



# Federal Real Estate

Comprehensive Real Estate Services

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[www.bundesimmobilien.de](http://www.bundesimmobilien.de)

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del din design  
Corporate Communications Agency  
Susanne Del Din  
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*Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben Board of Directors: Holger Hentschel, Dr Christoph Krupp (Board Spokesperson) and Paul Johannes Fietz.*

## Dear Reader,

The Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben (BImA), Germany's Institute for Federal Real Estate, has an extremely diverse portfolio. It includes the properties of the federal ministries, the Customs Authority, the Federal Police and other government institutions, as well as barracks and large military training areas. Most of the Federal Government's real estate used for official purposes is therefore owned by the BImA, which administers and manages the properties.

The BImA constantly modernises its existing buildings and adds new properties that have been constructed in line with custom specifications. In terms of planning and constructing federal buildings, the Federal Government has recently granted the BImA greater freedom but also more responsibility. Working together with its partners in a spirit of trust, it will therefore increase its construction work in future and deliver projects quicker. Thanks to its own climate programme, the BImA ensures that its properties meet – or even exceed – the current energy efficiency requirements.

The BImA also supports the housing drive championed by the Federal Government, federal states and local authorities: it now owns more than 38,000 homes which it uses to provide affordable housing, first and foremost to federal employees. It constantly invests in modernisation measures and also builds homes itself under the Federal Government's housing assistance scheme in an effort to help relieve the burden on tight housing markets. To achieve this goal, it works closely with the local authorities in many places. Properties that can be developed into housing and that

the Federal Government no longer requires are sold by the BImA to city councils and local authorities in a targeted manner and often at a greatly reduced rate.

The BImA's remit also extends to areas that would not automatically be associated with a real estate company. Its Federal Forest Service division looks after more 440,000 hectares of forests and open country – most of which are either currently used by the military or were done so in the past – and employs forest and wildlife conservation measures. This also includes forest fire prevention, the removal of residual contamination and munitions clearance.

The tasks of the BImA are both varied and fascinating. We and the approximately 7,000 employees of the BImA are committed to addressing these tasks in a responsible and reliable manner and to balancing the sometimes conflicting requirements – such as protecting species on the one hand and promoting renewable energy on the other. We work proactively and with flexibility in facing up to challenges such as the coronavirus pandemic: mobile working and ongoing digitalisation, for example, are here to stay and are instrumental in enabling us to implement our projects swiftly and cost-effectively. In so doing, the BImA plays its part in stabilising the economy, even in difficult times. We hope that this publication will help you get to know the BImA as a reliable service provider and a strong partner.

*Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben  
Board of Directors*

*Extraordinary: The BIWA sometimes also rents out its very special properties – like the Kronprinzenpalais at “Unter den Linden 3” in Berlin.*



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*Diverse: The BIWA’s portfolio also contains some unique properties, such as the “Sundische Wiese” on the Zingst peninsula.*



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*An innovative developer: Some pioneering large-scale projects – such as the Climate Tower in Bonn – have already been completed at the BIWA’s properties.*

*Essential: Under the housing assistance scheme, the BImA provides affordable homes for federal employees.*

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*Supporting: When heavy rains and devastating floods cause major damage, as they did in the summer of 2021, the BImA is on hand to help.*



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# Die BImA

The Institute for Federal Real Estate (Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben, BImA) is the key real estate company for Germany's Federal Government, with a remit that is varied and often unique. A closer look reveals more than meets the eye.



*BImA headquarters in Bonn*

Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben

# One company, many facets

Since it was established on 1 January 2005, the Institute for Federal Real Estate (Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben, BImA) has become the key real estate company for the Federal Government. Its work is as diverse as the properties in its portfolio.

The BImA is one of the most important stakeholders in the German real estate market. It looks after and manages around 19,000 properties. It owns some 460,000 hectares of land and 38,000 apartments, giving it a substantial portfolio. This covers residential, industrial and commercial real estate through to existing and former military areas and even includes forests and agricultural land. An important element of BImA's work is the adoption of a standardised system of real estate management (S-REM) for most of the Federal Government's real estate used for official purposes. This means that it manages and services nearly all the properties used by government department and ministries, which also involves managing energy and environmental aspects. By way of an aside, the BImA's centralised energy procurement also sees it generate some 96 per cent of the electricity required by the commercial properties in civic use from renewable sources.

## Creating new spaces

The BImA is also responsible for selling properties that the Federal Government no longer needs. These efforts are currently focusing in particular on repurposing as many plots of land as possible for building affordable

## Set up for success

The BImA is a federal corporation established under public law as an independent legal entity and is headquartered in Bonn. The commercially run company has about 7,000 employees throughout Germany, distributed across the headquarters in Bonn and nine regional offices in Berlin, Dortmund, Erfurt, Freiburg, Koblenz, Magdeburg, Munich, Potsdam and Rostock. With more than 120 satellite locations, the BImA engages fully with its clients on the ground.

homes. With housing increasingly scarce, the BImA is thus implementing the Federal Government's objectives agreed at the housing summit in September 2018, especially in major urban areas. Working together with local authorities, the BImA develops commercial utilisation models, feasibility and market analyses and urban planning agreements as well as land development and use concepts – creating new residential, commercial and recreational spaces. The BImA also creates new spaces in its role as developer, when new government properties need to be built, for instance.



## Structure

On an organisational level, the BfIA is divided into nine divisions. Six of these carry out actual operations: Facility Management, Sales, Federal Forest Service, Portfolio Management, Residential and Administration. These are supported by the IT, Finance and Organisation/Human Resources divisions. There are also administrative units that report directly to the Board of Directors. The BfIA is subject to legal and professional oversight by the Federal Ministry of Finance. An Administrative Board consisting of ten members advises the Board of Directors.

The BfIA crafts plans that are painstakingly customised to meet the needs of the specific user – entirely in keeping with the principle of “individually tailored real estate instead of a generic off-the-peg building“. In order to fully exploit the potential offered by complex properties, strategic planning is key. This is why the BfIA analyses properties, allocates them to particular sub-portfolios in accordance with business objectives, improves them, and sometimes even demolishes buildings. Such measures show how properties can be managed and upgraded in the best possible way and how brownfield sites can be repurposed and utilised.

### Investing in the housing stock

The BfIA also invests in its housing stock and has already strengthened its commitment by establishing the Housing division. The future will see it expand its forward-looking investments further. In addition to its actual core business, the BfIA also performs state functions on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, such as providing property services for allied military forces and settling claims arising from military manoeuvres, property damage and injury to persons. Furthermore, it has placed a greater focus on the housing assistance scheme for federal employees, under which it now performs the role of developer too. Concentrating its efforts on urban centres with a tight housing market, it has begun building new homes for federal employees. The first homes were completed in 2020.

### Expertise in many areas

Last but not least, the BfIA also brings decades of expertise in agricultural and forested land management

to the table. This know-how is targeted to the specific needs expressed by its clients.

Mother Nature is in good hands with the federal district foresters – in terms of both forestry management and conservation measures. From Trave to Hohenfels, from Rhine-Weser to Lausitz, 17 Federal Forestry Offices provide user-oriented, comprehensive land management across roughly 368,000 hectares of woodland and 207,000 hectares of open land and bodies of water belonging to the Federal Government and third parties. Additional services range from providing forest valuations and surveys to the sale of game. ■



*The BfIA is also active as a building developer in the housing sector.*



Real estate sales have allowed the BImA to construct some 70,000 homes between 2005 and 2021.



In mid-2022, the BImA provided **319 properties** rent-free for the accommodation of 61,000 refugees.

The BImA current provides training for some **250 young people** – in six different career pathways and six dual degree courses.

# 17

The BImA has been in the market for **17 years**.



**4.4 billion euros** in income from leasing government properties was collected by the BImA in the previous year.

The BImA has real estate assets worth around **18 billion euros**.

The BImA's staff of nearly **7,000 people** work at the headquarters in Bonn and at nine regional offices 120 satellite locations nationwide.

The BImA is currently planning and implementing over **350 large-scale construction** measures with an investment volume of six million euros or more.

The BImA organises over **700** in-house training and development events every year – both online and face-to-face.



In 2021, around **850,000 cubic metres** of wood were harvested from the areas managed by the Federal Forest Service.

The BImA provides **38,000 homes** and **26,000 allocation rights for benefit** of the Federal Government's housing assistance scheme.

In 2021, the BImA paid around **2.4 billion euros** into the federal treasury.



The BImA as an employer

## Attractive and varied

The BImA offers employees a wide variety of exciting responsibilities as well as attractive conditions.

■ The success of the BImA is thanks to its 7,000 dedicated employees nationwide. It offers them interesting responsibilities and job security, with the benefits of working as a civil servant. The BImA focuses on providing comprehensive support to its employees.

### Individual and flexible

Flexible working hours, part-time models and mobile working allow staff to shape their working hours to suit them and balance career and family life. The BImA helps in structuring parental leave and supports employees returning to work. The focus here is on equal opportunities with support given to women in managerial roles as well as to practice of active fatherhood.

It encourages staff to realise their potential and take on new challenges. Employees are able to change jobs within the company, at its over 100 sites, and a large number of internal and external further training courses are available. All staff are given a smart phone and laptop so that they can follow modern working practices and work remotely, wherever they are.

Under the housing assistance scheme, the BImA provides affordable rented housing for staff, especially in urban centres. It also enables families to book cheap holidays via the welfare organisation owned by the Federal Government. The BImA takes the health of its staff very seriously. Back exercises, yoga, pilates and actions days on all issues relating to fitness and mental health are all provided on a regular basis. Ergonomic workstations and flu jabs are offered to all staff as a matter of course. Depending on where exactly they work, employees can access specific health promotion measures too.

The issue of welfare is also hugely important: an in-house integration management team helps those who have been absent from work for a long time due to illness to get back into the everyday working routine. Every member of staff has a welfare officer who they can go to with questions about challenges they face in their lives. Respect, tolerance and diversity are an everyday reality at the BImA. ■

In conversation

# “Mobile working is becoming part of our everyday lives”

Michael Müller, head of the Organisation and Human Resources division, explains what makes the BImA stand out as an employer.



## ? Mr Müller, what is it that makes the BImA special?

There are two main benefits to the BImA. On the one hand, we're part of the public sector and offer a great deal of security, good prospects and a flexible, family-friendly working environment. On the other, we're the provider of real estate services for Germany's Federal Government, and our entrepreneurial outlook gives us ample scope to operate like a business in the private sector. These are two exciting aspects that dovetail well together.

## ? How does that characterise your corporate and work culture?

We treat one another as colleagues first and foremost, with a fairly flat hierarchy and an ethos that is fairly atypical for an administration. Anyone who identifies potential for improvement can simply send the directors an email. We encourage our staff to get actively involved. Our wish is for people to network and exchange ideas and opinions without any regard for hierarchical structures. Our philosophy is “lead the way, and make it simple”. We adopt a commercial mindset, which means we sometimes question the occasional rule or regulation.

## ? What will be the decisive factors in the next few years in your view?

There's a need to think ahead and do it strategically, because the world of work is evolving rapidly. Demographic change is a particularly relevant factor. We're taking a proactive approach and want to retain young people at the earliest possible stage and give them some stimulating career prospects. For instance, we've significantly expanded what we offer students following dual curricula. The COVID-19 pandemic will also leave its mark for a long time to come. Mobile working is becoming part of our everyday lives. In the medium term, of course, this will throw up some new questions: do we still need to keep an office available for everyone, or will we be tackling the issue of hot desking some day? Digitalisation is something else that's right at the top of our agenda. This also includes smartphones and laptops for all BImA staff, electronic files and apps developed specifically for the BImA that make remote working easier. We're already well placed in that regard but would like to get even better.

## ? What advice do you give applicants interested in working at the BImA?

Pop in and simply see the “shop floor” for yourself, live and up close. Our range of attractive workplaces is just as varied as our property portfolio, from the island of Heligoland to all the way up the Zugspitze mountain. We offer jobs covering almost all of the occupations that are needed to look after a property: from mechatronics engineers to real estate agents, from federal district foresters who protect the forest and nature, to water engineers, who keep waterworks running. Just apply in a simple, straightforward process, and we'll get back to you – that's a promise! ■



*Some differences, but lots of common ground: PuRE-net is an organisation representing real estate specialists from 23 European countries.*

#### Partner organisations

## A strong network

As a member of the Public Real Estate Network (PuRE-net), the network of European providers of public real estate services, the BI mA also exchanges knowledge and ideas with fellow industry experts from other countries.

