

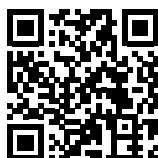


Federal Real Estate

Comprehensive Real Estate Services

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Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben Board of Directors: Dr Christoph Krupp, Holger Hentschel, Paul Johannes Fietz.

Dear Reader,

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

The BImA constantly modernises its existing buildings and adds new properties that have been constructed in line with custom specifications. To do this while also guaranteeing accessibility, structural fire protection and energy efficiency standards requires the organisation's wide-ranging expertise. In this regard, the BImA, as the key real estate company for Germany's Federal Government, can draw on the 15 years of experience that it has acquired since its foundation.

But there is more to the BImA than just that. It also supports the Federal Government's housing drive by providing affordable housing for around 70,000 people. It constantly invests in the modernisation of the approximately 36,000 homes that it owns and will soon be building homes itself under the Federal Government's housing assistance scheme for federal employees. It works closely with

local authorities in many places to alleviate the housing shortage. 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. In some cases, such as when there is a need to create affordable housing, this is done at a greatly discounted rate.

The BImA's remit also extends to areas that one would not automatically associate with a real estate company. For instance, its Federal Forest Service division looks after more 570,000 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.

Performing the duties with which we have been entrusted in a responsible and sustainable manner is of utmost importance to us at all 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*

Service-oriented: In its core business, the BImA manages and services almost all of the Federal Government's real estate used for official purposes. It also builds properties for its clients.



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The 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 more than 18,000 properties. It owns some 460,000 hectares of land and 36,000 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 the 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 departments and ministries, which also involves managing the energy and environmental aspects of the properties in its care. By way of an aside, the BImA's centralised energy procurement also sees it generate some 80 per cent of the electricity consumed by the government properties in civic use for which it is responsible 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

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.

affordable 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. The



Structure

On an organisational level, the BImA is divided into eight specialist divisions. Five of these carry out actual operations: Facility Management, Sales, Federal Forest Service, Portfolio Management 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 BImA 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.

BImA 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 BImA analyses properties, allocates them to particular sub-portfolios in accordance with business objectives, improves them and demolishes dilapidated 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. The BImA also invests in its existing housing stock and will even strengthen this in future.

Expertise in many areas

In addition to its actual core business, the BImA 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. It also provides housing assistance for federal employees. In future, the BImA will also be performing the role of developer under the housing assistance scheme. Focusing its efforts on urban centres with a tight housing market, it will be building new homes for federal employees. The aim is to build between 6,000 and 8,000 homes nationwide over the next few years.

Last but not least, the BImA 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, the 17 Federal Forestry Offices provide user-oriented, comprehensive land management across roughly 366,000 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 BImA is also active as a building developer in the housing sector.

Between 2005 and 2019, the BImA entered into more than **30,000** contracts of sale.



Since it was established, the BImA has sold **292** so-called **high-rise bunkers** with total proceeds reaching **78.8 million euros**.

The BImA currently provides training for some **200 young people** – in seven different career pathways and six dual degree courses.

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The BImA has been in the market for **15 years**.



4.04 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 **19 billion euros**.

*More than **980 people** work at the BImA's headquarters. Magdeburg is the largest of the nine regional offices, with some **860 employees**. There are more than **120 satellite locations** nationwide.*

The BImA is planning and implementing more than **450 large-scale construction measures** each with an investment volume in excess of six million euros.

The BImA organises over **700** in-house training and development events every year.



In 2019, around **965,000 cubic metres** of wood were harvested from the areas managed by the Federal Forest Service.

*The BImA has more than **62,000 homes** at its disposal for the Federal Government's housing assistance scheme.*

In 2019, the BImA paid around **2.32 billion euros** into the federal treasury.



Many differences, but lots of common ground: 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 BImA also exchanges knowledge and ideas with fellow industry experts from other countries.

From Cyprus to Finland, from Ireland to Latvia, the 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. The many different real estate-related subjects include business models and strategies, performance indicators, energy-saving measures, and more besides.

The BImA is an active contributor to this international alliance and has hosted several of its events, such as in 2012, when it devised and organised a new working table entitled “Efficient office space solutions” in Berlin. This has now established itself as a firm fixture on the PuREnet calendar.

