



Families First Newsletter

Issue: 04 | Date: March 17, 2023

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

Included in this issue of Families First:

- SFA Condition Survey
- Performance update on Accommodation contracts
- Key dates to note
- Current and future SFA investment
- Useful links

SFA Condition Survey

While DIO continues to routinely collect information about the standard of Service Family Accommodation, it is important to us that we have the fullest possible picture of the condition of our Service family homes. This will help us to achieve maximum future investment in our Service Family Accommodation and ensure that spending can be targeted where most needed.

We would really welcome your view and experience of living in a Service family home, it is key to us gaining a more comprehensive understanding of our Service Family Accommodation. We would therefore appreciate if you would take the time to complete the short survey that has been sent out to families. If you have not received this, please access this via the [SFA Defence Connect group](#) or contact Family Federations.

The survey closes on 27 March and the results will be used to help inform and focus future investment decisions on areas that are important to you and your family.

Please note data from this survey should not be used to report individual repairs, these should continue to be raised via the [National Service Centre](#).

Update on Performance Against Accommodation Contracts

Repairs & Maintenance

As of 16 March, the current backlog for repairs and maintenance stands at **5,896** down **72%** from the December peak of **21,100**.



Compensation

Following feedback from families, compensation for *Total Loss of Cooking Facilities* and *Hotel Subsistence* is now paid as cash.



Please see Pinnacle's website for full details on how to claim compensation.

Damp & Mould

An initial Damp & Mould "First Responder" process was implemented in February. This is the first step in dealing with a report of damp & mould.

As part of their visit to your home, the First Responder may clean and treat areas of damp & mould. However, the main purpose of their visit is to:

- assess the property to validate the telephone severity assessment
- collect additional details about the issue
- decide next steps including instructing professional surveys and/or scheduling works
- provide advice on how to prevent or reduce damp & mould
- in severe cases, trigger a move-out

Active complaints

As of 16 March, the number of active complaints has reduced to **2,232**



Considerable work continues to resolve complaints and this has led to a **47%** fall in open complaints since the peak in November.

Call wait times

During February, average call wait time for Pinnacle's National Service Centre was **22 seconds**.



Future SFA Investment – Capital Purchase Programme

In order to replace some of our poorest quality homes, several areas near RAF Brize Norton were identified to purchase new homes as part of the Capital Purchase Programme.

A total of 58 homes were purchased at sites in Bampton and Eynsham and come fitted with solar panels and Electric Vehicle Charging Points. 38 of these new, modern homes are already occupied or allocated to families.

The Capital Purchase Programme is part of a wider investment plan to improve existing SFA as well as provide new homes. This year we are purchasing an additional 387 high quality and modern homes across the country at a cost of £153m.



SFA Investment across the Estate: A Snapshot

Foxwood Gardens



We are investing £73m this financial year in improving thermal efficiency in families' homes to make them warmer, safer, more energy efficient and less vulnerable to damp and mould. This will provide 600 homes with new boilers, 1200 with new roofs, 1740 with new doors and windows, and 900 with full external wall insulation.

This includes 51 homes at Foxwood Gardens in Plymouth which have benefited from new windows & doors, new window restrictors, insulated porch roofs and enhanced external lighting.

These works are ongoing across the estate, and Foxwood Gardens was just ahead of works on a further 24 homes being completed in Blandford Forum, Dorset.

Planning for Move-in, Move-out and Removals this Summer

Summer is always the busiest period of the year for housing allocations and removals activity. The last week in July and first week in August are particularly popular dates and are usually fully booked several months in advance. Whilst our suppliers will always attempt to meet families' preferred Move-in, Move-out and removals dates, it may not always be possible to achieve this against the significant volume of requests received. This is because the removals industry is still experiencing staff shortages.

To help us manage this particularly busy time and to ensure families' needs are met:

- We would be grateful if families only request services during this period if they are unable to move at any other time.
- Where circumstances allow, please could accompanied personnel without children avoid planning for a move within the school summer holiday window.
- Please ensure removals are planned as soon as Assignment Orders via the [Agility portal](#) are received. Families do not need a confirmed delivery address to start this process but knowing the location will allow Agility to plan for the summer moves.
- Once families have been allocated SFA, please confirm availability for removals **before** booking a move in and out appointments.

If families have any questions or concerns, then please contact Agility directly: [Agility GRMS](#).

Key Dates to Note

22 March – Local housing surgery (VIVO), Phoenix Community Centre, Portsmouth

23 March – Local housing surgery (Amey), Lossiemouth

26 April – Local housing surgery (VIVO), Millennium Amenity Centre, Carterton



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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](#)