From Cyprus to Finland, from Ireland to Latvia, this network currently spans more than 23 European countries. The PuRE-net organisation (Public Real Estate Network) has been bringing European providers of public real estate services together since 2007.

Members meet regularly to share their experiences regarding the construction sector and the management of public real estate. Thanks to digital media, international exchanges across different time zones – for instance with participants from its partner organisation The Workplace Network (TWN) in Canada, the US and South Korea – are also possible.

The real estate sector covers a variety of subjects, ranging from strategies and performance indicators to energy saving measures, climate neutrality, sales and more besides. The BI mA is an active contributor to this network and has hosted several of its events, such as the working table entitled “Efficient Office Space Solutions”. This event, which the BI mA devised and has now

established itself as a firm fixture on the PuRE-net calendar, is held by different European countries on a rotating basis.

The BI mA has repeatedly staged working tables, for instance in Berlin and at the United Nations offices in Bonn. One priority area for the BI mA at these events was the measures to be taken by government institutions when constructing new buildings. Germany has already played host to the PuRE-net Annual Meeting too. Robert Erfen, who represents the BI mA in PuRE-net, sums it up this way: “Thanks to

PuRE-net, we have established contact with numerous European partner organisations and have gained invaluable insights into their organisational structures and the scope of their various property portfolios. And BI mA’s business model – which sees it act as owner, developer and provider of real estate services – has also been met with great interest by other public real estate organisations throughout Europe.” ■



Ownership duties: sites with suspected explosive ordnance

# Accepting the challenge

By stepping up cooperation with local authorities in explosive ordnance clearance, the BIImA is upholding its promise.

Relics dating from World War Two, bombs and other munitions with their detonation mechanisms intact have been lying dormant in the ground for more than 70 years. Long after the end of war, clearing explosive ordnance therefore remains an ongoing task facing not only owners, regulatory authorities and technical agencies, but also developers and users of properties where such weapons are suspected. This is particularly true of the BIImA as one of Germany's largest real estate owners. Many of its sites are suspected of containing explosive ordnance as a result of warfare and their use for military purposes over many years. Within Germany's federal system of munitions clearance, the BIImA sees itself as having a special responsibility. Through the sharing of expertise with the sector and the application of high quality standards nationwide, its major aim is to improve results in this area.

## Progressive dialogue

The BIImA has been campaigning for years for such measures and has already held a number of symposia on this issue. The first such event in May 2014 was entitled "In the Jungle of Responsibilities – Munitions and Sites to be Converted". The event was designed to support affected communities and provide information on points of contact while also creating a forum for an exchange of ideas.

On this basis, a series of events has now become established. The BIImA provides a regular platform giving experts the opportunity to continue working on problems and lend impetus in the search for national solutions. The Specialist Explosive Ordnance Conference in May 2019 acted as a catalyst for the creation of a working group on munitions between the Federal Government and the individual federal states, at the level of the Conference of the Ministers of the Interior, and has since worked intensively on establishing high quality standards that are uniform nationwide.

In this context, and against the backdrop of the increasingly severe forest fires on sites containing explosive ordnance, the BIImA and the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania entered into a cooperation agreement in January 2020. In May 2022, it backed this up with a framework agreement worth a total of 190



*Ordnance clearance is a generational responsibility and requires particular expertise.*

million euros governing the concrete implementation of measures. Another cooperation agreement, this time between the BIImA and the state of Brandenburg, was signed in November 2020. With these agreements, the BIImA is not only sending out a strong message but has also created a key basis on which to deepen cooperation between the Federal Government and the federal states.

## Creating expertise and boosting knowledge

In supporting scientists and researchers specialising in explosive ordnance clearance, the BIImA passes on its wealth of experience in this field. It has a strong partner at its side in the form of the Bundeswehr University in Munich, through which it is able to offer the academic postgraduate course in Explosive Ordnance Clearance for technical planners. Since 2017, the partners have worked together to ensure that the long-term Explosive Ordnance Clearance project also has academically qualified personnel to guarantee that the work meets common standards across the country. More information can be found at <https://kampfmittelraeumung.bundesimmobilien.de>.



*The issue of refugee accommodation has become more important again due to the war in Ukraine.*

### Accommodating refugees

# Staying in BImA properties

When it comes to accommodating refugees, the BImA helps the federal states, rural districts and municipalities by putting suitable properties at their disposal, rent-free.

■ The number of refugees and asylum seekers coming to Germany in recent years has already required the whole of society to pull together. As the key real estate company for the Federal Government, the BImA has also fulfilled its responsibility and is supporting the federal states, rural districts and municipalities responsible for housing refugees and asylum seekers. At times, up to 172,000 people were accommodated on properties owned by the BImA. Former barracks were ideal, as they provided space for a large number of refugees and asylum seekers, usually at very short notice.

### No more rental costs

To support states, rural districts and municipalities even more effectively, the body legislating on the budget specifically provided the BImA with a number of options. As of 1 January 2015, the federal states and municipalities have been able to accommodate asylum seekers and refugees on federal properties rent-free. The budgetary legislator has also specified that any initial repair costs and development costs (so-called ad-

aptation costs) that are necessary and appropriate for these properties can be reimbursed by the BImA.

### BImA receiving many enquiries

Since early 2022, the issue of refugee accommodation has become more important again due to the war in Ukraine. With the BImA currently receiving many enquiries nationwide, it is constantly analysing its portfolio to see whether federal properties are available that can be used to house persons seeking shelter. However, responsibility for assessing and ultimately deciding whether a property is suitable for refugees and asylum seekers lies with the relevant federal states and local authorities.

By May 2022, the BImA had already handed the federal states, rural districts and municipalities a total of 319 BImA properties, or parts thereof, rent-free. These provided capacity to accommodate around 61,000 people. ■

# Anything but ordinary

The BImA's portfolio is packed full of properties that boast unique distinguishing characteristics, that will arouse your curiosity or that will simply make you stop in your tracks.

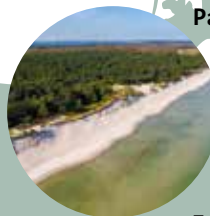
## Building at speed

In just 2.5 years, the BImA completed work on the Federal Police Academy in **Lübeck**, its first ever modular building to be constructed using a "fast-track procedure". The pilot project, with its offices, teaching spaces and accommodation areas, has been well received: user demand for further buildings of this kind is huge.



## Part of the National Natural Heritage

The "Sundische Wiese" forms the eastern section of the **Zingst peninsula** and is part of the Western Pomerania Lagoon Area National Park. Here, the Natural Heritage Area is managed by the Federal Forestry Office in Western Pomerania-Strelitz.



## Music to the ears

A musical campus for the German armed forces, and which is unique nationwide, was built on land housing the forest barracks in **Hilden** – with rehearsal and teaching rooms, a chamber music hall, recording studio and much more.



## Wind energy

Two wind energy projects, each generating some 33 megawatts of power, were carried out in **Königs Wusterhausen** and **Sprenghagen**. These are the two most powerful wind farms on land owned by the BImA.



## Climate protection in vertical form

Completed in early 2022, the new UNFCC Secretariat building stands at around 68 metres high and is a new landmark between the historic buildings on the UN campus. The unofficial name of the Climate Tower in **Bonn** is the "Kurzer Eugen".



## High tech underground

One of Europe's largest underground facilities is the **Neckarzimmern** UTA of the German armed forces. 38 kilometres of transit routes run through it, an air circulation system ensures a constant temperature of 21 degrees Celsius.



## Fastest building project

A temporary building for the Federal Police District Office in **Freilassing** has sprung up in a record time of just 1.5 years. Thanks to its modular design, it was assembled in only four months.



## Back to school

The BImA has built a new annexe in Perlach Forest for the European School **Munich** for more than 1,500 students.



## Above the clouds

The "Schneefernerhaus" on the summit of the **Zugspitze** houses the environmental research station, 2,656 metres above sea level. Here, the BImA has rented laboratory space and outdoor areas for use by Germany's Environment Agency.



# The service provider

The BImA's primary task involves managing and servicing nearly all of the Federal Government's real estate used for official purposes. In so doing, it always keeps an eye on the interests of the users.



## Government properties

# A single source for all services

All properties used by the federal authorities for official purposes are managed by the BI mA in line with the principles of the standardised system of real estate management (S-REM).

With the Act Establishing the BI mA of 9 December 2004, the legislator charged the Institute for Federal Real Estate with the task of implementing a standardised system of real estate management (S-REM). Under section 1 (1), “[i]n particular, this includes the management of properties used by Federal Office of Administration departments in the fulfilment of their responsibilities (government properties)”. From 2005 to 2013, ownership of nearly all of the domestic government properties was gradually transferred to the BI mA and thus to the S-REM. At present, 114 different users with more than 4,600 leases are managed in the S-REM.

The S-REM is geared towards managing, servicing and operating federal properties on commercial terms. The cooperation between users and the BI mA is based on a landlord-tenant model that takes into account economic and functional factors. There are a great many different types of properties required by users for official purposes: these include administrative buildings and courts, laboratories for technical and medical institutes and accommodation, through to port facilities, museums, libraries and bunkers.

## Proven and standard measures

By law, the BI mA is responsible as a basic principle for meeting the Federal Government’s need for property sites and space. This need can change for a variety of reasons, whether due to requirements being redefined or parameters that have changed in other ways. In such cases, the user tasks the BI mA with exploring the options for a new facility, with some qualifications. The user specifies in more detail what they need and describes their requirements in terms of the features of

the building and areas as well as the location. A proven, standard procedure is thereby initiated in which the BI mA investigates potential options and calculates the total investment required.

The BI mA has a large portfolio of its own properties that may be able to satisfy the reported need if alterations are made or if an extension is added. Alternatively, a property can be purchased or leased from a third party. And if a new commercial property needs to be built, the BI mA will act as developer and design individually tailored solutions that meet the user’s precise needs.

## Extensive obligations

The BI mA’s S-REM encompasses commercial, technical and infrastructural facilities management as well as construction and renovation. It guarantees that the real estate portfolio is utilised efficiently. In addition to flexible accommodation options, the synergy effects also deliver savings to the federal budget. As the owner and landlord of the properties, the BI mA has extensive obligations: as well as operating and servicing a property, the BI mA also ensures that all measures intended for the maintenance of structural elements, technical systems and outdoor areas are carried out – from clearing clogged gutters to removing snow and ice. The duty of care associated with premises liability also plays a major role. Depending on the size and the needs of the property, BI mA property managers may be assigned permanently on site to coordinate the tasks required there. ■



*Patient well-being has top priority at the Central Hospital of the German armed forces in Koblenz.*

Focusing on the client

# Customised solutions

Many of the BIImA's clients need their properties to fulfil very specific requirements. The range of users that benefit from its services is very broad. Four examples are given below.

As far as the collaboration between the German armed forces and the BIImA is concerned, the figures speak for themselves: more than 1,200 leases for roughly 30,400 buildings and over 244,000 hectares of land. This makes the German armed forces the largest client in the standardised system of real estate management (S-REM). From barracks and air fields to naval bases – the German armed forces' portfolio is very diverse and the expectations placed on the BIImA as a service provider are accordingly high.

One example of this is the Central Hospital of the German armed forces in Koblenz, the oldest and largest facility of its kind. Here, BIImA staff maintain the building infrastructure on an ongoing basis and oversee any repair or construction measures that are required. The hospital continues to run as normal while any work of this kind is carried out as the treatment of military and civilian patients is given top priority at all times. The site is as big as 21.4 football pitches and houses 19 specialist medical departments and ten outpatient clinics. The Christoph 23 rescue helicopter is also stationed here and helps to ensure the provision of emergency medical care in the region as part of the

civil-military cooperation between the German armed forces and the ADAC automobile association.

## Focus on security

Another of the BIImA's largest clients is the Federal Police (BPOL). From Flensburg to Garmisch-Partenkirchen and from Görlitz to Aachen, there are some 175 BIImA properties accommodating the Federal Police with its regional offices, police stations, district offices and sports colleges. The mounted unit in Stahnsdorf, the police dog training school in Bleckede, the district office for maritime security in Neustadt (Holstein), air support squadrons in Oberschleißheim, Fuldata, Blumberg and Fuhlendorf as well as numerous training centres and Federal Police sports colleges are just a few examples of the wide range of areas in which the police works. By 2024, the Federal Police will be strengthened by the addition of a further 12,800 posts, which will in turn increase the need for accommodation. The Federal Police continues to work closely with the BIImA in managing the construction measures associated with this expansion. The BIImA



*Lots of space: The BI mA has constructed a new building for the THW local section in Schopfheim.*

will carry out extensive development on more than 140 existing properties in order to accommodate new BPOL employees. Plans are in place to create an additional 17 new properties. In order to meet the needs of the Federal Police as quickly as possible, the BI mA will focus primarily on new modular-design buildings.