The working tables have since been hosted by other European countries and the United Na-

tions, including in cities such as Bonn and Berlin. In 2018, the BImA invited participants to the next round of working tables and focused, among other things, on measures for government institutions to take when constructing new buildings. And Germany has also already hosted the PuRE-net Annual Meeting.

Robert Erfen, who represents the BImA in PuRE-net, sums it up this way: “Thanks to PuRE-net, the BImA has established contact with numerous European partner organisations over the past several years and has gained invaluable insights into their organisational structures and the scope of their various property portfolios. And BImA’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.” ■



Delicate legacy

By fostering the exchange of ideas with industry specialists, the BImA is moving complex subjects such as conversion and the disposal of explosive ordnance to the forefront of political attention.

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. Sites which were previously used by the military and which have now been transferred to civilian use – so-called conversion sites – were prime targets for attack during the war or are saddled with munitions from past military training operations. Disposing of these and finding a suitable subsequent use for the sites is a challenge that the BImA faces on a day-to-day basis.

Ideas for discussion

The need to bring all of the parties involved in the conversion process together around one table in an effort to develop solutions for both the present and the future was identified early on by the BImA. The first conference addressing the issue of conversion was held in Berlin in 2012, with the tagline “Conversion Means Designing the Future”, and brought together mayors, district administrators, conversion officials in federal states and members of parliament. Since then, the parties concerned have met on a regular basis to exchange ideas.

The BImA also acts as a driving force in dealing with munitions at conversion sites. Different statutory regulations in the federal states make an already complicated situation more difficult. The BImA has been campaigning for years for the introduction of uniform standards nationwide governing explosive ordnance disposal and has held a number of symposia on the topic. The first of these was a conference entitled “In the Jungle of Responsibilities – Munitions and Sites to be Converted” in May 2014. 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. Some 200 representatives from government and federal state ministries, the local authorities affected, the German armed forces and explosive ordnance disposal units, as well as members of industry and the scientific community, took part.

On this basis, a series of events has now become established. With workshops and specialist conferences on explosive ordnance, the BImA pro-



Ordnance clearance is a generational responsibility and requires particular expertise.

vides a regular platform giving experts the opportunity to continue working on problems identified and lend impetus in the search for national solutions. The Specialist Explosive Ordnance Conference entitled “On the Path to Uniform National Standards” was held in Berlin in May 2019 and 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.

Training of experts

In supporting scientists and researchers specialising in explosive ordnance clearance, the BImA 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 an 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 sufficient academically qualified personnel to guarantee that the work meets common standards across the country. More information can be found at www.konversion-kampfmittel.de. ■



Upskilling, training and supporting

Learning never stops. This is why the BI mA offers its staff an in-house training programme with a wide range of opportunities for continuing professional and personal development and supports career advancement through upskilling measures. It also supports the next generation of managers as well as seasoned executives with schemes designed to secure them new qualifications. At over 30 sites across Germany, the BI mA provides training for more than 200 junior staff in a total of seven career pathways and six dual degree courses with an integrated practical element. Internships provide young people with the opportunity to gain initial experience at the BI mA, while the trainee scheme offered by the Federal Forest Service is an attractive entry-level opportunity. Further information is available at www.bundesimmobilien.de/5081/karriere.

The BI mA as an employer

Variety guaranteed

The BI mA offers employees a wide variety of responsibilities, attractive conditions and a good work-life balance.

■ The success of the BI mA is built on its 7,000 or so employees across Germany. It offers them interesting responsibilities and job security, with the benefits of working as a civil servant. The BI mA focuses on providing comprehensive support to its employees, who are able to change jobs within the company at its over 100 sites in order to broaden their own experience and tackle new challenges.

Healthy and appreciated

A healthy relationship between employees' working and home lives forms an integral part of the corporate culture. Flexible working hours, part-time models and working from home allow staff to shape their working hours to suit them and balance career and family life. The BI mA champions a flexible approach to parental leave and supports employees returning to work. Under the housing assistance scheme, it provides affordable rented housing for staff, especially in urban centres. It also enables families to book cheap holidays via a welfare organisation owned by the Federal Government.

