



# Families First Newsletter

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

## Air Cdre Leah Griffin on winter preparedness

With the darker nights closing in, there is a looming sense that winter is almost upon us, and this month's focus is on how we can all best prepare for winter. Over the last two months, most parts of the UK have experienced extremely high levels of rainfall which have, unfortunately, resulted in the flooding of some SFA properties (most notably at Chicksands). The collaboration and teamwork from all stakeholders in responding to this incident was heartening to see, but it serves as a cautionary reminder that the UK's weather patterns are changing; they are increasingly unpredictable and bad weather is not confined to winter!

To prepare for winter, DIO recently convened a full day of planning with Amey, Pinnacle and VIVO to review our plans for adverse weather. Stepping through several scenarios, we collectively reviewed our preparedness to answer 'what if' questions, and how we would respond to a series of worsening weather scenarios. The session was an excellent opportunity to identify areas for improvement ahead of the winter season, whilst revisiting lessons identified from last year.

In parallel with our winter readiness, it is also important that families take action to ensure that they are as prepared as possible for winter and Pinnacle provide a helpful repository of [Winter Tips](#) to protect properties during inclement weather. Families should also remain vigilant for the presence of Damp and Mould and continue to report this to the Pinnacle helpdesk. DIO has seen positive results in response to the packages of works delivered to address Damp and Mould which have prevented reoccurrence in over 80% of cases. That said, for those homes where the initial works have been unsuccessful, it is key that they are revisited to resolve the most stubborn cases, so please do let us know if this is the case. With twelve named storms last year including a storm in August, it is looking like we need to be prepared for another wet winter!

To find out more about how we have been preparing for winter and why it's important to us, you can [watch our video here](#).



**Air Cdre Leah Griffin**  
Head of Accommodation | DIO

## Flood preparedness for SFA

With an increase in rainfall across the UK, we want to ensure families are equipped with the right knowledge should a flood alert be issued.

One of the first things you can do to prepare, is to understand your home and the location it is in. You can check if your home is in a flood-prone area using this [online tool](#) where you can also sign up for flood warnings via phone, text or email. Next, protect your valuables by checking what damage your contents insurance provides and store irreplaceable items or documents upstairs or in high places. Finally, make a flood plan that involves safe locations you and your family can go to in case of an evacuation. Ensure all family members know this plan and have emergency contact numbers to hand.

If a flood occurs that affects your home, focus on safety first. Move your family, and any pets, to higher ground or upstairs. Then, report the flood to Pinnacle who will alert DIO and contractor teams to support you and other families affected. If they find your home is uninhabitable, you will be moved into temporary accommodation until your house is fully dried and sanitised or, if the damage is extensive, you may be allocated a new home.

Further information on Flood Preparedness can be found on [Pinnacles website](#).

## SFA Roadshows

Over the last few months, we have held SFA roadshows in Catterick, Portsmouth, Waddington, and Tidworth and our series of SFA Roadshows continue. Next month we will be in Aldershot on 6 November and Leuchars on 28 November.

These sessions are an opportunity for you to hear from DIO and our suppliers about performance and investment, and importantly, they offer a chance for our senior teams to hear your views. If you'd like to attend one of these sessions, please [sign up here](#).

In 2025, we are planning to visit more locations. So, keep your eyes peeled for more roadshows near you.

## Safety with fireworks and sparklers

With bonfire night around the corner, we want to remind families to celebrate safely and ensure you have all the fun, without the risk. Stay vigilant and remember these tips to help keep your family safe:

### 1. Follow the Firework Code

We encourage you to attend an organised firework display where possible. However, we know you may choose to have a display at home. If you do, only buy fireworks that are CE marked and keep them away from children. Do not light fireworks under the influence of alcohol and keep well-back. We also recommend keeping pets indoors and do not set off fireworks past 11pm as it is illegal, unless it falls on certain dates which can be [found here](#). For more information on the Firework Code, [click here](#).

### 2. Keep an eye on sparklers

Though sparklers may seem harmless, they are incredibly hot and can easily cause injuries. They should never be given to children under five and all other children should be supervised. Ensure anyone holding a sparkler is wearing gloves and once finished, place the sparkler in a bucket of cold water.

## Check out Army Families Federation's new video

Because every Army family matters



## Winter preparedness

We are busy ensuring our teams are prepared for winter, and one of the best ways you can help us, is by completing some initial checks to ensure your home is winter ready.

To guide you through these checks, Pinnacle have released a [series of videos](#) with some handy winter tips.

## Click here to sign up to your Roadshow

# SIGN UP TO YOUR SFA ROADSHOW

Come and instigate change! DIO along with Pinnacle, Amey and VIVO invite service personnel and your families to the Roadshows hosted by our senior representatives. We will share updates about investment in your homes, the steps we're taking to improve the services you rely on and give you the opportunity to share your experience of living in SFA.

**Aldershot - 06/11/24**

**Leuchars - 28/11/24**

#### Session times at most locations:

13:00-14:30

17:30-19:00

#### Aldershot evening session:

16:00-17:30

Sign up here:



<https://forms.office.com/e/Jdbk6N9bWE>



VIVO

Amey

Working with



## 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](#)

