



ANNINGTON OFFERS GOVERNMENT £105 MILLION TO IMPROVE SERVICE FAMILY HOMES

Annington is today announcing the offer of a £105 million fund entirely dedicated towards modernising and improving homes for service personnel and their families.

The fund is being proposed as part of a constructive offer to the Government to avert a lengthy and costly legal battle over attempted enfranchisement of army housing owned by Annington, and which would deliver far greater benefits for military families. Annington is poised to release the fund once the Government agrees to drop the enfranchisement case.

The fund, named the *Annington Homes Modernisation Fund* (AHMF), will be channelled towards refurbishing and modernising the Married Quarters Estate (MQE) and is expected to improve standards in over 30,000 service family homes. We are making this offer, despite the fact that responsibility for repair and refurbishment, at their insistence, rests solely with the Government.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), the operating arm of the MoD, is entirely responsible for the maintenance of service homes, which have been allowed to reach appalling conditions in some cases. Annington's substantial commitment goes above and beyond the DIO's usual maintenance budget and will allow for a significant improvement in the estate. It would be managed by the military families who live in the properties and would be released over a period of three years.

Improvements would include upgraded heating and insulation, refreshed fixtures and fittings in kitchens and bathrooms, and improvements to the external and internal structure of buildings to reduce and eliminate chronic and widespread damp. It is intended that the money will be focussed on homes with the most acute need.

Baroness Liddell, Chair of Annington, said:

"Too many service families are forced to tolerate sub-standard living conditions after failings by the DIO to maintain their homes.

"We believe this significant pot of money would go a long way towards bringing Service Family Accommodation into the 21st Century.

"The money that the Government intends to spend on misguided attempts to enfranchise Annington properties is far better spent on desperately needed improvements to these service homes. We are generously offering to put this right as we firmly believe that our service personnel and their families deserve better."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

As part of the 1996 deal to sell Annington 55,000 homes in the Married Quarters Estate, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) took on full responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of these properties to reduce the cost of rent. The DIO has failed in its efforts to maintain the homes of service personnel, and in many cases hasn't even tried.

On 16th December, the MoD served a notice to enfranchise a single house in Cranwell. The notice seeks to use enfranchisement legislation to expropriate a house the MoD sold to Annington in 1996. In a statement to Parliament on 27th January, the Government indicated that this scheme went further than one property and they intended to explore the enfranchisement of all the houses leased to the MoD by Annington.

This followed three years of negotiations which Annington conducted with the Government in good faith and settled on 15th December. A statement from Jeremy Quin MP described the outcome of these negotiations as “a good outcome and a fair settlement.”

The AHMF is contingent on the MoD dropping the enfranchisement case.

All occupied properties, numbering over 30,000, owned by Annington in the Married Quarters Estate will be eligible for the AHMF.

The MoD's Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey from May 2021 found that just 52% of personnel living in Service Family Accommodation were satisfied with the overall standard of their accommodation.

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