The BI mA takes the health of its staff very seriously and offers far more than the standard occupational health and safety measures. Back exercises, yoga, pilates, action days on all issues of healthy eating and targeted training sessions on topics such as "healthy working" 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 also access specific health promotion measures, such as regular check-ups for forest workers.

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 problems in their lives. Respect, tolerance and diversity are an everyday reality at the BI mA. ■

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. A small selection is included below.



Part of the National Natural Heritage

Germany's largest active inland dunes are located on the **Lübtheen Heath**. Here, the Natural Heritage Area is managed by the Trave Federal Forestry Office.



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

The most powerful wind farm on land owned by the BImA was built near **Königs Wusterhausen**, generating some 33 megawatts of power.



The legendary giant

As part of the UN campus, the 115-metre-high Langer Eugen, a high-rise in **Bonn** formerly housing members of parliament, now accommodates 21 UN agencies.



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.



Small, but impressive

The Customs Administration's radio tower on top of the **Grosser Falkenstein** mountain in the Bavarian Forest is one of the smallest S-REM properties.



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.

S-REM for 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).

■ The Act Establishing the BI mA of 9 December 2004 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. 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: from 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 by the user 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, thereby initiating a proven, standard procedure. 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. Using this information as a starting point, 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 government 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 BImA'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 BImA 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 BImA's standardised system of real estate management (S-REM). From barracks and air fields to naval bases – the German armed forces' portfolio is diverse and the expectations placed on the BImA 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, BImA 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 ensures

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 BImA's largest clients is the Federal Police (BPOL). From Flensburg to Garmisch-Partenkirchen and from Görlitz to Aachen, there are some 170 BImA properties which serve as 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, Fulda, 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 is expected to be strengthened by the addition of a further 12,500 posts, which will in turn increase the need for accommodation. The Federal Police continues to work



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

closely with the BImA in managing the construction measures associated with this expansion. The BImA will carry out extensive development on 140 existing properties in order to accommodate new BPOL employees. Fifteen new properties are also to be created. In order to meet the requirements of the Federal Police as quickly as possible, the BImA 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. There are currently 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 BImA with new challenges. One such case arose last year in Brandenburg, where a massive increase in staffing levels necessitated the rental of an additional education and training facility within the space of a few months, to serve as an interim solution. Work on the training centre's long-term home is now in full swing.

Energy efficient and accessible

The German Customs Authority is also one of the BImA's major clients, with around 980 leases in place currently. Because the Customs Administration 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 Administration expands, the need for staff grows. As well as enlarging leased space, the BImA 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. In the case of the renovations to the Central Customs Office in Regensburg and the newly constructed Central Customs Office in Bremen, all of these requirements have already been successfully implemented. The BImA is having a new multi-purpose building constructed for the Central Customs Office in Stralsund, which is due to be ready by autumn 2020. The building will comprise garages, a sports hall, indoor shooting range, exhibit room and other offices. The BImA is acquiring suitable sites on which it plans to build 11 operational training centres for the Customs Administration, with construction work being carried out under its own responsibility. ■



The BImA is using a modular construction to meet the Federal Police's rapidly growing need for space.



The Futurium building's unusual design makes it a real eye-catcher.

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.

Sometimes a user's needs with respect to a given facility change. If it becomes necessary to build a new government property, the BIaA 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 BIaA to date in Berlin has been particularly high. In October 2014, employees at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) moved into their new offices. This was the first time that the Federal Government had constructed a civil federal building under a public-private partnership (PPP). The well-planned and coordinated cooperation between the public sector and a private sector partner resulted in the construction of a modern ministry headquarters, boasting an impressively high level of architectural quality and energy efficiency, on time and on budget.

Energy efficiency also played an important role in the new building for the Ministry of the Interior in the German capital. One of the features of the pioneering energy strategy for the building, which the BIaA completed in 2015, is the use of

geothermal energy to deliver optimum heating to all of the offices.

The BIaA's largest newbuild project to date is 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.

Bigger, faster, further

The BIaA completed the Futurium in November 2017 after just 27 months of construction work. This building is another property that the BIaA 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



The Federal Intelligence Service's new headquarters in Berlin, the largest project carried out to date.