### The size is key

Individually tailored solutions are also required in the collaboration with the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief – the Technisches Hilfswerk, or THW. The BI mA currently has around 900 S-REM leases with the THW. Some 99 per cent of the organisation’s staff are volunteer aid workers. The specific needs of this user include housing its high-tech vehicle fleet and expensive special equipment. Sufficiently large and attractive buildings for accommodation are also in demand in order to make this voluntary work more attractive. This is constantly presenting the THW and the BI mA with new challenges. One such case arose in Brandenburg, where a massive increase in staffing



*The BI mA is using a modular construction to meet the Federal Police’s rapidly growing need for space.*

levels necessitated the rental of an additional education and training facility within the space of a few months, to serve as an interim solution. Preparations are now in full swing.

### Energy efficient and accessible

The German Customs Authority is also one of the BI mA’s major clients, with around 980 leases in place currently. Because the authority is undergoing constant change, the requirements its buildings need to satisfy are also changing constantly. As the range of tasks carried out by the Customs Authority expands, the need for staff grows. As well as enlarging leased space, the BI mA is called upon to apply its property expertise so as to guarantee access for people with disabilities and to ensure that buildings meet the latest standards in terms of fire protection, energy efficiency and safety and security. The BI mA has already achieved this in the case of the renovations to the Central Customs Office in Regensburg and the newly constructed Central Customs Office in Bremen. In Hamburg, a new building is also being constructed for the Customs Authority in the northern part of the HafenCity development.

Across the country, the BI mA plans to build eleven operational training centres for the Customs Authority, all of which are similar in terms of their design. Each of these will comprise a sports hall, an indoor shooting range, a building for operational training purposes and outdoor training areas. The building projects will adopt a series construction approach, thereby enabling them to be undertaken rapidly and in a manner that optimises processes. Series construction also makes maintenance simpler, optimises the buildings’ life cycle and thus reduces the environmental and climate impact. ■



*Newbuild with a view of the Rhine and historic neighbours: the new high-rise building for the UN campus in Bonn.*

#### New office buildings constructed

# Developer for the Government

The Institute for Federal Real Estate is responsible for all construction work at its properties and has already completed numerous significant projects.

■ If it becomes necessary to build a new commercial property, the BI mA will also act as developer and design individually tailored solutions that meet the user's precise needs.

The number of large-scale projects implemented by the BI mA to date in Germany's capital city has been particularly high. The BI mA's largest newbuild project to date has been the new headquarters for the Federal Intelligence Service (BND) in Berlin, which was completed and officially handed over in November 2016. With a gross floor area of approximately 260,000 square metres, it has room for some 4,000 members of the service's staff.

The BI mA completed the Futurium in November 2017 after just 27 months of construction work. This building is another property that the BI mA has constructed in accordance with the PPP model. In its capacity as landowner and developer, it delivered the project on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The Futurium represents the gold standard as regards compliance with the latest sustainability criteria and houses exhibition and event spaces that meet exacting requirements. The building is used

by Futurium gGmbH to provide an independent platform for dialogue on scientific, technical and social developments, so as to stimulate debate on shaping the future.

#### New high-rise building for the UN campus

The BI mA has delivered a further major newbuild project for the United Nations at its office in Bonn. The Climate Tower, a free-standing annexe, measuring some 65 metres high across 17 floors and three basements, was built between the former plenary chamber of the German Bundestag and the historic Altes Wasserwerk complex, site of an old waterworks. Since May 2022, the building has housed 330 employees of the Secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. With this building too, the BI mA is aiming to be certified gold under the Federal Government's Sustainable Building rating scheme. Two historic buildings – the former waterworks and the pump house – will become an integral part of the campus and will be used in the future for UN conferences and symposia.



*A green oasis in the Climate Tower: the passive house standard serves as the blueprint for the newbuild's energy concept.*

The BImA is also building for younger target groups. In Perlach Forest, for instance, it constructed a new annexe for 1,500 students on behalf of the European School Munich (ESM). The annexe was handed over to the ESM in time for the 2019/2020 school year. The total floor space is roughly 29,000 square metres. As well as a primary school and a sports hall, the new building also includes a kindergarten.

The BImA was also able to hand over the new accommodation, classrooms and office buildings for the Federal Police Academy in Lübeck-Falkenfeld on time. Under this pilot project, living quarters for 200 students and a teaching block with ten separate classrooms and 16 offices were constructed on a site measuring 2,760 square metres, using a modular design.

The keys to the three modular buildings were handed over in March 2022 and teaching began shortly thereafter. Construction costs for the new buildings stand at around 22 million euros.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic and the global supply shortages in building materials that it brought about, the new buildings were set up within the planned time frame. Once work on the outdoor areas has finished, as is scheduled to be the case in September 2022, the construction project will finally be completed. ■

## The BImA paves the way in structural accessibility

In order to meet the statutory requirements, by spring 2021 the BImA had examined around 6,000 buildings in the S-REM Classic category for the presence of structural barriers which make accessing and using buildings either more difficult or impossible for people with disabilities. As well as providing users with extensive support in fulfilling their statutory duties, the BImA assumed responsibility for actual recording and facilitated timely reporting by the users.

In the next step, measures to remove any existing barriers are prepared based on the findings of the data collected. Structural accessibility categories have been defined and the BImA is currently developing an accessibility standard so that specific measures for removing barriers can in future be planned and implemented as and when required, in consultation with the users of government properties. The long-term objective is to carry out an upgrade to existing buildings as regards accessibility in order to comply with the statutory requirements and to reduce the disadvantaging of persons with severe disabilities.

In conversation

# Participating in success

New approaches in construction are saving time and money: Lothar Giese, head of the BImA's main office in Berlin, explains how complex building projects can be completed faster. The example he uses is that of a newbuild for the Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (BAM).

**? Some highly specialised physics and chemistry laboratories, workshops, testing facilities and state-of-the-art offices are being constructed for the BAM in Berlin's Adlershof district. It takes just six years to get from the tendering procedure to handing over the building. How is that possible?**

Lothar Giese: Working as a developer, we've adopted the innovative concept of "integrated project delivery" (IPD) for this project together with our partner Bundesbau Baden-Württemberg. The secret lies in the fact that all of the companies involved in planning and construction – not just the planning offices, but the specialists that will actually be doing most of the various tasks – are sitting around the same table right from the start. With highly complex, large-scale projects such as the newbuild for the BAM, this saves a lot of time, stops planning errors and prevents costs from increasing.

**? Doesn't having 100 experts also mean 100 different opinions and endless debate? How do you manage to get everyone singing from the same hymn sheet?**

At the start of the project, all of the partners involved in planning and construction sign what's known as a multi-party agreement. Responsibility and risk as well as savings in the planning and construction phase are shared out across the board between the BImA and the other parties to this agreement. The guiding principle is "best for project". Put simply, this means that the question of what's best for the BAM newbuild is the most important criterion in any decision-making. A profit-sharing scheme also enables us to create a positive incentive system. If our performance exceeds expectations, profits are distributed among all the project partners. In other words, we reward shared success. This has never been done before with a federal building.

**? A bonus system for exceeding expectations instead of the usual contractual penalties – how is the construction industry reacting to the new concept?**

The information event at project start was held as a digital webcast due to the coronavirus pandemic.



Of course, all of us would have preferred to get together in person. Nevertheless, there was a massive response and huge interest in becoming a partner in the pilot project. Around 150 potential project partners and other interested parties logged on, joined the discussions and asked questions. I expect this level of interest to be maintained during the call for tenders as well.

**? So have people had experience with this approach to construction?**

IPD contract models are still very much of a rarity in Germany. There is an initial pilot project that is at the implementation stage. In the US and Canada, people have been using the method for some time now and have completed a large number of building projects successfully and on budget. In Europe, the UK and Finland are leading the way. I think that IPD will catch on in the long term, particularly for complex, large-scale projects. ■

## In new splendour

As the owner of many art in architecture pieces, the BImA is also responsible for their preservation. For instance, Thomas Dempwolf recently restored the bronze sculpture of the “Großer Reiter” (“Grand Rider”) on behalf of the BImA. The patina and the surface structure have now been restored. With renewed lustre, the sculpture of a young boy on his horse looking into the distance welcomes all motorists at the A11 border crossing between Germany and Poland in Pomellen. Symbolising, among other things, the need for mobility in a united Europe, the sculpture was created in 1996 by the artist Thomas Jastram.



A remit covering building culture

# Our artistic face

The creation of what is termed “art in architecture” is part of the BImA’s work as a developer. Whether they are sculptures, graffiti or installations, the works of art augment and enrich what are usually public spaces.

Art in architecture is an integral part of building architecture and therefore of the construction task. It is incorporated into almost all the BImA’s construction projects. The art gives these new buildings a unique touch and makes them easily recognisable. To this end, between 0.5 and 1.5 per cent of the building costs are earmarked for this from the outset, as stipulated in the Art in Architecture Guidelines. One goal is to ensure that, via the artwork, people can identify with a new building. Given that most of these buildings are open to the general public, artwork helps to increase their acceptance. Last but not least, these art in architecture pieces are closely interwoven with the everyday lives of local staff.

## Competitions and responsibility

Irrespective of whether it is for the Federal Police or research facilities, ministries, the Technisches Hilfswerk, the German armed forces or the Federal Court of Justice, an art in architecture piece will reflect the work carried out by the people using a building. The range of artistic forms and themes is suitably broad too. The

BImA runs regular competitions in its search for suitable artworks for each specific site. The independent artistic contributions being sought must create a link with the building’s architecture or function.

Artistic quality and meaningfulness are also important. Young artists are specifically promoted, as was the case in the competition for the Federal Environment Agency in Dessau that was run in cooperation with Burg Giebichenstein Art College in Halle. Graffiti for the Federal Police in Aachen and a futuristic kinetic installation for the Futurium are just some of the creations that have sprung from the competitions over the years.

The BImA is responsible for the artworks once they have been installed. The artists are expected to ensure that their designs are durable and sustainable. Presentation, maintenance and professional handling are therefore very important. Each year the BImA reviews all the artworks, which it then maintains and renovates as required. ■



*U.S. Army Europe paratroopers exercising at the Hohenfels military training area in Bavaria.*

Services for allied forces

## Sovereign task

The BI mA provides allied military forces stationed permanently in Germany with properties and looks after their real estate interests as part of the implementation of the NATO Status of Forces Agreement.

■ Kaiserslautern, Wiesbaden, Paderborn and more – U.S. and British forces are stationed in numerous locations across Germany. The allied forces make their own decisions regarding how long the properties will be used. The BI mA takes it upon itself to meet the needs of these allied forces for property. It procures suitable sites and sees to all property-related matters while those sites are used for military purposes.

The focus is on international law and environmental aspects as well as dealings with neighbouring properties. When the forces withdraw, the BI mA handles the termination of the legal relationships with the foreign state. If the property is leased, the BI mA will coordinate with its owner.

### All damage taken care of

The BI mA currently looks after some 62,000 hectares of federally owned and leased areas provided to foreign troops – the size of around 88,000 football pitches. Alongside some 15,000 apartments, for instance, this also includes the U.S. Air Force's largest aviation hub outside the United States with around 10,000 military

and civilian staff as well as the biggest and most modern U.S. training area outside America spanning roughly 23,000 hectares.

