



PRESS RELEASE

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Current Government Will Never Forget Gibraltar's Housing Estates

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar notes the Opposition's latest opportunistic comment regarding the refurbishment works to Government Housing Estates. The Opposition's criticism of the Government's tireless efforts over the last five years to refurbish these homes to provide a good standard of living is farcical: these are the same estates that were completely forgotten and left to rot by the GSD throughout their 16 year term of office.

The Government considered the GSD's neglect of Gibraltar's government housing estates as completely unacceptable, which is why their refurbishment was, and remains, a key manifesto commitment. It is a vitally important part of this Government's long-term vision for Gibraltar that these estates are properly refurbished in a way that addresses community needs and ensures quality spaces.

As such, the completion dates to some phases of the works have been adjusted in order to enable unforeseen – but necessary – infrastructural works and to account for logistical challenges that have emerged as the works progress. In many cases, these logistical challenges are unrelated to general construction works. In Laguna Estate and Moorish Castle estate, for example, delays have been caused by the laying of the 3 phase electrical supply to power the lifts. These logistical problems are currently being resolved.

Despite this, works are progressing well. At Laguna Estate all facades and roofs are in the final stages and the construction of most of the lift pits is proceeding to schedule. Furthermore, contrary to the GSD's incorrect statement, works to the blocks closest to Devil's Tower Road have begun and refurbishment to Fearless House is currently underway.

The works originally planned for Glacis Estate are now complete. However, unlike the previous GSD administration, this Government will never forget or neglect our responsibility to ensure a good standard of living in these homes. Therefore, the scope of the works at Glacis has been extended over and above what was originally planned and additional investment has been made to include the whole of the estate. This will include significant refurbishment to communal areas and works to construct and install lifts at George Jeger House and Archbishop Amigo House.

It is vitally important that these works are conducted in a safe manner that is sensitive to the needs of the families living at the estates. In order to ensure that contractors maintain



their work zones in a clean and safe state, independent health and safety consultants are regularly monitoring all of the works and make recommendations for improvements where necessary. The works are also supervised and inspected by the Housing Works Agency, which together with the Housing Department is in constant liaison with tenants' associations to ensure that areas of concern, particularly with regards to health and safety, are highlighted and addressed.

The rendering materials were chosen because of their history of longevity and value. Indeed, exactly the same through-colour rendering was used successfully by the GSD administration at Waterport Terraces. This rendering is specifically designed to prevent future maintenance and will avert the need to carry out future external repairs or re-decoration. It also provides a substantial improvement to the environmental footprint of the blocks to the benefit of all residents.