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

The BImA is currently delivering a further major newbuild project for the United Nations at its office in Bonn. A freestanding annexe, measuring some 65 metres high across 17 floors and three basements, is being built between the former plenary chamber of the German Bundestag and the historic Altes Wasserwerk complex, site of an old waterworks. From 2021, the building is expected to house 330 employees of the Secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. With this building too, the BImA 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.

The BImA is also building for a younger group of users. In Perlach Forest, for instance, it has 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 paves the way in structural accessibility

Since early 2020, many of the BImA's government properties under the S-REM have been examined to see whether they contain barriers which make accessing and using the buildings more difficult or impossible for people with disabilities. On behalf of its users too, the BImA is therefore assuming the task of determining accessibility in order to comply with the requirements of the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. This is to be followed by the creation of binding timetables and action plans for the removal of barriers. The BImA has had an app developed specifically for recording purposes. With

the help of the app, external service providers working on behalf of the BImA are now examining buildings for 84 features drawn up together with the Federal Office for Accessibility under the latter's coordination. Once the findings of the data collected have been analysed, measures to remove any barriers will be prepared. The BImA will plan and implement specific measures in consultation with the users of the government properties. In order to improve support for infrastructural facility management, information relating to building space is updated at the same time as details regarding accessibility are recorded.

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 retored 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 BIImA 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 BIImA 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 BIImA handles the termination of the legal relationships with the foreign state. If the property is leased, the BIImA will coordinate with its owner.

All damage taken care of

The BIImA 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 BIImA'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 Institute for Federal Real Estate, which will compensate them in accordance with German law. The BIImA then asks the relevant country to pay the damages owed under international law and transfers this amount back into the federal budget. This part of its remit sees the BIImA handle annual expenditure of some EUR 70 million at present. ■

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 home-building 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 to alleviate the housing shortage.

From List on the North Sea island of Sylt to Sonthofen on the edge of the Alps and from Görlitz on Germany's easternmost edge to Gangelt on its Dutch border, 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 36,000 homes across 8,700 residential buildings with a total living space of nearly 2.2 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 former 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.

The BImA currently manages over 16,000 of its homes itself. In other words, it takes care of everything relating to the tenants and the properties, from reletting and preparing statements for rent-related costs through to repossession, energy efficiency upgrades, gardening and business planning. For at least 19,000 homes, it continues to receive the support of external property managers. However, housing is becoming an increasingly important issue within the company. A new division focusing exclusively on residential properties is to be set up soon. Management of the accommodation that has been administered externally to date will gradually be transferred to the BImA.

However, the BImA does not just hold old military real estate in its residential portfolio. Soest's



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

SüdOstSiedlung, or “south-eastern estate”, was constructed in double-quick time around 70 years ago to accommodate people displaced from Germany’s former eastern territories. The BImA has been renovating the estate’s over 500 flats in stages since 2012, replacing the electrical installations and sanitary facilities, installing modern gas central heating and even bringing the floor plans up to date. Many of 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 Emser 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 – and this is the new element – the BImA will not only be retaining and investing in its own housing stock, it will also be building new homes.

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 been extended. It regulates the various concessions available when purchasing plots of land

Shelter for refugees

Over the past few years, the number of refugees and asylum seekers coming to Germany has required the whole of society to pull together. The BIImA has also been closely involved in the dialogue with local and government authorities to the extent that, at times, up to 172,000 people could be accommodated on federal property. Former barracks were ideal, as they provided space for a large number of people, usually at very short notice. Since 1 January 2015, this has also seen the federal states, rural districts and municipalities being handed federal properties or parts thereof rent-free subject to certain conditions. In addition, the BIImA is continuing to support the authorities.



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 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 BIImA 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 BIImA 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. To expedite homebuilding efforts, the BIImA intends to sign actual pacts in suitable cases, in which city councils or local authorities would grant short-term planning permission for the BIImA's own building work, for instance. For its part, the BIImA would provide plots of land and support services, amongst other things.