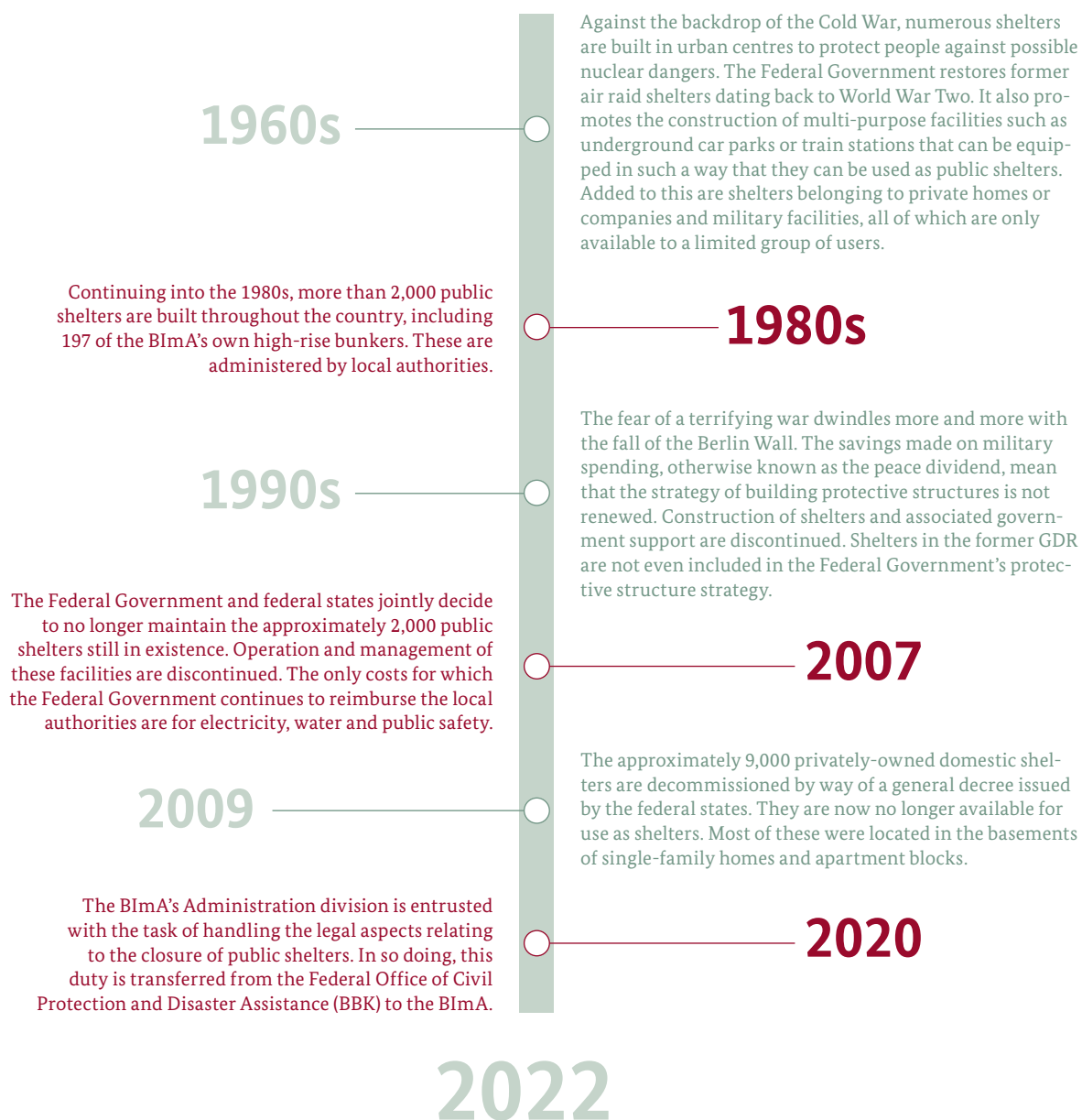
In addition, the BI mA's Claims Offices settle claims for damage caused by members of the allied military forces in Germany in the performance of their duties. This includes, in particular, damage as a result of manoeuvres or traffic accidents. Rather than having to deal with the military themselves, therefore, claimants can contact the responsible BI mA Claims Office, which will compensate them in accordance with German law. The BI mA Claims Office then asks the relevant country to pay the damages owed under international law and transfers this amount back into the federal budget. Its responsibilities in connection with the stationing of allied military forces in Germany sees the BI mA handle annual expenditure of some EUR 46 million at present. ■



A history

# The BImA and bunkers and shelters

The issue of shelters and bunkers is one that had more or less disappeared from public discourse in Germany for decades. The war in Ukraine has brought bunkers back into the public's awareness.



War breaks out in Europe following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The BImA receives hundreds of enquiries from concerned individuals regarding the location and condition of public shelters. It liaises closely with the BBK to respond to every enquiry.

The number of facilities that have yet to be legally decommissioned and for which civil protection remains the dedicated official use stands at around 600. Most of these are owned by municipalities and private persons. Only four public shelters remain under Federal Government ownership.

The Federal Government suspends the decommissioning of public shelters, decides to review its decommissioning strategy and works together with federal states and local authorities to draw up an inventory of remaining facilities dedicated to civil protection. The BBK and the BImA coordinate this task on behalf of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community. The outcome will form the basis for future decisions on public shelters in Germany.

# The active player

The BImA has a large housing stock in Germany. Under the housing assistance scheme, it provides homes for federal employees and will be doing building work of its own as part of the Federal Government's homebuilding drive.

Expertise in accommodation matters

# Under one roof

As the key real estate company for Germany's Federal Government, the BImA provides housing for tens of thousands of people. It works closely with local authorities in many places.

The BImA owns residential properties throughout the country. About a third of them are in the major cities of Berlin, Munich, Cologne/Bonn, Frankfurt am Main and Stuttgart. Its total stock comes to around 38,000 homes across 9,400 residential buildings with a total living space of nearly three million square metres. These properties range from single-room apartments through to five-room flats perfect for families and detached houses complete with gardens.

But why does the BImA, whose main responsibility is to look after the Federation's government properties, own any housing in the first place? Many of the homes are left over from the general real estate held by the former Bundesvermögensverwaltung, which BImA as its successor took over in 2005.

## Conversion for civic use

The allied military forces have also played a role: since the 1990s, they have been reducing their troop numbers in Germany, relinquishing some sites completely and returning their barracks to the German government – including sizeable housing compounds where the soldiers and their families used to live. These formerly military properties have been converted and

used for civic purposes ever since. The BImA rents out houses and flats primarily to federal employees under the housing assistance scheme, repairs them and takes care of any necessary renovations.

One such example is the former residential compound for the U.S. armed forces in the town of Langen in Hesse. The 156 three-room to six-room flats dating from the 1950s were comprehensively modernised. Some of them now have parquet flooring, a fitted kitchen and a balcony and are surrounded by extensive green spaces complete with playgrounds.

BImA's operations in this area are taking on a whole new look with the development of its own Housing division. As accommodation that had previously been administered externally has now been transferred back to the BImA, management of its housing stock is today once more conducted entirely under its own direction. In other words, the BImA takes care of everything relating to the tenants and the properties, from reletting and preparing statements for rent-related costs through to sustainable neighbourhood development and energy efficiency upgrades.

However, the BImA does not just hold old military real estate in its residential portfolio. Some properties have interesting histories. For example, in an



*The BImA has renovated a block of flats in Beelitz, Brandenburg (left), and created new playgrounds in the Cité Foch in Berlin (right).*

era of acute housing shortages, the SüdOstSiedlung – or “south-eastern estate” – in Soest was built in a record time of 100 days in 1951; it was one of the largest civil construction projects of the young Federal Republic. For refugees from Silesia and other areas who had previously been accommodated in a barracks, the 584 flats on the estate provided a new living space. These dwellings have gradually been renovated by the BImA and the flats now look as good as new.

### Renovating with sensitivity

When renovating and repairing these historical buildings, some of which date from the 1920s, there are often aspects to consider that relate to heritage preservation. Take, for instance, the so-called Emsler Block in Berlin-Charlottenburg, a stone’s throw from the Kurfürstendamm. The whole complex of 79 flats and 54 commercial units is listed and its architecture has echoes of the Bauhaus. Its stairwells and lifts have been and continue to be renovated in compliance with the rules for listed buildings. The roof of the underground car park in the inner courtyard has also been greened over, creating oases of relaxation for residents.

The launch of the homebuilding drive, a joint effort by Germany’s Federal Government, federal states and local authorities, has made the BImA even more important when it comes to housing. To accelerate the construction of new homes in Germany and provide a supply of affordable accommodation in areas where the housing market is tight, it is aiming to make as many sites available for this as quickly as possible. To this end, it is shifting its focus somewhat to a three-pronged strategy: firstly, the BImA sells plots of land that the Federal Government deems surplus to requirements to city councils and local authorities in a

targeted way for them to build affordable housing on; secondly, land may be sold to a private housing company if the local authority is not interested; thirdly, the BImA is also building new homes itself for the benefit of the housing assistance scheme.

### Unlocking potential

A comprehensive analysis of its portfolio has enabled the BImA largely to determine which plots of land it deems suitable for building new homes, irrespective of whether it will be local authorities, private companies or the BImA itself putting them to this use. In all, it has identified over 1,000 sites across Germany. The local authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that the properties can actually be built as they have control over planning decisions. When they grant planning permission, they create the framework under planning law for the homes and related infrastructure to be built.

For this reason, the BImA is stepping up its close cooperation with city councils and local authorities even further. Properties that are suitable for new homes and that the Federal Government no longer needs are always offered for sale first to local authorities directly. This is designed to enable several tens of thousands of homes to be built over the next few years.

However, this right of first refusal now applies to nearly all sites, rather than just properties to be converted as was previously the case. What is more, the scope of the Price Reduction Directive has also been extended. It regulates the various concessions available when purchasing plots of land in federal ownership and thus offers local authorities even more incentives to buy them (see box below right), especially if they are building social housing. Selling land at a discount is

## Housing – a key issue

The BImA has realigned its corporate strategy as far as housing policy is concerned and, to that end, has established the Housing division. Some 19,000 homes which were previously administered externally, as well as approximately 1,800 dwellings from the Federal Government's so-called "western assets", were transferred back to the BImA's management. Today, the division manages a total of around 38,000 of its own homes. Furthermore, the BImA has 21,000 allocation rights for homes currently in third-party ownership and also has more than 5,000 dwellings with heritable building rights. The housing assistance scheme currently encompasses around 64,000 homes – and the number is constantly growing. Four regional districts (North, South, East and West), each comprising two customer centres and a total of 28 service teams, look after tenants' needs.



intended to ensure that the new homes will remain affordable in the long term thanks to cheap rents.

### A partner for building homes

A good example of the strong partnership between the BImA and local authorities is a statement signed in February 2019 together with the Association of German Cities, the Association of German Rural Districts (Deutscher Landkreistag) and the Association of German Towns and Municipalities (Deutscher Städte und Gemeindebund). This statement explains how the BImA is helping local authorities to build new homes, by providing suitable properties, advice on site development and financial contributions to feasibility analyses, inventories or expert opinions, for example. In cities, towns and regions where federal institutions and agencies need accommodation for their employees, the BImA intends to build its own homes under the Federal Government's housing assistance scheme and thus ease the pressure on the housing market. Some 200 properties in all have been picked to receive new buildings, extensions and extra floors.

For instance, around 100 new homes are to be built in the town of Müllheim in Baden-Württemberg, while in the Cité Foch, a former housing complex for the French army in Berlin, the BImA has begun construction work on the first of more than 300 planned homes. Up to 500 homes are also to be built in Patrick Henry Village in Heidelberg, as well as more than 200 in the Munich metropolitan area.

You can learn more about the BImA's home-building projects on pages 32 and 33. ■

### Purchase incentives for local authorities

The Price Reduction Directive (Verbilligungsrichtlinie), which entered into force in September 2018, made purchasing plots of land from the Federal Government for homebuilding an even more attractive prospect for city councils and local authorities. One of the most appealing concessions is the 25,000-euro discount available on each new unit of social housing. Local authorities can also sell any properties that they bought at a reduced rate on to third parties from the private sector without having



*Alanbrooke Barracks in Paderborn.*

to repay the discount provided that the new owners fulfil the purpose for which the price reduction was offered. As the BImA also grants multiple concessions for different purposes and there is no longer an upper limit, the aggregate reduction can be as much as the total purchase price. In early 2019, for instance, the City of Paderborn took advantage of these discounts to purchase the site of the former British Alanbrooke Barracks with an area of around 18 hectares. A total of 800 new homes are to be built there, including 240 that qualify as social housing.

The right of first refusal protects local authorities from price competition on the real estate market. Independent **appraisers** determine the value of a property in advance of any direct acquisition.



The BImA has entered into more than **1,300 contracts** of sale with local authorities since the right of first refusal was introduced in 2012.

For each new unit of social housing that is built, the BImA reduces the purchase price by **25,000 euros**.

The number of new homes available under the housing assistance scheme is to grow by **8,000** by 2030.



The BImA has contributed to the creation of more than **5,550 units of social housing** to date through the sale of properties.

Since 2015, the BImA has granted discounts of some **130 million euros** for the construction of social housing alone.

