



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

in the picture

Information for Service Families from Defence Estates Operations Housing

Winter 2009

Putney upgrades prove popular

Minister Kevan Jones visited refurbished homes in London in October to find out from service families how DE investment has improved their daily lives.

Williams Gardens in Putney had been vacated and was a target for squatters two years ago, but since September 2008, a multi-million pound upgrade has modernised four Service Family Accommodation blocks.

The complete refit of 48 flats included new kitchens, bathrooms, roofing, insulation, wiring, and plastering, as well as a fully refurbished children's play park, community area and landscaped grounds.

The flats have been finished to a high standard and are available for use by Service families who are based in barracks in London, including members of the Household Cavalry Regiment and the Grenadier Guards.

For Carol Wyard, wife of Corporal Steve Wyard of the Household Cavalry, the new accommodation is a huge improvement on their previous flat.

"It's lovely... The standard of finish is fantastic. When you come home the kids can go out and play when you cook dinner and you can keep an eye on them. It just means they have the opportunity to go out and play which is obviously much healthier for them."



Housing Information Centres and Repairs Helpdesks

All Housing Information Centres will be closed from 1200 hrs on Friday 18 December.

They will also be closed for the Christmas period from cease of work on Tuesday 22 December until Monday 4 January or Tuesday 5 January in Scotland.

The repairs helpdesks will be manned over the Christmas period for emergencies.

To report a problem please telephone:

England and Wales

0800 707 6000

Scotland

0800328 6337

Northern Ireland

0800 030 4651

Hedge Reduction Programme

The hedge reduction programme has been temporarily suspended to enable available resources to be targeted at key areas of Service Delivery. Occupants will be contacted before the hedge reduction programme resumes and work starts on their property. Where the hedge reduction programme has not taken effect, this work will be completed at the next move-out where possible, with no cost to the occupant. Meanwhile occupants are still responsible for maintaining hedges in line with the terms of their licence, i.e. where hedge heights have been reduced, maintaining the reduced height will be the occupant's responsibility; where hedges have not been reduced in height, responsibility will remain with Defence Estates.



DEFENCE ESTATES

Defining Estate Solutions to Defence Needs

Protecting your home this winter

This information has been taken from Customer Fact Sheet 4 – Looking After Your Home:

What can I do to prevent damage to my heating and plumbing system during cold weather? Prepare for cold weather by locating the position of the water main stopcock in your Service Family Accommodation (SFA) and checking that it operates in case you need it. You should also report to your prime contracting helpdesk any taps and cisterns that require attention and also any damage to insulation on outside pipe-work. During severe weather you are responsible for ensuring the temperature in your SFA does not fall below 10°C. Keep doors of rooms without heating open to allow heat to circulate. Also slightly open your loft hatch to allow some warm air into the loft pipes.

What about outdoor pipes? You need to take special care with pipes leading outside the house. For outside taps you should shut off any isolating stopcock when not in use, and leave taps open. If you are unsure about what to do, please contact your prime contracting helpdesk.

What precautions should I take if I am going away in cold or severe weather? You are responsible for ensuring that adequate frost damage precautions are taken. You should therefore: (a) Leave central heating on permanently with the room thermostat set to minimum of 10°C. (b) Turn all radiator valves on to full, leave all internal doors open and slightly open your loft hatch. (c) Where possible, leave your keys with a trusted neighbour and ask them to check the house regularly.

Will it be expensive to leave my heating on constantly? No heating left on like this consumes little fuel at a small cost. It really is far better to spend a small amount to prevent problems, than incurring the cost and inconvenience of a major clean up operation.

I have a condensation problem in my SFA. What can I do to alleviate this? Double-glazing, central heating and modern kitchens and bathrooms are all improvements that result in warm and draft-free homes. Unfortunately, these ideal living conditions are also the perfect combination for condensation to occur. You can also prevent condensation forming by taking the following steps: (a) Open the windows in your kitchen or bathroom when cooking or bathing or, where fitted, switch on extractor fans. (b) Avoid drying damp clothes on radiators – use airers instead. (c) Keep the ventilation grills on double-glazed windows open. (d) Use adequate ventilation when operating tumble dryers. The effect is worse in winter when doors and windows are firmly shut. The best solution is to ventilate your property as often as possible and ensure any vents in walls are kept uncovered.

If there are any topics you would like to see in future editions of this publication please email us on Deopshousingcommunications@hd.de.mod.uk

Improving homes

To keep our families up-to-date with the Defence Estates upgrade programme and to ensure you are aware of which sites are scheduled for Core Works during the coming financial year (FY), please see below a list of the affected sites and the approximate dates for completion.

2009/10

In 2009/10 we plan to upgrade 800 properties and to date have completed 583.

Projects underway with completion in year are at High **Wycombe** (87 properties), **Aldershot** (Quetta Park - 42 properties and 57 bathrooms), **Catterick** (10 properties), **Chester** (9 properties), and **Abingdon** (43 properties).

Bulford (84 properties in year with contract completion due in FY 2011/12), **Colchester** (109 properties in year with contract completion due in FY 2010/11) and **Chicksands** (106 properties in year with contract completion in FY 2010/11).

There are other works currently being carried out listed below:

Boilers are being replaced in 132 properties in **Scampton**.

Roofs are being replaced in 112 properties in **Arborfield**, 71 in **Upavon** and 30 in **High Wycombe**.

Rewiring projects are taking place in 199 properties at **Wittering**, 65 at **Plymouth**, 40 at **St.Mawgan**, 49 at **Cottesmore**, and 87 spread over **Benson**, **Bushey** and **Halton**.

Doors and Windows are being replaced in 109 properties in **Waddington** and 23 in **Pirbright**.

Projects at **Innsworth**, **Halton**, **Catterick**, **Rowner**, and **loft insulation phase 2** are due to commence .

NB: The figures above are approximate and correct at the time of printing.