



Families First Newsletter

Issue: 23 | Date: January 30, 2025

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

SFA Estate Development

You may have seen our [announcement](#) last month that a landmark deal was reached enabling the MOD to buy back 36,347 SFA homes in the UK, previously sold to Annington in 1996.

Now that we have renewed our ownership over thousands of homes, we are no longer held back by the restrictions we once were. This creates new opportunities to sell, redevelop and refurbish the estate. There are already two programmes of work in motion, with a planning application submitted for 265 new net-zero houses at RAF Brize Norton and a further application for 300 new houses at Catterick Garrison will be submitted in the spring.

A Defence Housing Review has been commissioned by the Secretary of State to determine how we can renew forces housing to meet modern consumer standards and how we can better exploit the potential of MOD land.

As part of the review, around 2,500 homes across the UK will be independently surveyed. This will help to provide a detailed assessment of the condition of SFA homes. Should your home be selected for inclusion in the survey programme, you will receive a letter approximately one week before the intended date of the inspection. Letters will be issued from Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), who are undertaking the surveys for DIO.

Providing access for these surveys to take place will help us to make the best decisions on the future of the SFA estate, and we are grateful for your support in enabling access if your home is selected. More detail can be [found here](#).

We appreciate that many of you may have questions about the announcement and this 'once in a generation' opportunity to transform the quality of SFA but change of this nature and scale will not happen overnight. We will continue to update you on the plans and development of the SFA estate over the coming months through this newsletter and our SFA Roadshows.

SFA Roadshows 2025

SFA Roadshows continue across the UK throughout this year with the first events taking place at:

Stafford on Thursday 6 February – 13:00hrs

Cosford on Thursday 6 February – 17:30hrs

Brize Norton on Tuesday 4 March – 13:00hrs and 17:30hrs



These events provide you with a valuable opportunity to engage directly and ask questions of senior representatives from DIO, Pinnacle and Amey/VIVO in a face-to-face setting.

During these sessions we are keen to hear from you about your experiences in SFA as your insights directly shape activity to improve our services. We will also be sharing with you 'what next' following the landmark announcement last month whereby the MOD reached a deal to bring the military housing estate back into MOD ownership.

Places are limited at some venues. To secure your place, [click here](#). The full list of roadshow locations for 2025 will be published in the next few weeks.

Winter Preparedness in Action

Over the last few months DIO and its suppliers (Pinnacle, Amey and VIVO) have worked closely to prepare for the challenging winter period to help us better respond to you and the needs of your family during adverse weather. We have increased the number of staff available to handle your calls and increased operators on the ground to make sure that we could carry out any repairs needed asap so that you could enjoy the festive season.



Average call wait time on Christmas Day was 7 seconds



12 staff at the Pinnacle call centre on Christmas Day and 4 overnight staff



4192 repair jobs completed from 21st December to 5th January



21 boilers replaced from 21st December to 5th January



231 cooker repairs from 21st December to 5th January including a replacement cooker installed within 5 hours on Christmas Eve



112 engineers on call during the Bank Holidays

“We had an emergency leak at New Year. Someone was there within an hour, found the issue and fixed. Brilliant service.”

“My oven broke just before Christmas. I reported the fault Friday, they condemned the oven Monday and replaced it Christmas Eve. Good communication and service.”

Pinnacle Drop-in Sessions

In response to your feedback, DIO, Pinnacle, Amey and VIVO have opened local housing office drop-in sessions. The following locations are now available: Aldershot, Blandford, Brize Norton, Brompton, Colchester, Cosford, Gosport, Larkhill, Leuchars, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Waddington, Weeton and Windsor.

Dates and opening times are available on the [Pinnacle website](#). Look out for more about these office sessions in next month's edition of Families First.

Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) Update

Over the coming months there will be a change to the delivery of the Afghan resettlement scheme to a simpler and more cost-effective programme which will help deliver better outcomes overall.

ARAP is being replaced by the new Afghan Resettlement Programme (ARP) which is a joined-up delivery programme, that brings together the two existing Afghan resettlement schemes: Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and Afghan Citizens Relocation Scheme (ACRS).

Transitional accommodation will continue to be provided across the SFA estate, but the Government's aim is to return sites to their previous use, and every effort is being made to minimise any impact on Service Personnel and families whilst Local Authorities identify settled accommodation for Afghan families.

Raising repair tasks

A reminder that it is important to report any necessary repairs in your home even while you're in the process of moving out. This allows for any required work to be completed before a new family moves in, creating a smoother transfer for all. Please report any repair issues by contacting the Pinnacle National Service Centre.

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](#)