In cities, towns and regions where federal institutions and agencies need accommodation for their employees, the BIImA 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. Thus, for instance, 104 new homes are to be built in the town of Müllheim in Baden-

Württemberg over the coming years, while 400 new homes are planned for the Cité Foch, a former housing complex for the French army in Berlin. A total of 800 homes are also to be built in Cologne on the site of the former Lind barracks. You can learn more about the BIImA's homebuilding projects on pages 28 and 29. ■

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 to repay the discount provided that the new owners fulfil the purpose for which the price reduction was offered. As the BIImA 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 **800 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**.*

Until 2018, the discount granted for the construction of social housing was limited to 80 per cent of the purchase price. Now, the BImA can grant a discount equal to the full price, which means that it is possible to purchase properties at **no cost**.



The BImA has contributed to the creation of more than **4,000 units of social housing** to date through the sale of properties.

*In the last five years alone, the BImA has granted discounts of some **100 million euros** for the construction of social housing.*

In 2019 alone, building work began on around 2,360 state-subsidised homes following discounted sales to local authorities.

In 2020, BImA properties where there is potential to build up to 5,000 additional new homes may be sold.

The BImA also supports **small-scale projects**. In 2019, the City of Fulda acquired a property which is being used to create **20 units of social housing**.



In Münster, around 3,000 homes are to be built on the site of the York and Oxford Barracks, which were sold in 2018. 550 of these homes will qualify as social housing.

*Throughout Germany, there are around **200 federal properties** that could be granted planning permission for the construction of between 6,000 and 8,000 homes. The BImA will build homes itself here.*

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.



BImA block of flats in Cottbus.

The housing assistance scheme is extensive and encompasses more than 62,000 homes in over 500 locations throughout Germany. 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. Many staff at the German armed forces, Federal Police and Customs Authority take up the offer. However, all federal employees are entitled to apply.

Affordable housing

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. Ultimately, this serves to maintain and strengthen the operating capacity of public administration bodies.

As well as acquiring occupancy rights, the BImA also screens and selects applicants and assigns homes based on set criteria. If no federal employees are interested, the house or flat will be put on the private rental market.

Drive to build more homes

The BImA is keen to further expand the housing assistance scheme as part of the Federal Government's homebuilding drive. Back in 2018, the government's current coalition agreement announced that "the housing stock of the Institute for Federal Real Estate [is to be] utilised and further developed and the housing assistance scheme for federal employees strengthened".

For one, this stock is to be modernised and its management optimised. For another, the BImA intends to undertake building work of its own and thus increase the supply available. It plans to construct new homes, convert existing properties and add extra floors and buildings to its own residential real estate. Any requirements over and above this are to be met in a targeted way by acquiring occupancy rights. The BImA is also working to determine the housing needs of the various federal institutions and agencies across Germany even more accurately and raise awareness of the assistance scheme. ■



The first task on the former military site in the Porz district of Cologne is to make space for 800 new homes.

Housing assistance

Homes we are building ourselves

In tight housing markets, the BImA creates affordable accommodation. For this purpose it has identified plots of land nationwide and set up a programme for the construction of new homes. 6,000 to 8,000 flats are to be built soon.

In its capacity as a developer, the BImA focused until recently on buildings for ministries, Germany's armed forces, the Customs Authority and other such bodies. Now, it is building homes too. In so doing, its aim is to act on its own responsibility in creating affordable housing to strengthen the housing assistance scheme and to make the Federal Government more attractive as an employer.

The project began immediately after the go-ahead for the Federal Government's homebuilding drive had been granted. The first step for the BImA was to conduct an extensive examination of its properties. "The analysis showed that around 200 plots of land are potentially suitable either for building new homes or for densification through extensions and expansion to existing buildings. We then began drawing up concrete plans for each individual building project. In a number of places, the first diggers will soon be in operation," reports Thies Langholz, head of the BImA's homebuilding drive.

As far as the BImA's own building projects are concerned, the "Lager Lind" in Cologne is something of a heavyweight. Around 800 new homes are being

built on the 14.5 hectare site where the military ruled the roost for more than 200 years. In an initial step, the dilapidated buildings are to be demolished by the end of 2020. The forest in the north-eastern part of the site will remain untouched and the BImA is also investing around a million euros in biodiversity measures. 2025 is the scheduled completion date for the homes. The project is part of the homebuilding pact entered into between the City of Cologne and the BImA in 2019. Under the terms of this pact, a large number of new and affordable homes are to be built in this area of the city in as short a space of time as possible.

