



MODern Housing Solutions
Building 351
2nd Floor Annex
RAF Brampton
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE28 2EA

To:
All Occupants of
Service Family Accommodation
(Non PFI)

26 February 2007

www.modernhousingsolutions.com

Dear Customer,

Modern Housing Solutions (MHS) Service Family Accommodation Maintenance Guide

Please find enclosed a copy of the 'MHS Service Family Accommodation Maintenance Guide'. I would be grateful if you could spare the time to read this Guide as it will provide you with detailed information on our maintenance service along with a means of readily identifying faults. Please do keep this Guide available so if you need to call the Help Desk then the Agent who answers can refer to it. Copies of this Guide can also be downloaded from the MHS website: <http://www.modernhousingsolutions.com>.

I am, however, aware that there does seem to be some confusion and perhaps misunderstanding about the service MHS is contracted to provide and it may be of assistance to you if I clarified this. The primary nature of the contract is to maintain housing; MHS only upgrades the housing stock on the authorisation of Defence Estates (DE) when separate funding is available.

For instance, MHS is required to maintain your property and to help you when things breakdown. This includes a response maintenance service and a planned programme of works. If, you have a leaking tap or your heating is not working, MHS will fix this for you using a response time that has been agreed by DE. These being:

- Emergency Faults (i.e. total loss essential facilities such as water, cooking or heating between 31Oct - 1 May) are attended within 3 hours and made safe within 24 hours.
- Urgent Faults (i.e. partial loss of facilities, blocked toilets or defective installations such as part of a cooker) are rectified within 5 working days.
- Routine Faults (i.e. all other types of repairs such as dripping taps, resealing surfaces) are rectified within 20 working days.

In some emergency situations, there maybe a requirement for you to move out of your SFA into Hotel Accommodation. Should this need arise, then you must contact the HelpDesk on 0800 707 6000. Only the Helpdesk Agents are authorised to make these bookings and they will also explain to you other relevant factors such as food, and any other special requirements. See our website for further details.

New facilities are something that MHS does supply, but only with prior authorisation from DE. To clarify, if you would like a shower fitting in your bathroom or an additional electrical socket, then this would be classed as an Incidental New Work (INW) which would require DEs approval. As budgetary constraints are something that we all need to live with, the likelihood is that if this is not a Health and Safety issue or relating to Special Needs then this will probably not be carried out during this financial year (end Apr-07).

As your Landlord, DE does continue to deal with all the allocations, bookings and Move-Out/In Issues (details of the required Move-in and Move-Out Standards can be found at Annex B to the Maintenance Guide). You should continue to contact your local Housing Officer should you have any problems relating to these issues. You will note that the Maintenance Guide makes reference to the DE publication 'A Guide to Living in SFA' (aka the Occupant's Handbook). Please be aware that this publication is not due to be published in hard copy until April 2007. In the meantime, you can view an electronic copy of this guide via the Defence Estates website:

http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk/sfa/f&p_occupant.htm

Over the life of the Contract, DE will require MHS to raise the standard of some SFA to Standard 1 for Condition (subject to the availability of funds). The group of properties to be included in any one upgrade project will be specified by DE. The scope of work involved in these upgrades will vary, depending on the state of the property, but in most cases will have to be done when properties are unoccupied.

There are also various elements of your property that will have a 'planned life' e.g. boilers, cookers, kitchens and electrical systems. Each year we will agree a programme with DE (known as the Strategic Facilities Plan or SFP) to replace some of these life expired elements. This work may be done whilst Customers are still in-situ. We will advise occupants of the properties affected by these programmes of work, and will endeavour to meet individual needs and convenience issues. Customers should be aware that these works will be subject to the availability of funding.

I acknowledge that the service provided by MHS has not been, in some areas, always to the standard I would have wished and that we must continue the improvement of our service delivery. However we do need support and there have been many occasions in the last year when occupants have not been in or answered the door when appointments have been scheduled. This has resulted in missed opportunities to repair broken or damaged fittings and to carry out on behalf of your Landlord statutory and, planned inspections of the property i.e. gas and electricity inspections, asbestos and condition surveys and for the installation of specialist equipment. In helping us to help you, I would therefore be most grateful if scheduled appointments could be met and access provided to the property. If a change to this scheduled appointment is required then the Help Desk should be informed at the earliest opportunity. In looking for ways to improve the arrangements for scheduled visits, I am investigating the feasibility of locally recruiting spouses who will be employed to oversee and manage appointments within specified areas. This initiative is currently being trialed in Tidworth with the assistance of the HIVE organisation.

As I said in my introduction, please do read this Guide to better understand what it is that we are here to provide and keep it readily available if you need to call the Help Desk. On move-out, it would also be appreciated if your copy was left in the property for the incoming occupant.

Yours sincerely



Richard Lumby
Managing Director
MODern Housing Solutions

Copy to:
DD SP Pol AF&W
Housing Colonels
Chair AFF
Chair NFF
Chair Airwaves.

Enclosure: MHS Service Family Accommodation Maintenance Guide