



PRESS RELEASE

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Hundreds of new homes as from August 2019

In a major boost to the Government's house-building programme, over 1600 homes for Gibraltarians will be made available from the summer of 2019 until the end of 2021.

This was announced by the Chief Minister Fabian Picardo today in a press conference with the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia who is responsible for Lands and Government Projects, and the Minister for Housing and Equality, Samantha Sacramento.

The Government of Gibraltar plans to be able to deliver over 1500 new build affordable homes for eligible residents of Gibraltar from August 2019 until the end of 2021. These Government projects will go through the planning process in the usual way.

In addition, approximately 160 former MOD homes will pass to the Government as part of the MOD Lands Transfer Agreement and will then be sold by the Government.

The eligibility requirement for the new build afford homes (which is set out below) will be different to the eligibility requirement for the ex-MOD housing.

Construction of 3 NEW affordable housing estates

Hassan Centenary Terraces

Construction will first begin on a new impressive Hassan Centenary Terraces which has been modified and will be sited in a different location on the Eastside development. As there have been delays with the Blue Water project, it has been decided that such delays should not delay the new affordable housing schemes which are earmarked for this plot.

The new scheme will different to that which was previously announced because the technical requirements of the previous location, which involved major road realignment and extensive geotechnical works that are part of the eastside development would have taken longer to resolve. The location of the new affordable homes was therefore moved so as to progress the commencement, and therefore the completion, of the development of the east side plot.

Coastal protection works will involve the construction of an upgraded rock armour revetment, designed to meet the parameters currently in use locally for storm return periods and sea level rise. In addition, extensive utility services' infrastructure will be laid to service the development.



Both of these tranches of work will progress in advance of and in parallel with the construction of the housing estate.

Bob Peliza Mews

Bob Peliza Mews will now be located at Waterport, on the site of the current Waterport power station, an area that is now a well established residential area. The relocation of this affordable development arises from aspects of the education projects which have required more extensive relocations, details of which will be provided by the Minister for Education in coming weeks.

This estate will continue to incorporate the current Scouts and Duke of Edinburgh Scheme headquarters and will have the new bathing pavilion on its doorstep. It will be on the frontline of the Harbour with sea views.

A third new affordable home development

Additionally, plans provide for a third estate at Europort Avenue that will provide for a further 400 flats. This project will be in a prime town centre location.

On the basis of current plans, the three estates will provide approximately 1,500 new homes for our people.

Process

The Government will procure the construction of the projects through a competitive process to ensure quality and value for money.

Timetable

Completion of the first blocks of affordable homes is expected to be in February 2020 with the first phase of Hassan Centenary Terraces and the whole of that estate being completed by the end of 2020. Completion of the estate on Europort Avenue is expected to commence in March 2021. Completion of the first phase of Bob Peliza Mews is expected, subject to the successful and timely commissioning of the new power station, in June 2021 and the second phase in December 2021.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria and priority of allocation continues to be as announced by Government in its press release in August 2015 which are given in Notes to Editors.

MOD properties

The lands agreement, which was concluded between the Ministry of Defence and the Government of Gibraltar in July 2011 provided for the construction of new homes for the MOD at Four Corners in exchange for the release of existing MOD accommodation to the Government.

In line with that agreement, the following MOD accommodation in the South District will be handed over to HMGOG:

1. The Europa Walks



2. Trafalgar Heights
3. Naval Hospital Hill
4. Lake Ramp, Provost Ramp and Phillimore Ramp at Buena Vista Estate

It is expected that all these properties will be transferred to the Government in early 2019. Thereafter they will initially be used to provide accommodation for athletes who will participate in the Island Games.

Tenders or Expressions of Interest for these properties will be opened during the course of this calendar year with an expectation of completion starting in August 2019. Government is in the process of preparing a brochure outlining all the opportunities available and a more detailed announcement will be made in due course.

The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo said:

“The provision of housing that is affordable is of course an essential part of the strengthening and growth of our nation and has therefore always been a priority for our GSLP/Liberal administration. We have a proven track record and have already delivered in numbers and quality. We are committed to continue to provide for our community and will continue to do so with homes that are affordable and I am delighted to announce the next phase of our forthcoming projects. Hassan Centenary Terraces will provide spectacular aesthetics at the entrance to the East side development and will be the first estate to be delivered. We will phase the completion of the remaining estates thereafter so that there will be a continuous supply of accommodation. Similarly, we will be seeing the remaining jewels on the MOD property crown being delivered to us in 2019. The Minister for Housing will lead on the details and specifications of the new affordable homes to ensure that we properly cater for the housing demand. Land Property Services and GRP, under the Deputy Chief Minister, will lead on the MOD housing as has been the case in the past.”

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“The Government has, over the years, put on the market a number of former MOD properties out to tender and these have been allocated to the highest bidders in each case. There has been considerable demand for such properties in the past and the Government expects that it will be no different with the units that we will be advertising shortly. There are many instances where the release of former MOD residential units has allowed movement up the property ladder with accommodation being released further down the scale. The Government decided to combine the announcements of the release of MOD accommodation with the new housing schemes so that interested parties are aware of the different options. The development of these new housing schemes will be phased to ensure that there is continuity in the provision and everyone will be aware of what will be available in the coming years.”

The Minister for Housing and Equality Samantha Sacramento said:

“I have seen the damage that historic lack of housing causes in our community as well as the joy of seeing families move into new and high quality homes in the last couple of years. I am glad to be part of a Government that has addressed this issue in a way that is unprecedented. In addition, of



course, the natural consequence of the allocation procedure will be that there will be a substantial release of Government rental housing stock and this will have a positive effect on the waiting lists for rental housing.

Notes to Editors:

Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants who release Government rented accommodation, in order of their position on the Housing Waiting List first and then by category of flat released.
2. Applicants on the Housing waiting list but excluding those only eligible for a 1RKB
3. Applicants on the Housing waiting list eligible for a 1RKB/those eligible to apply for HMGoG rented housing but not on the waiting list/those, other than because they already previously owned property would be eligible to apply for housing/meritorious upgraders (i.e those requiring larger accommodation because of family composition). This group would be sorted by way of a draw.
4. Applicants wishing to upgrade or transfer from their currently owned accommodation. Also to be sorted by a draw.
5. Any other applicant resident in Gibraltar. To be sorted by a draw.
6. Any remaining apartments will be put out to tender to the highest bidder

The Government is now writing to all applications who have already expressed an interest to purchase affordable housing and asking them to complete a questionnaire the objective of which is to ensure to optimise the composition of the flats. The questionnaire will also be available to print out on the Government's website. A copy of the questionnaire is attached.