Around 100 homes are being built in the town of Langen in Hesse. The BImA is constructing twelve apartment blocks there, each containing two-room and three-room flats, in order to meet the Federal Government's growing need. The housing assistance scheme plays an important role in Langen given that there are many institutions of the Federation and the federal state of Hesse close to Frankfurt Airport: these range from the Paul-Ehrlich-Institut (the Federal Institute for Vaccines and Biomedicines) and the



Rapid solutions are in demand: designs for the building developments in Aschaffenburg (left) and Müllheim (right); in Langen (centre), the BImA wants to build on the open spaces on the existing complex.

German National Meteorological Service to the operations centre of the German Environment Agency's air monitoring network. The new buildings, with a total living space of around 6,400 square metres, should be completed in 2023 and add to the capacity of the existing BImA complex.

Given the increasing numbers of personnel at the German armed forces barracks and Federal Police District Office in Rostock, the BImA is also building homes under the housing assistance scheme at the Baltic Sea. Sixty affordable homes for federal employees are therefore to be added to its Hohe Düne residential complex in Warnemünde. Two apartment buildings will be constructed over the next three years, containing a mixture of different sized apartments for families, couples, single occupants and commuters. Both buildings will be equipped to meet the needs of disabled persons, and will have flat entrances and lifts.

Rapid solutions

In Alsterdorf, a leafy district of Hamburg, the BImA is building 110 new one-room to four-room flats. A former research site for a nautical institute will soon house members of the German armed forces and their families. The first tenants are to move in in 2023. The speed of the project's implementation is due to the modular design of the four buildings, each with three or four storeys. The environmentally sound energy strategy includes charging points for electric cars and solar roof panels.

In Berlin, Cité Foch, a former French housing complex in Reinickendorf, is now the focus of the housing drive. In addition to the almost 470 existing

apartments rented out by the BImA under the housing assistance scheme, it is now building some 400 extra homes on three sites, ranging from single-room apartments to three-room flats. Development planning work is already underway, as is the demolition of buildings which are no longer required. The settlement's particular flair, combining space and greenery, is to be retained. Besides green roofs, the neighbouring park will enhance its verdant character. The modern properties will be constructed in series to be ready for occupancy in three years.

The BImA also applies modular design and serial production in its Spessart-Gärten project in Aschaffenburg, comprising two point blocks with apartments grouped around a central stairwell. The groundbreaking ceremony is due to take place before the end of the year. The 30 two-room to four-room homes, perfect for families, each measure between 60 and 100 square metres and are to be available for federal employees in Aschaffenburg and the surrounding area by late 2021.

Eight new buildings with 108 family dwellings in total – that is the BImA's plan for Müllheim in Baden-Württemberg. The BImA owns an estate in the town which it wishes to increase in density. Here too, the aim is for housing to remain affordable, with rents for future tenants of less than ten euros per square metre. Building work will begin this year, with the project – which includes two underground garages for 108 cars – due for completion by 2022.

The BImA presented its programme for the construction of the first 3,000 or so homes to the Federal Ministry of Finance in April 2020: it will begin building work on 3,000 homes by 31 December 2022 and complete these by the end of 2024. The estimated total investment is 600 to 800 million euros. ■

Managing interests

Anybody facing major challenges needs a strong and reliable partner at their side. The BlmA 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 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 oppor-

tunities 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 with restrictions, as is the case with underground bunkers, 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



The former U.S. military airfield has been turned into an industrial estate and business park for some 180 companies.

BIImA uses a centralised residual contamination management system in which it records and assesses the risks and arranges for remediation as needed.

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 WirtschaftsService 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.

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 BIImA 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.

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.

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 American housing complex, comprising some 1,000 homes plus facilities such as schools, hospitals and shopping centres spread over 62 hectares, was handed back by the military. 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 30 such cases in 2019.

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 Govern-

ment 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: the biggest case that the BImA is currently working on concerns assets worth around seven million euros. Set against these are around 195 million euros in liabilities. 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 estate amounting to more than nine million euros were rejected in 2019.