The BImA's annual budget for renovating the housing stock for the housing assistance scheme stands at **150 million euro**.

In 2022, BImA properties where there is potential for the construction of up to **2,500** additional new homes may be sold.

The BImA also supports **small-scale projects**. In 2022, the local authority of Schwalmstadt acquired a property which is being used to create **18** units of social housing.



In Münster, around **3,000 homes** are being built on the site of the York and Oxford Barracks, which were sold. **550** of these homes qualify as social housing.

Throughout Germany, there are around **200 federal properties** that could be granted planning permission.

In its homebuilding programme, the BImA has set itself the goal of completing a total of **3,000** new rented housing units by **2024** at the properties in question.

Housing for federal employees

# A duty of care

The BImA provides employees of the Federal Government with suitable, affordable housing close to their place of work. This service – the housing assistance scheme – has existed since 1950. Now it is to be developed further.



*BImA block of flats in Potsdam.*

Offering more than 64,000 homes in over 500 locations throughout Germany, the housing assistance scheme is both extensive and varied. In addition to the BImA's own stock, this also includes properties owned by third parties for which the BImA has obtained occupancy rights. Affordable rents are important to the BImA in all these places, because the scheme is particularly targeted at employees on lower and middle incomes.

## Affordable housing

Many staff at the German armed forces, Federal Police and Customs Authority take up the offer. However, all federal employees are entitled to apply. Homes are assigned based on set criteria, under which each application is assessed in accordance with how urgent the need for the housing is. Social and employment-related criteria are considered equally, which means that priority can be given to those people in lower and mid-ranking pay and salary grades. For young colleagues in particular who are at the start of their employment period or who need to change depart-

ment at short notice, this scheme also gives them the opportunity to find affordable accommodation even in major urban areas.

## Easy access where needed

The housing assistance scheme is designed to provide suitable, affordable and – where necessary – more easily accessible or barrier-free housing to federal employees close to their place of work or within its catchment area, and thus help the Federal Government in its staff decisions. This also applies in particular to economically strong regions and major cities where the situation on the housing market is tight and where prices are high. In providing this scheme, the BImA is helping to fulfil the Federal Government's duty of care in respect of its staff. The offer increases the Federal Government's attractiveness as an employer and supports it in its aim to attract new recruits and retain them over the long term.

## Just a few clicks to find a home

A dedicated real estate portal exists to look for homes under the housing assistance scheme. Here, eligible parties can search specifically for a suitable dwelling. Those with a little bit more time to spare before moving can also register on the portal and be notified of suitable offers automatically via e-mail.

Over and above its own stock, the BImA also acquires rights of allocation to homes on other markets where necessary, so as to provide flexibility in covering the housing requirements of federal employees. And if there are periods during which there is no demand for a BImA property among those entitled to receive housing assistance, the house or flat will be put on the private rental market. ■



*Creating new homes one module at a time: in Aschaffenburg, the BI mA is delivering resource-efficient serial construction.*

### Housing drive

## Homebuilding using the Lego principle

In tight housing markets, the BI mA creates affordable accommodation itself. Up to 8,000 homes are to be built soon – as quickly and as sustainably as possible and to the highest quality possible.

In Aschaffenburg, 26 attractive homes were built in a record time of just one year during the first part of the Spessart-Gärten project. A further 26 homes will follow just as quickly. On Travis Park, a former conversion sign that had previously been used by the U.S. armed forces, this was made possible thanks to a modular design and serial production.

The principle is the same as that used when building Lego: the homes are assembled on site from individual modules which have been manufactured beforehand in production facilities. Anybody with an image of a prefabricated building in mind would be mistaken: the modules are planned individually and are quality-tested. They are then assembled on site to create attractive homes that meet the standards of modern accommodation.

### Savings in time and energy

System building reduces construction time by as much as 70 per cent and cuts both energy consumption and building costs. In Aschaffenburg, those people living

near to the development were also happy, with exposure to construction noise and site traffic kept to a minimum. Delivery and assembly of the modules took just a single day. The interiors were then fitted and the first tenants were able to move in as early as summer 2002.

The building of the BI mA's two modular construction blocks in the Spessart-Gärten is carried out based on the "Series and Modular Construction" framework agreement of the GdW, the Federal Association of German Housing and Real Estate Companies. Under this agreement, the BI mA can draw on the support of nine partner companies with considerable expertise in modular construction. The strategy adopted by the BI mA's housing developers of using modular construction wherever possible in future homebuilding projects is validated by the positive experiences gained in Aschaffenburg.

The BI mA also aims to build up to 8,000 new homes itself over the next few years, in many cases through loft conversions. Limiting land use makes homebuilding measures particularly sustainable. ■





In conversation

## “We act in society’s interest”

Thies Langholz is in charge of the BImA’s homebuilding drive and explains the organisation’s responsibilities in this regard.

### ? **Mr Langholz, how is the BImA supporting the homebuilding drive being championed by the Federal Government, federal states and local authorities?**

Together with many other key players, our objective is to increase the stock of affordable housing in Germany. There are many aspects to our remit. Firstly, we’re identifying which of our properties are suitable for building new homes and that the Federal Government doesn’t need in order to fulfil its mandate and are making them available. We’re giving local authorities the right of first refusal on the properties we put up for sale and guaranteeing them discounts for building social housing. We’re also bolstering our own housing assistance scheme for federal employees. In other words, residential buildings in our stock are being renovated and upgraded, and some are being enlarged, e.g. by adding new floors on top. And, last but not least, we’re also building new homes. Our newbuild programme as part of the housing assistance scheme involves as many as 8,000 homes.

### ? **That doesn’t seem all that many. Will it relieve the pressure on the housing market?**

Even if we’re not in a position to meet the huge demand, it’s an important contribution. We’re creating places for Federal Government employees to live – specifically, for people on low to moderate incomes – often in urban centres. Then they won’t need to find accommodation on the open market, which takes some of the pressure off for everyone. Incidentally, people often ask why the BImA doesn’t do more building, particularly since it owns so much land. In response, I can only stress that our core duty as enshrined in law is to provide properties to meet the Federal Government’s official needs. And not every piece of land deemed surplus to requirements will be a suitable site for new housing, which limits what we can offer in terms of homebuilding.

### ? **How would you rate the results of the BImA’s homebuilding drive so far?**

We achieved our first interim target, starting work on 1,000 construction projects, in spring 2022 and are aiming to hit the 3,000 mark by the end of the year. Although we’ve managed to get some elements off the ground successfully, many challenges still lie ahead. Only a handful of people know that the BImA doesn’t actually have any plots of land that are ready to build on – we first need to develop them, obtain planning permission and construction permits, do feasibility studies. It often takes quite a long time before we see any results. For one thing, the local authorities in many places have to be persuaded first.

### ? **Why is that? Both you and the local authorities are all pulling in the same direction, after all.**

That’s correct. However, it seems as if the message has not reached everyone. We’re often seen as just a normal investor, who needs to fulfil certain requirements to get planning permission. Sometimes, we’re also faced with demands that we cannot meet at all. For example, we don’t build any social housing. But because we cap our rents at a socially responsible level anyway, we usually find a good solution together with the local authorities. And every project that is implemented successfully helps to improve general understanding.

### ? **What do you want to see in the future?**

That we meet our targets on schedule. And that the public sees the role we play and recognises that we’re not out to make a profit. We retain long-term ownership of the homes and act in society’s interest to create affordable and attractive housing quickly. ■

# Managing interests

Anybody facing major challenges needs a strong and reliable partner at their side. The BImA is committed to reconciling diverse interests and to sustainable development in many areas.

*The Ermekeil Barracks in Bonn*



Opportunities and challenges

## Experts in conversion

The conversion of military sites is a complex undertaking for everyone involved. The BImA supports local authorities and federal states in this process and ensures that different interests are represented in a balanced fashion.

■ The military withdraws, areas – sometimes whole city districts – are freed up and are suddenly available for completely new, civic uses. Conversion is the name of the game. This process has been occupying local authorities – the parties directly affected and holding planning authority – the federal states and the BImA as the owner of the plots of land, for decades.

Once it becomes clear that military forces will be withdrawing from a site, the BImA first examines whether the Federal Government needs to use the property for a different purpose. If it is deemed surplus to requirements, the BImA steps in early to hold talks with the communities concerned so that any action required to secure subsequent use as quickly as possible can be taken. It provides tangible support, including by helping to pay for market and feasibility analyses, land use concepts and land use planning. The focus of this process is on reconciling the respective communities' construction policies and urban planning interests, the BImA's utilisation obligations and the financial interests of potential buyers.

### Urban development on a grand scale

For urban development in particular, properties that are set to be converted offer interesting opportunities

for energising an entire region. It is rare to find contiguous sites of comparable size in the hands of a single owner. Integrating properties for conversion into new plans presents a major opportunity for city councils and local authorities. Local authorities are unable to exercise their powers to make planning decisions while the sites are being used by the military. Only once these have been returned by the military are local authorities then able to develop ideas for possible uses, either on their own or with the help of the Federal Government, their federal state or investors.

Besides offering many opportunities, the conversion process also involves many challenges. Residual contamination, unexploded ordnance and constraints imposed in the interests of conservation or heritage preservation mean that conversion projects sometimes start out from a difficult position. Even the permitted use of existing structures under building legislation, but with restrictions imposed, can complicate matters. In such scenarios, the BImA commissions expert reports or participates in working groups in order to devise a solution together with the federal states and local authorities. For the case of residual contamination, the BImA uses a centralised contamination management system in which it records and assesses the risks and arranges for remediation as needed.



*The former military airfield in Niederkrüchten is to be used predominantly for business properties.*

The options for future use depend on the particular situation. Commercial use is the first choice for city-centre sites, but public facilities, housing and mixed-use buildings are also a possibility. In Herford in North Rhine-Westphalia, for instance, four blocks containing 24 flats previously used by members of the British armed forces were sold to Wohn und Wirtschafts-Service Herford GmbH (WWS) in 2018. The blocks of flats will be used to accommodate students of the federal state's University of Applied Science for Finance in future.

In Niederkrüchten, a municipality in the district of Viersen in North-Rhine Westphalia, the former British military airfield covering 210 hectares is to be used predominantly for business properties, creating roughly 5,000-8,000 jobs in the process. In return, there are plans to set aside around 50 hectares of the airfield as compensatory areas for nature conservation measures.

### Achieving the goal in stages

Sites set to be converted can also be developed and sold in several stages, as happened at the former Schlieffen Barracks in Lüneburg in Lower Saxony. The first step was to sell part of the site, covering some eight hectares, on which the federal state government built a civic centre. In 2011, the BImA sold another section of the site, some 24 hectares this time, as part of a tendering procedure under EU law. A total of 750 flats and single-family homes that could accommodate around 1,500 people were constructed in the so-called Hanseviertel II. The third stage in 2018 saw the remaining 27 or so hectares (Hanseviertel III) of the former barracks sold to the local authority under its right of first refusal. It is planning 650 homes here – enough for some 1,800 people – including around 210 that qualify as social housing.

### Plenty of space for businesses and services

Site conversion activities are being closely watched by the public. Many residents fear that the military's withdrawal will mean negative economic consequences for the communities affected. The successful conversion undertaken in Bitburg in Rhineland-Palatinate illustrates how these fears are often unfounded: in 1994, the U.S. armed forces handed back its airfield there, covering some 490 hectares, to the then Bundesvermögensverwaltung. The site is now an industrial estate and business park spanning 230 hectares that has attracted some 180 companies and created roughly 1,500 jobs to date. Flights have continued to operate, albeit in a smaller space. Some 50 hectares are currently ripe for further development, with some 80 more to come as flights are to be reduced further. The former airbase is now the biggest single-site industrial, business and logistics space in Rhineland-Palatinate.

### Working together with local authorities

Conversion work in Bitburg continued in 2012 with the acquisition of the former Alte Kaserne barracks, with marketing for the 11-hectare property completed within two years. Later on, in December 2017, the military handed back the American housing complex, comprising some 1,000 homes plus facilities such as schools, hospitals and shopping centres spread over 62 hectares. A plan for the site's subsequent use that considers the interests of everyone involved is currently being devised in dialogue with the town council and the local rural district, the Eifelkreis Bitburg-Prüm. ■



*The BImA holds a stake in a limited company that owns, among other things, a Spanish beach.*

Managing Germany's inherited estates

# When the state inherits

Estate administration is also one of the varied and lesser known duties of the Institute for Federal Real Estate.

