newly formed Accommodation Support Cell.

The role of the Accommodation Support Cell

The Accommodation Support Cell is a dedicated team of Civil Servants which sits outside of DIO and, from the 19 Sept 2023, will provide support on the New Accommodation Offer. The Accommodation Support Cell's core role is threefold:

- to provide support to Service families with policy questions and queries on the New Accommodation Offer, including the different allowances available and how to claim them.
- to provide support to Service families placed into the Private Rental Sector, and signposting to resources available to secure a property.
- to review evidence presented by a Service family who have difficulty finding a property in the Private Rental Sector and either directing that further action is needed or escalating the case to the Accommodation Colonel for decision.

Impact on Service families currently living in SFA

For families currently living in SFA, the current policy applies and there will be no immediate impact. If personnel experience a reduction in their entitlement as a result of the new offer, they will be eligible to 'transitional protection'. This means there will be no reduction in entitlement level for a three-year transition period after the launch of the new offer on 11 March 2024.



Your New Accommodation Offer explained...



Needs Based Allocation



Transitional Protection



Support for Parents



Defence Minimum Standard



Increased support to buy a home



Improving the overseas accommodation offer



Established Long Term Relationship



Dual Accommodation Expense

For more information email Accommodation Support Cell: People-Accom-ASC@mod.gov.uk

Improved compensation system

Following on from families' feedback, Pinnacle has introduced a new improved compensation system making the process much easier for families to claim.

Families will see new forms on the Pinnacle website, be required to validate their email address (to ensure this is correct and vouchers are sent to the correct place) and will receive regular emails to update them on their claim's progress. All communications from the new system will be received from *no-reply@pay729.net*.

Pinnacle is aware of several legacy claims still in the previous system. The team is working hard alongside Amey, VIVO and voucher providers to process these claims as quickly as possible.

If you haven't heard back on a claim that pre-dates the new system (submitted before 1 Aug 23), please contact: compensation@pinnacleservicefamilies.co.uk



Investment across the SFA estate

29 roofs replaced in Poole, Dorset

The work involved replacing the main roofs including all felt, battens and roof tiles, as well as all soffits and fascias.

Loft insulation was replaced with a depth of 300mm to ensure the homes are now warmer and more energy efficient.

All of the homes' first floor bathroom & WC extractor fans were also replaced with higher grade fans to resolve historical damp and mould issues.

Before



After



Culdrose External Wall Insulation upgrades

This project is the fourth phase of works to improve the thermal comfort and efficiency of properties in Culdrose, which will help Service Families save money on their heating bills whilst helping to reduce the MOD's carbon footprint.



Last year, DIO invested £73 million to improve the thermal efficiency of its homes, which provided 600 homes with new boilers, 1,200 with new roofs, 1,740 with new doors and windows, and 900 with full external wall insulation.

Key Dates to Note

4th October- Community Hub Bovington Camp

11th October - Coffee Morning, Marchwood

5th October –Drop in session, Larkhill

5th October – Drop in session, Lyneham

30th October – Drop in session Innsworth

4th October- Drop in session, Corsham

3rd October -Drop in session, Hullavington



Useful Links

[Contact Pinnacle](#)

[Make a request for compensation](#)

[Reporting damp and mould](#)

[Join the SFA Defence Connect page](#)

[Forces Help to Buy is here to stay](#)

[New Accommodation Offer](#)