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 three properties to the BImA's stock in 2019. 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. ■

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 BlmA'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 operated by a subsidiary of the BImA. The building underwent extensive renovation 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 Villa Mumm in Frankfurt is a truly head-turning property. Built by the champagne baron Herrmann Mumm von Schwarzenstein in 1901, the magnificent property is today the headquarters of the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy. Incidentally, when Frankfurt applied to become the capital of Germany in 1949, the plan was to make Villa Mumm the residence of the Federal President.

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 Müritz National 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



Vernadskogo housing estate in Moscow



European Patent Office in Berlin



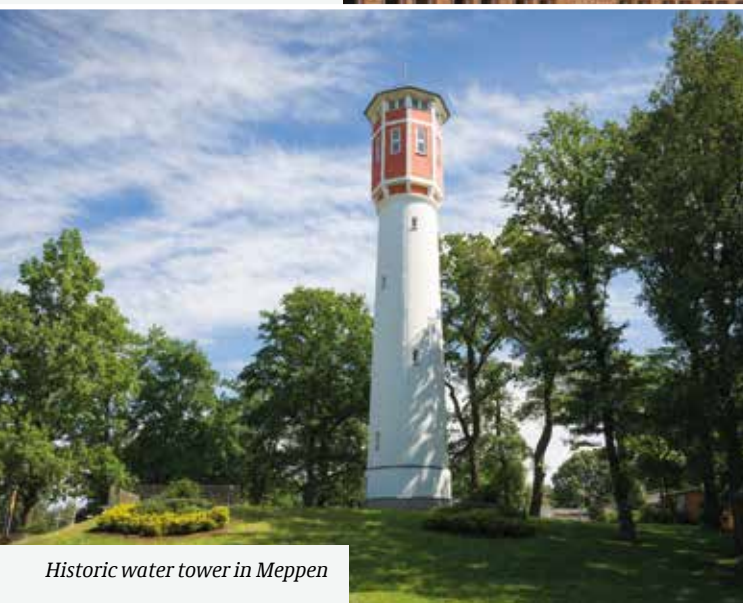
International nursery on the UN campus in Bonn



Rennsteig Barracks in Oberhof



Schloss Oranienstein in Diez/Lahn



Historic water tower in Meppen



Villa Mumm in Frankfurt





Kronprinzenpalais in Berlin



Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community in Berlin



Villa Bohnenberger in Stuttgart



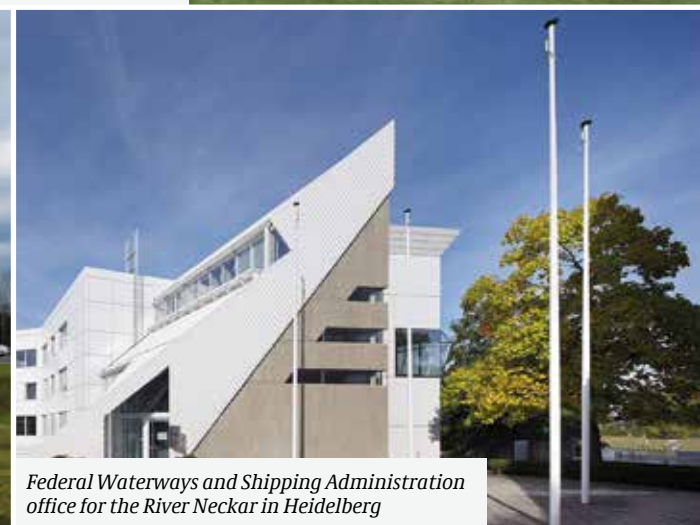
German Supreme Audit Institution in Bonn



Federal Police Building in Rostock



Accommodation for the Federal Police's mounted units in Stahnsdorf



Federal Waterways and Shipping Administration office for the River Neckar in Heidelberg



Grüner Hof in Ulm



Headquarters of the Federal Intelligence Service in Berlin



Museum of Military History in Dresden



Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy in Berlin



Grandhotel Petersberg in Königswinter



Federal Administrative Court in Leipzig



Residential property in Dresden



Federal Network Agency in Konstanz



Federal Ministry of Finance in Berlin



Windmill in the Senne region

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 BI mA 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 BI mA's crown jewel: during Berlin Fashion Week, even the fashion world makes its appearance here.