When a person whose last residual residence was abroad dies without leaving any legal heirs, their estate passes to the Federal Government – a scenario known as a “Mallorca-Fall”, or “Majorca case”. This is where the BImA comes in, taking care of the estate, selling the assets and retaining the proceeds. It is not just properties that are inherited: regardless of whether it is life insurance policies, jewellery or shares, there is always a specialist department at BImA that will be responsible for managing the estate and settling the inheritance. The BImA's experts handled 28 such cases in 2021.

## Bequests of all kinds

The Federal Republic will also inherit if someone has remembered it in their will. For instance, an Estonian lady bequeathed a weekend cottage and some woodland in her home country to the German state, even though she had children of her own. A well-known opera singer changed her last will and testament 18 times due to disputes amongst her descendants, finally naming the Federal Government as her sole heir. Cases

like this, where the government inherits under a will even though the deceased left surviving relatives, often get the BImA involved in legal proceedings.

The state can also “inherit” debts: in 2021, these amounted to around 2.7 million euros. Although the government is only required to settle as much of the debts as it can raise from the estate assets, it still has to make sure that any real estate it inherits is safe for persons or vehicles at all times. Proceedings of this kind last two to three years – assuming all goes well. Claims against the estate amounting to more than 19 million euros were rejected in 2021.

If a foreign national without heirs dies and leaves real estate in Germany, the BImA will in certain cases exercise the right to appropriation. This resulted in the addition of four properties to the BImA's stock in 2020. The BImA is also responsible for inheritance cases in which the former East Germany was named as heir or one of the heirs. Around 1,500 such cases are currently being processed. ■

In conversation

# An eagle eye in the service of the Government

The day-to-day business that goes on at the BImA also includes extensive administrative tasks, such as monitoring the use of resources. Head of department Uta Gnahn explains what this involves.

**? Monitoring the use of resources – that sounds like a lot of red tape. What does it mean exactly, and what are your main duties?**

We check that funds are being used efficiently, economically and for their intended purpose. For example, when the Federal Government makes cash payments outside the federal administration, to so-called grant recipients, we look very closely to see whether all the rules are being followed. Our eight-strong team are experts in areas such as collective bargaining and tendering law and audit the tender process for things like large-scale construction measures and IT procurement.

**? Can you think of a specific example of such an audit?**

The audits are extremely varied, so they cover a wide range of topics. One job we did recently took us to Lusatia, for example. In the early 1990s, eastern Germany was still home to 39 large open-cast lignite mines, 32 of which were closed down over time and handed over to Lausitzer und Mitteldeutsche Bergbau-Verwaltungsgesellschaft mbH (LMBV). LMBV manages and rehabilitates or re-designs former mining areas, for which it receives funding from the Federal Ministry of Finance. We were therefore tasked with auditing the efficient use of public money to cover various expenses incurred at LMBV.

**? How do you get these kinds of contracts, and what's the process for conducting an audit?**

We receive the audit contracts directly from the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs. There are always two colleagues working together on an audit, because we follow the dual-control principle. We visit the site and search, inspect and analyse all the documents before discussing everything with the grant recipients. Back at the BImA, we prepare a detailed final report for the ministries.



**? How long does such a process take?**

An on-site audit lasts approximately a week. However, if you can't do any in-person visits, as has happened most recently due to the coronavirus pandemic, it means much more work for both sides. This is because we need to see the original files to be able to inspect and analyse all the documents. Of course, this will get easier with increased digitalisation, if all of those involved only maintain electronic files in future.

**? When did the BImA actually assume responsibility for monitoring the use of resources?**

The task had been a duty of the former Bundesvermögensamt, or Federal Property Office, since as long ago as 1997, and it passed to the BImA when it was founded in 2005. Since then, we've carried out 390 audits. ■

## Sustainable building operation

Flooding is increasingly shining a spotlight on climate action and the impact of climate change in property management too. The BImA has set up a dedicated climate programme for its own stock of properties. All of those used for civic purposes are subjected to a “storm check” to minimise the potential danger they face. BImA staff are given ongoing training in protecting the climate and environment, and properties are upgraded for resource-efficient use, such as by introducing an energy data management (EDM) system. EDM data will pave the way for centralised energy controlling, benchmarking and reporting in the future with the aim of saving energy and CO<sub>2</sub> effectively over the long term.



Storms and flooding in Germany

## Help with rebuilding

The storms and devastating flooding of summer 2021 caused severe damage in Rhineland-Palatinate, North Rhine-Westphalia, Bavaria and Saxony. The BImA is providing support on several levels.

For those affected, July’s natural disaster was an event on an truly unprecedented scale. Many lost their houses and flats, some even their lives. Infrastructure was also completely destroyed across vast swathes of land. The BImA was given special permission by the Federal Ministry of Finance to provide people affected by the floods with land, housing and furniture for free. For instance, 30 homes were made available to flood victims in North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate as an urgent relief measure. The BImA also put various properties in its portfolio at the service of the rebuilding efforts, such as for storing aid packages and materials. BImA employees in the flood-hit regions offered support in many places immediately, providing aid with a minimum of fuss and collecting and distributing donations, both in their official capacity and in their own time.

### BImA properties affected

However, some of the BImA’s own properties in Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate also suffered as a result of the storms. Flooding and

water ingress caused undermining, moisture damage, contamination, disruption to power supplies and damage to the technical infrastructure, necessitating extensive drying and cleaning and repairs to this infrastructure, buildings and outdoor facilities.

### Funding from the reconstruction aid fund

To fix this damage, the BImA received some 30 million euros from the 2021 reconstruction aid fund. Endowed with up to 30 billion euros, this fund had been set up by the Federal Government as a special-purpose federal fund for repairing damage and rebuilding infrastructure in Bavaria, North-Rhine Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony. ■

# A richness of diversity

From the Kronprinzenpalais (Crown Prince's Palace) to the Federal Administrative Court, from the Hotel Petersberg on the mountain of the same name to the offices of the Federal Ministry of Finance – the BImA's portfolio contains many remarkable properties.





The multifaceted BImA

# Eye-catchers and monuments

From tank ranges to protected expanses of heathland, from blocks of flats to palaces, from bunkers to ministry buildings: the BImA's portfolio contains a diverse range of properties.

There are many architectural gems amongst the federal properties used for official purposes. Some of the buildings are also testimonials to historic milestones and have now been listed as protected historic landmarks. One such example is the building housing the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF). It was built in 1935 to be the headquarters of the German Reich's Ministry of Aviation, and after World War Two was used by the East German government to house its ministries. On 7 October 1949, the German Democratic Republic was founded in this building. After reunification, the property was home to the Treuhandanstalt (the agency spearheading privatisation efforts), and since 1999 it has been the first official seat of the BMF.

The Petersberg in Königswinter is also full of political history. From 1945 to 1952, the property was the headquarters of the Allied High Commission. The Petersberg Agreement was signed here in 1949, an important step by the Federal Republic of Germany on the path to becoming a sovereign state. From 1990 onwards, the building was used by the Federal Government to accommodate guests and has housed numerous official visitors. It is now a five-star hotel, the Steinberger Grandhotel & Spa Petersberg, operated by a subsidiary of the BImA. The building underwent extensive renovation, completed in 2019.

The Langer Eugen in Bonn, the high-rise building formerly containing offices for members of the German Bundestag, continues to play host to politics. Since 2006, the 32-storey building constructed in the 1960s has been used by a number of UN organisations. The BImA has delivered a further major newbuild project for the United

Nations at its office in Bonn. The Climate Tower, a free-standing annexe measuring some 68 metres high and comprising 17 floors and three basements, has been built between the former plenary chamber of the German Bundestag and the historic Altes Wasserwerk complex, site of an old waterworks. In February 2022, the building was handed over to the United Nations for use by 330 employees of the Secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The sustainability of the Climate Tower is reflected not only by its aim to be certified gold under the Federal Government's Sustainable Building rating scheme, but also by its status as an energy-efficient building as awarded by EnergyAgency.NRW and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Industry, Climate Action and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in 2021. Two historic buildings – the former waterworks and pump house – will also become an integral part of the campus and will be used in the future for UN conferences and symposia.

## Discoveries that will leave you amazed

From the Neckarzimmern underground facility, used by the German armed forces as a depot for the Air Force and Army and one of the largest military facilities of its kind in Europe, to the Müritznational Park, with its unique woods, moors and lakes, the list of special properties owned by the BImA could go on and on. A small visual tour of these properties can be found on the following pages. ■



*Futurium in Berlin*



*Historic water tower in Meppen*



*European Patent Office in Berlin*



*Schloss Oranienstein in Diez/Lahn*



*Schloss Hohenaschau in Aschau im Chiemgau*



*Villa Mumm in Frankfurt*





Federal Fiscal Court in Munich



Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community in Berlin



Villa Bohnenberger in Stuttgart



German Supreme Audit Institution in Bonn



Federal Police Building in Rostock



Accommodation for the Federal Police's mounted units in Stahnsdorf



Federal Waterways and Shipping Administration office for the River



Grüner Hof in Ulm



Headquarters of the Federal Intelligence Service in Berlin



*Museum of Military History in Dresden*



*Residential property in Dresden*



## A crown jewel for rent

Have your celebrations where the Prussian royal family once lived, hold your conference where Emperor Wilhelm II was born in 1859, or network at a site where history was written when Germany's Unification Treaty was signed in 1990. All of this is possible at the Kronprinzenpalais (Crown Prince's Palace) in Berlin. The BIWA rents out one-of-a-kind facilities at this prime real estate at "Unter den Linden 3" for exhibitions, gala dinners or conferences. And it is not just companies, associations and ministries that have already rented the BIWA's crown jewel: during Berlin Fashion Week, even the fashion world makes its appearance here.





*The BI mA sold the German armed forces' former Specialist Medical Centre in Kempten in late 2016.*

### Sale of properties

# Looking for something special?

If the Federal Government no longer needs a property, local authorities have right of first refusal. Should they forego this, the BI mA will sell the property in question on the real estate market.

Whether at auctions, trade fairs, on the Internet or through the traditional method of advertisements, the BI mA's 23 regional sales teams use a number of channels to offer its portfolio of properties for sale to potential buyers. Each property that is sold has its own tale of success.

Take the former Jägerhof Barracks in Ludwigsburg for example. The BI mA sold the site, measuring 12,760 square metres and located in the city centre, to Wohnungsbau Ludwigsburg GmbH under the right of first refusal. The company is creating a mixed-use development here, consisting of housing (73 per cent) and space for businesses and services (27 per cent). Around 150 apartments are projected to be built, 70 of which are to be state-subsidised. For each new unit of social housing that is built, the BI mA has granted a discount of 25,000 euros.

In Aschaffenburg, the BI mA initiated the conversion of Travis Park, the former U.S. residential district. The city authorities and the BI mA signed an urban development agreement for the area, since renamed Spessart-Gärten, with the aim of obtaining

planning permission, demolishing some of the residential buildings and opening up new sites for construction. The site offers space for some 400 new homes, while a hall of residence for students has already been built. In addition, the BI mA sold some parcels of land there for building social housing in 2018 and has undertaken construction work of its own on two plots as part of the housing assistance scheme for federal employees.

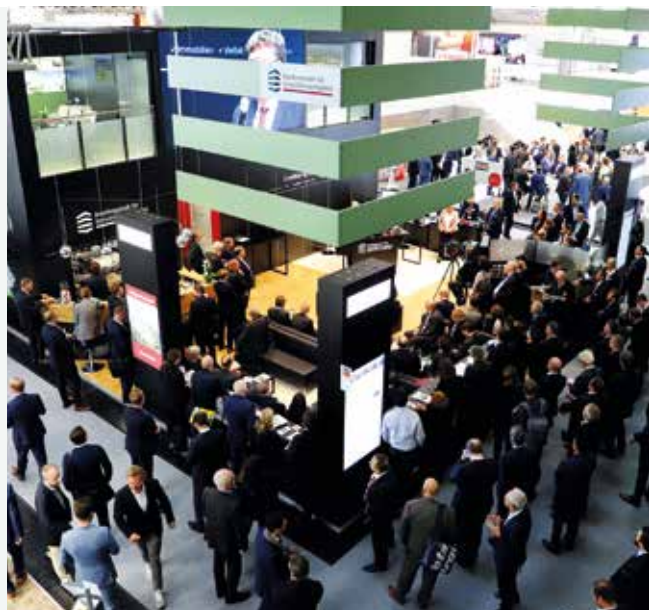
### A roundabout route to a sale

The sale of the former American Arms Hotel in Wiesbaden is one example of how conversion does not always proceed exactly as planned. The five-storey building was constructed by U.S. allied forces on a city-centre site in 1951 to accommodate its military personnel. When the military returned the property covering some 20,000 square metres to the BI mA in spring 2015, the plan was to sell it on to the city's own urban development company Stadtentwicklungsgesellschaft Wiesbaden mbH as early as the autumn of



## Showcasing top properties

In the first week of October each year, the BImA presents its highlights at Europe's biggest real estate and investment trade fair, the EXPO REAL in Munich. The BImA's stand at the trade fair, a permanent feature, can always be found in the same place. In addition to in-depth discussions, the BImA has an attractive supporting programme, including interviews and discussions with prominent partners in politics and industry. It also offers insights into ongoing and upcoming projects. Together with the members of the Board of Directors, BImA experts from across Germany in Sales, Facility Management, Portfolio Management and the Federal Forest Service divisions make themselves available to answer questions from all the interested visitors.



the same year. But things turned out differently: the building ended up being used to house asylum seekers until late summer 2017. It was only then that sales negotiations resumed, with the purchase agreement being signed in June 2018. Amongst other things, the site is now to be used for 115 flats qualifying as social housing.

