

British Army family gets new home for Christmas as they move into the first refurbished houses

Corporal Stewart Angus of 1st Battalion the Mercian Regiment moved into the upgraded property at Larkhill along with his wife Sarah and children Paige, aged 11 Bradley, aged 4, and 3 year-old Oscar.

Their new home has been completely upgraded by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and contractors Amey, thanks to £200-million of funding for military accommodation which was announced by the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Defence in July.

The Angus family are the first of around 3,500 military families who will be able to live in newly upgraded homes because of the funding.

Cpl Angus, Sarah and their children will benefit from a house which has been refitted, with a new kitchen, bathroom, downstairs toilet, heating pipework and radiators, boiler, electrical wiring and fittings and flooring.

Corporal Angus with his wife Sarah and children Paige, Bradley and Oscar at their new home. DIO Crown Copyright, 2020.

Artex ceilings were removed, walls were completely re-plastered and new carpets and curtains were added. In addition, the house got a new roof, windows and doors, external lights and some new fencing. New loft insulation and external wall insulation were also added, greatly increasing thermal efficiency to save energy, reduce the family's heating bills and make sure it's a warm family home through the winter.

The Government's funding totals £200-million for accommodation improvements for armed forces personnel. Of this, £122-million is being spent on upgrading 3,500 service homes throughout the UK. Some properties are receiving a full refurbishment, like Cpl Angus' family home, while others will see smaller but still significant improvements with a minimum investment of £25,000 per property.

Around 800 homes which have been empty for a long time are being targeted first to reduce disruption to families. A number of play parks in military housing areas will also see significant investment, giving many children improved places to play.

Air Commodore James Savage, DIO's Head of Accommodation, has welcomed the family to their new home.

He said:

It's great to see Corporal Angus and his wife and children become the first of many military families across the country to benefit from improvements to Service Family Accommodation. This funding allows us to target some of the homes most in need of improvement and really make a difference to the home lives of thousands of servicemen and women and their families.

It's a condition of the funding that it must be spent within 18 months, so my team and our industry partners, Amey, have had to work very quickly to identify where the money can be best spent and then to put our plans into action.

Corporal Angus' new home is the first of many and I hope he and his family are very happy there.

Corporal Angus said:

Moving house is always stressful, especially with three children, but it certainly helps to be moving to somewhere that I know is practically a new house in many ways. We're really pleased to be moving to a property with all of these new and upgraded features, particularly just in time for Christmas!

Tim Redfern, Amey's Managing Director Defence said:

Amey and DIO have a shared vision of providing the military community with secure, warm and energy-efficient homes, and this huge boost in government funding will enable us to further support the MOD in their commitment to improve the quality of armed forces living accommodation, and enhance the economic, sustainable and social performance of the Defence estate.

Additionally, it allows our supply chain partners to preserve the resilience of their own business during the pandemic and provide a much-needed boost to their local community.

We're absolutely delighted that Corporal Angus and his family are pleased with the upgrades to his property and we look forward to welcoming many more families into their newly-refurbished homes.

Alongside the spending on family homes, DIO is investing £38-million of the £200-million funding on a nationwide Net Carbon Accommodation Programme and £6-million on refurbishing accommodation at Longmoor Training Camp. This will improve facilities for troops when they are training away from their permanent base. The remaining £34-million will be used for improvements to some Single Living Accommodation facilities in Army barracks, RAF stations and naval establishment.

This investment programme will provide work to dozens of companies, many of which will be small and medium enterprises local to the area. It is expected to sustain around 2,000 jobs in the construction sector.

Watch the Youtube video to hear directly from the Air Commodore James Savage and Corporal Angus: <https://youtu.be/lZPoJyMNvW8>.

Read the full transcript: [Army family get Christmas wish granted with fully upgraded Service Family Accommodation](#) (ODT, 5.75KB)