### Handsome pieces

Among the real estate that the BImA has already sold, there are a few genuine highlights. A real gem in terms of urban development, and an example of a successful conversion project following more than 100 years of



*Land formerly occupied by the Naval Air Wing 5 in Kiel is to be turned into a new city district in future.*

use by the military, is the sale of the roughly 70-hectare site used by the Naval Air Wing 5 and situated on the bank of the Kiel Fjord. Here, in the eastern part of Kiel's Holtenau district, a completely new urban quarter is to be built right on the water. As well as residential and commercial properties, it will provide spaces for leisure, tourism and sporting activities.

Around 1,800 homes, including around a third that qualify as social housing, are to help relieve the burden on the city's tight housing market. The BImA has granted a discount on the purchase price to account for the alleviation of urban design deficiencies.

### Opportunities for investors

The fact that BImA properties too continue to offer creative options for use and investment opportunities is illustrated by upcoming sales projects. One such example is in Bitburg, an up-and-coming region close to both Trier and Luxembourg. Here, a former housing area covering around 62 hectares is to be developed into a site housing not only 44 residential buildings each with 24 apartments, but also a primary, intermediary and high school, various sporting facilities, a kindergarten as well as a shopping centre and an administrative building.

The conversion of the former Berlin-Tegel airport in future will also provide further investment opportunities. ■

# The sustainable partner

In its efforts to combat climate change and protect the environment, the BImA supports many Federal Government programmes, carries out energy efficiency upgrades to its buildings and runs nature conservation and species preservation projects.



The BImA's climate programme

# A Herculean task

By investing in improvements to the energy balance of the Federal Government's buildings and the electromobility master plan, the BImA is assuming responsibility for the climate and the environment.

Building and maintaining properties to comply with high standards of energy efficiency is a key aspect of the BImA's climate programme. The BImA ensures that the annual primary energy demand of any planned new buildings is 60 per cent below what is currently prescribed under the Buildings Energy Act 2022.

## Many ways to reach energy efficiency

In BImA's upgrades to existing buildings, the annual primary energy requirement is 45 per cent less than the standard set by the Buildings Energy Act for a newbuild property. To reach its energy efficiency targets, the BImA is placing a greater emphasis on renewable energy sources in its new buildings and renovated properties (for example photovoltaic, geothermal, solar) as well as energy efficiency in the building envelope and the technical building fit-out.

In order to ensure the implementation in future of the new energy efficiency standards, especially when carrying out repairs and planning building measures at existing properties, the BImA is incorporating energy efficiency upgrades into its integrated condition-based maintenance strategy. This involves taking into account all of the structural and energy efficiency aspects of a property, as well as those of its accessibility.

The issue of electromobility has also become more important in recent years and is a key factor for the Federal Government in achieving the climate protection goals that it has set. With its charging infrastructure master plan, the BImA is supporting the Federal Government's objective of increasing the expansion of electromobility.

## Engaging in the efficient use of energy

As well as the potential offered in structural terms and the use of energy efficient technology, energy conscious behaviour plays a key role in curbing climate change and in achieving the Federal Government's climate neutrality goal. This is where "mission E", the BImA's energy efficiency campaign, can help. It is aimed specifically at all federal employees working in properties used for civic purposes and allows the BImA to fulfil its responsibility to provide comprehensive advice for managing properties efficiently. The campaign helps property users to also exploit the potential for savings that can be made as a result of their own energy-efficient behaviour. Campaign weeks or action days, held either face-to-face or in online events, provide federal employees with an opportunity to learn how

they can save energy without any loss of comfort. The BImA's energy officers pass on the latest background knowledge and explain contexts, with the aim being to change old habits in day-to-day life or at home so as to modify energy use and identify areas where energy savings can be made. The focus is on the responsible use of electricity and heating, correct ventilation and climate-friendly mobility. The campaign is constantly being refined and adapted in line with current requirements. In addition, all candidates for entry into service with the Federal Police and Custom Authority are taught about energy efficiency in a training course designed especially for them. More information is available at <https://missione.bundesimmobilien.de>.



*The hitherto biggest wind farm on property owned by the BImA can be found near Königs Wusterhausen.*

## Renewable energy

# Pressing ahead with expansion

The share of renewables in energy consumption needs to increase further. To help achieve this, the Institute for Federal Real Estate is providing suitable properties that can be used to help generate renewable energy.

Renewable energy use is an essential pillar in the transition to new energy sources. Using the wind, sun, water, biomass or geothermal energy to generate electricity or heat reduces greenhouse gas emissions. It also helps in ensuring a sustainable energy supply because unlike fossil fuels, which are dwindling, the forces of nature are virtually inexhaustible.

## Public safety through renewables

With its legislative package for the accelerated expansion of renewable energies, the Federal Government wants to “turbocharge” the transition to renewables. To achieve this goal, comprehensive changes will be made to legislation, including the Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG). The future principle that renewable energy use will be declared a matter of overriding public interest and serve public safety is particularly important. This will require a further expansion of renewable power plants and lead to rising demand for sites with the right potential. The BImA has been assisting in this area for many years. It identifies sites at its

properties that are particularly suitable for harnessing energy from wind and solar power.

## Harnessing potential

Suitable properties with sufficient amounts of sun and wind speed and flow are offered on the market or provided to the partner, primarily by way of contracts for the use of the land with a 20 to 25-year term. By the end of 2021, 31 free-standing photovoltaic facilities and 59 wind turbines with an output of some 330 megawatts had been installed on sites owned by the BImA. These range in scope from a small photovoltaic power plant to a major wind farm. According to the BImA's own data, a total of more than 500 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of energy can be generated each year using these resources, along with savings of more than 300,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. The largest free-standing photovoltaic project can be found near Prenzlau in the Uckermark, and generates roughly 16 megawatts. Here, solar panels have been installed on an area measuring more than 300,000 square metres.

## Geodata infrastructure

Which sites are suitable for the harnessing of renewable energy? This is what the BImA and the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Planning (BBSR) are investigating in a joint research project, with equal consideration being given to conservation concerns and spatial planning regulations. The BImA integrates the findings from the project into the company-wide geodata infrastructure. Using a specially developed renewable energy application, all BImA staff are able to use a geoinformation system to access the findings and combine them with other specialist information and applications. In cooperation with the BBSR, the BImA regularly updates the database so that the potential sites for renewable energy projects can be identified using the latest data.



### Biggest wind farms in Brandenburg

The biggest wind farms on land owned by the BImA, each of which boasts an output of approximately 33 megawatts, are located not far from Königs Wusterhausen. A total of 18 wind turbines have been installed there. The largest turbines have a hub height of 134 metres (total height: 199.9 metres) and a rotor diameter of 131 metres.

Using geoinformation systems and a specially developed analysis, the BImA is continuing its programme to locate more of its sites offering the necessary potential and mobilising these for renewable energy purposes. In future, properties used for official purposes, residential buildings and commercial real



*Wherever possible, the BImA also makes its woodland areas available for the expansion of renewable energy.*

estate are also to be put in the service of renewable energy by having solar panels fitted to their roofs. The BImA's most important renewable energy project is the "Pferdsfeld" wind farm currently under construction in Rhineland-Palatinate.

### Concentrated expertise

The Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy is organised on a cross-divisional basis and is supported by renewable energy specialists from the Portfolio Management department at each of the BImA's main offices. The Centre of Excellence pools expertise in identifying and developing suitable sites and facilitating their use for wind farms and free-standing photovoltaic power plants. When putting the necessary measures into place at the level of the individual properties, it can rely on close cooperation with the other divisions involved, such as Facility Management, Housing or Sales.

Information regarding the sites on BImA properties which are suitable for renewable energy purposes can be found on the website <https://erneuerbare-energien.bundesimmobilien.de>.





*A pollinator, a food source and much more besides: without insects, there would be no biodiversity.*

Protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity

## Mindful of the future

More carbon-capturing trees in the forests, more insect-friendly lighting along access roads, more solar panels on buildings: the BI mA is promoting sustainable development by supporting the Federal Government's programmes.

Germany's National Sustainable Development Strategy is based on the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and preserving biodiversity is a key aspect of these. The German National Strategy on Biodiversity, approved by the Federal Government back in 2007, sets 330 specific national objectives. One of these was achieved in 2016 when the "Federal Government Strategy for the Exemplary Consideration of Biodiversity on all Federal Property" was ratified. Under this strategy, the decline in biodiversity is to be stopped and reversed by 2020.

### Focus on conservation

Nowadays, flying insect numbers are down by 75 per cent on 30 years ago, which is killing birds and other species along the food chain. In response, the "Action Programme for Insect Protection" is targeting all areas in which the BI mA operates. The Federal Government's "Blue Ribbon Germany" scheme is also geared towards preserving biodiversity and protecting



*The islet of Neßsand in the Elbe: a paradise for nature lovers.*

the environment. It is intended to ensure the ecological permeability of the federal waterways and re-establish a national wildlife corridor. To this end, the BI mA is restoring riverbank habitats, for example by planting and maintaining riparian forests.

## Forest fringes full of diversity

The habitats, flora and fauna that can be found where forest meets open land are particularly diverse. The Federal Forest Service is fostering this diversity by planting berry-producing shrubs and fruit trees where required or felling individual woodland trees to produce sinuous structures and areas of virgin soil where solitary bees and wasps can breed and find food. In other words, forest fringes with an intricate structure do not only provide protection against noise and dust on BImA land used for military purposes. They also help to implement various Federal Government programmes, including the National Strategy on Biodiversity, the Forest Strategy 2025 and the Action Programme for Insect Protection.



It is committed to focusing particularly on nature and landscape conservation objectives when it cultivates land, manages buildings and repurposes federal property. Both within their own remit and as part of their joint efforts, all the BImA's divisions – from Facility Management and the Federal Forest Service to Portfolio Management and Purchasing – are working towards implementing the 2030 Agenda. Biodiversity thus now plays a bigger role in the continuing professional development courses for staff.

### Conserving habitats

Much has already been done, with near-natural mixed woodland being planted and maintained for some years now. This includes preserving trees with cavities, nests and cracks as habitats for bats, birds and insects. When working in woodland, machinery is only used on logging trails, not least to protect the soil.



*Undisturbed bogs have an important part to play in global efforts to protect the climate.*

The Federal Forest Service secures and protects bogs and bog woodlands, and restores them wherever possible. Experts from the Federal Forest Service are also currently formulating a strategy to rejuvenate woodland areas with the aim being to make them more adaptable to the challenges of climate change.

### Insects welcome

As a rule, no pesticides, synthetic chemical fertilisers or products containing peat are used on any BImA property or land. Only native woody plants are now grown on open land, while locally appropriate trees and shrubs are planted outside properties used for civic purposes. The lighting for buildings, roads and paths is gradually being converted to sources that attract and thus endanger as few insects as possible. Bee hotels provide nesting sites for insects.

### Environmentally responsible procurement

In addition, an important step is being taken in terms of purchasing goods and services, with environmental factors now playing an increasingly important role in procurement alongside price and quality. Materials are required to bear the “Blue Angel” environmental label, while the welfare records of service providers in Germany and abroad are also taken into consideration. ■



*A bird's eye view of the Münster munitions facility: circular craters today provide vital water holes for animals.*

Protecting species on contaminated areas

## Wildlife on Frankfurt's doorstep

What was once a former munitions facility covering 250 hectares is today grazing land for bison and Przewalski's horses. This unique nature conservation project is a joint venture between the BImA and Deutsche Bahn.

When Christoph Goebel explores the site of the former munitions facility in the town of Münster in southern Hesse, together with Francesca Zahnreich and Harald Fuhrländer, it is something akin to an African safari. Although the forest experts in their off-road vehicle are naturally not on the lookout for elephants or giraffes, the animals they are searching for – namely free-ranging bison and Przewalski's horses – are just as spectacular, at least by German standards. Thirteen European bison and seven Przewalski's horses roam the meadows and woods on this 250-hectare site – two species which only narrowly escaped extinction at human hands. The new habitat provided by the former munitions facility in Münster, near Dieburg, south of Frankfurt, plays a vital role in protecting populations of these species in Europe.

And there they are! Just a few hundred metres away from a gravel path, the herd of bison are grazing leisurely in the sun. Two calves are romping through the long grass while the imposing leader of the herd, who goes by the name "Shakal", keeps human visitors at bay with sceptical snorts. As head of the Schwarzen-

born Federal Forestry Office, Christoph Goebel helped initiate the settlement of the animals. "We are all delighted to see how the animals have taken to this habitat and how they are developing," he says, keeping his eye firmly fixed on his camera viewfinder as he has yet to get a shot of the young calves.

### Military drills give way to species protection

A few moments later, as the group of Przewalski's horses emerges from the undergrowth, the joy of the forester and amateur photographer is complete. "It's an altogether good thing that we are today able to actively protect species on a former military site, and one which is strewn with munitions. We are part of the EAZA Ex situ Programme and are therefore in constant contact with zoos and other breeding facilities throughout Europe." The project was made possible thanks to the support of Deutsche Bahn, which is creating a measure here that offsets the environmental impact caused by the expansion of its rail network. The animals' new home is around 250 hectares big and





*Christoph Goebel points to where bison have been gnawing. Young trees are dying off and grazed areas are left free for the horses.*

is completely surrounded by a fence – not only to keep the animals on the site but also to keep humans out. After all, the site had been used as a munitions facility since the 1930s, most recently by U.S. Forces.

The Americans withdrew for good in 1994 and most of the remaining buildings were demolished. However, the history of the property is forever etched into its natural environment: former craters now form water holes at which the bison and Przewalski's horses quench their thirst. "As the U.S. armed forces advanced towards the end of the war, the German army here frantically tried to destroy munitions and performed uncontrolled detonations. In so doing, many of the munitions were simply dispersed widely over the site. Entering the area is, and will remain, extremely dangerous," explains Harald Fuhrländer, the manager of this particular district.

Today, only 26 hectares of the site are ordnance-free; everywhere else munition remnants can pose a risk to humans. The danger to animals is evidently not as great. "Across the country, we have many years of experience carrying out grazing projects on land contaminated with ordnance," reports Christoph Goebel. "We've never received information from any of our Forestry Offices about animals or carcasses having been found that were visibly wounded or dead as a result of contact with unexploded ordnance." Unlike humans, he adds, animals are not curious to touch unfamiliar objects. "And perhaps the animals' instinct also plays a role here," suspects Goebel.

A red kite circles high up in the sky. The Przewalski's horses have long since disappeared among the woodland undergrowth and the herd of bison have withdrawn to the shadows cast by the trees on the edge of the forest. Some animals are resting while others are grazing or munching on the bushes. Bison feed mostly

on grasses, but also enjoy eating twigs and the bark of trees and bushes. In some cases, this causes the woody plants to die off – much to the delight of the forestry experts. "If it weren't for the bison, the land would very quickly become completely overgrown with trees. In a very natural way, they help to keep the land clear, and this benefits the horses. And the dead trees provide a habitat for lots of insects," explains Francesca Zahnreich.

### Monitoring via GPS

Przewalski's horses are the district manager's specialism. She is particularly happy to be seeing "her" animals again later in the afternoon. With the stallions standing on an asphalt area, it is a good opportunity to examine their hoofs. "That all looks good, none of them are limping," says Zahnreich happily. Shortly thereafter, the young stallions trot away again, snorting as they do so. GPS is used to track where they go. "Some animals wear collars. The devices are the same as those used in the Serengeti," says Zahnreich laughing. The safari feeling will be complete next year once the visitor platform, which is being planned in conjunction with the local authority in Münster, is opened. With a little luck, nature lovers will then be able to observe the animals from a distance, leaving the wilderness undisturbed. ■



*Animals of distinction: red deer help to preserve rare species.*

## Biodiversity

# Award-winning species preservation

The BImA also relies on wild horses or red deer to tend the countryside – and helps to protect species in the process. Many biodiversity projects have been awarded prizes as part of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

With biodiversity worldwide declining rapidly, the United Nations is actively dedicating different time periods to the preservation of biodiversity. The decade from 2011 to 2020 was one such period. The decade supported the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which in Germany is enshrined in the National Strategy on Biodiversity. Examples of good practice are to serve as a blueprint in this regard. Fourteen BImA projects alone received an award in the decade to 2020.

## Rare bat saved

One highlight was the award given to the project on the “Greater Horseshoe Bat in Upper Palatinate”. This was a multi-year project to provide long-term protective measures aimed at preserving the aforementioned species of bat, which had become very rare in Germany. Hohenburg in Upper Palatinate is home to the last remaining maternity roost of greater horseshoe bats, with their distinctively shaped nose, in the whole of the country. The colony now numbers 337 bats and

these feed on the abundance of insects available on the neighbouring Hohenfels military training area. Another project that has received an award is based at the Grafenwöhr Training Area in Bavaria. Red deer is the Federal Forest Service’s animal of choice for landscape management. Unlike livestock, they do not need to be fenced in or looked after and can also be found roaming in areas that are largely inaccessible. Researchers from the Institute for Wildlife Biology of Göttingen and Dresden examined the benefits of the animals by fitting them with GPS trackers and monitoring them over a period of five years. This exercise revealed that the animals, which can cause major damage in forests, are very beneficial to open spaces and the preservation of rare species. But this depends on wildlife being managed purposefully, as practised by the Federal Forestry Office in Grafenwöhr.

On the Wahn Heath, a major local recreational area in the Cologne-Bonn region, a project which has converted a former military site into a home for meadow pipits and Icelandic horses also received the UN Decade award. The restoration and grazing project



*Biodiversity on government-owned land: the European nightjar, greater horseshoe bat and Pomeranian Coarsewool sheep.*

is carried out by the Federal Forest Service, the local nature conservation agency for the Rhein-Sieg district and the state enterprise responsible for roads in North-Rhine Westphalia. Icelandic horses, Bentheim sheep and Thuringian forest goats keep open spaces free of shrubs and forest cover, thus protecting the habitat for rare plant species such as the maiden pink and preserving undeveloped areas for protected animal species like the woodlark. The sheep and goats in question are also on the “Red List” of endangered livestock breeds in Germany.

### Tending the countryside with sheep

Another grazing project to receive a UN award, this time in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, reintroduced a breed of sheep that had become virtually extinct. Until around 1970, the swathe of dunes that forms part of the “Altwarper Binnendünen, Neuwarper See und Riether Werder” nature reserve was managed using sheep farming. When, in 2016, the Federal Forestry Office in Western Pomerania-Strelitz was tasked with formulating an extensive grazing plan, there were no longer any herds to be found for miles around. A year later, an organic farm was brought on board to assemble 20 Pomeranian Coarsewool sheep, a historical and regional livestock breed that is also on the “Red List”. These animals now help to preserve the dunes for endangered species such as the “Carthusian Pink”, the smooth snake, a species of wood ant and rare birds like the Eurasian hoopoe and European nightjar.

Another project synonymous with successful land management and monitoring can be found in Hesse. For more than a decade now, the BImA property Campo Pond has been home to Przewalski’s hor-

ses – the only horse in the world to have survived to this day that is a genetically pure species of the primitive wild horse. Although endangered, these horses are now even active conservationists themselves. By grazing on the ground vegetation, browsing on woody plants, and creating wallows where they have walked or rolled around on the ground, the horses help to preserve the valuable sandy grassland with its species-rich carpet of flowers. The annual monitoring of birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects as well as vegetation confirms the success achieved at Campo Pond.

Following the UN Decade on Biodiversity, which came to an end in 2020, is the newly proclaimed UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration from 2021 to 2030. The BImA will again contribute to this new initiative. ■

### The National Natural Heritage

Since 2005, the Federal Government has secured around 156,000 hectares as National Natural Heritage (Nationales Naturerbe, NNE). The BImA has contributed roughly 125,000 hectares, usually former military properties but also the “Green Belt”, the former border zone between East and West Germany. Government-owned land is gradually transferred to conservation organisations such as the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt Naturerbe GmbH, the Heinz Sielmann Foundation and the NABU Foundation for National Natural Heritage. The Federal Forest Service ensures the environmental management of heritage areas on behalf of numerous institutions. The BImA has coordinated the Council for National Heritage since its creation in 2018.

Germany's largest active inland dunes are located on the Lübtheen Heath. Thanks to strong winds and a lack of ground vegetation, the dunes are among a small number in Germany which still shift to this day.

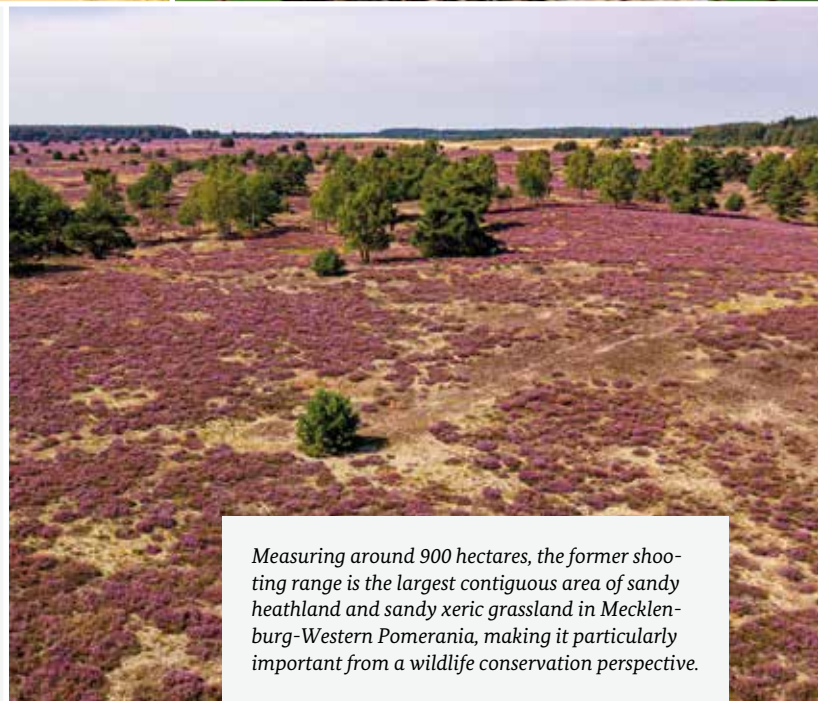


Military exercises on the Lübtheen Heath continued until 2013. Today, bunker remains and military backdrops that have been left intact provide a habitat for many animals, including the red-backed shrike. Since 2008, the area has been designated as an EU bird sanctuary.



## Military activity gives way to conservation

Since 2015, the Lübtheen Heath has formed part of Germany's natural heritage owned by the Federal Government. Responsibility for conservation measures here lies with the Trave Federal Forestry Office. Its use by the military has created a valuable landscape with heath areas and sandy plains. The 6,200-hectare site is an eldorado for biodiversity. The Tengmalm's owl, European nightjar and tawny pipit are just three of more than 70 recorded bird species that nest here. Vast undissected areas of open land are surrounded by extensive pine forests, which in future will be left untouched.



Measuring around 900 hectares, the former shooting range is the largest contiguous area of sandy heathland and sandy xeric grassland in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, making it particularly important from a wildlife conservation perspective.



With their open sandy areas, the inland dunes and their surrounding environment are an oasis for particular animals and plants. The natterjack toad, blue-winged grasshopper (photo) or grey hair-grass all feel at home here.



Federal district foresters keep the dunes and heathland free of vegetation, removing shrubs and pine trees for instance. In future, conic horses will help to perform this job. Without support from the grazing animals, the land would become more overgrown with each passing year.

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