Bunkers and shelters – specialist real estate

Strikingly different

The range of the BI mA's properties for sale includes numerous bunkers and shelters. And business in them has been booming for years – thanks to lots of creative ideas on how they can be put to new use.

■ Built at one time to protect the civilian population from air strikes, air-raid shelters now offer an offbeat space perfect for a customised second use. A multigenerational home with rooftop café, a centre for culture and the arts, a music studio or even a museum are just some of the examples of what they can be used for.



Now a regenerative power plant, the converted high-rise bunker in Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg, attracts lots of visitors.

The image of bunkers has changed over the past decade. The "Fascination With Bunkers" project launched by the BI mA in 2011 has been instrumental in drawing attention to the potential of high-rise bunkers. The results speak for themselves: a project website, an illustrated book, a travelling exhibition, two student competitions and the widely-acclaimed publication entitled "Livening up Bunkers". The book, published by Jovis Verlag, classifies bunkers and shelters by type and presents examples of how high-rise bunkers have been converted for other uses. It also gives the BI mA the opportunity to suggest possible uses to prospective buyers and highlights aspects that need to be taken into account.

Thanks to the project, demand for bunkers has increased: since 2005, the BI mA has sold more than 290 high-rise bunkers to local authorities, architects, project developers, private individuals, artists and associations. One of the appeals of these former shelters is their distinctive appearance. In some cases, the old walls have been retained as a visible concrete feature, thereby creating a very particular atmosphere. ■



The BImA 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 if it is suitable for new homes. Should they forego this, the BImA will sell the property in question.

Whether at auctions, trade fairs, on the Internet or through the traditional method of advertisements, the BImA'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 BImA 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 BImA has granted a discount of 25,000 euros.

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

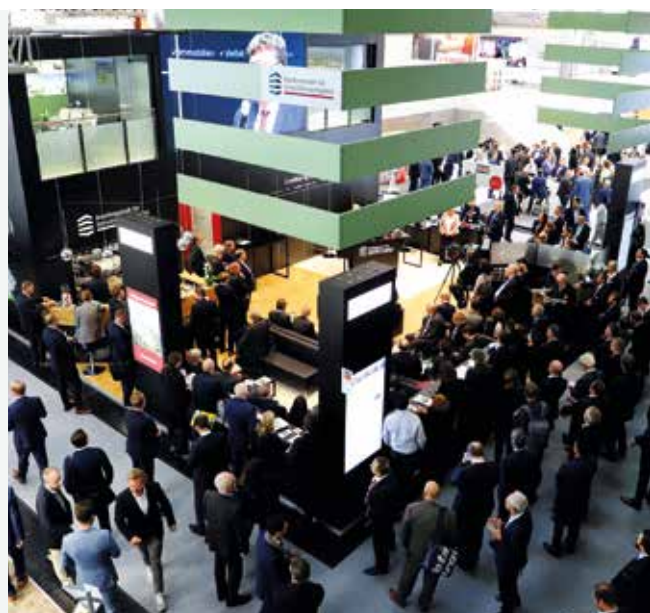
planning permission, demolishing some of the residential buildings and opening up new sites for construction. The site offers space for some 400 new homes, while a hall of residence for students has already been built. In addition, the BImA sold some parcels of land for building social housing in 2018 and will be doing building work of its own on one plot 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 BImA 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

Showcasing top properties

In the first week of October each year, the BIImA presents its highlights at Europe's biggest real estate and investment trade fair, the EXPO REAL in Munich. The BIImA's stand at the trade fair, a permanent feature, can always be found in the same place. In addition to in-depth discussions, the BIImA 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, BIImA experts from across Germany in Sales, Facility Management, Portfolio Management and the Federal Forest Service make themselves available to answer questions from all the interested visitors.



of 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 BIImA has already sold, there are a few genuine highlights, including a former British villa in Bad Oeynhausen which was auctioned off in late 2017. This grand estate, known



The former British villa known as the White House in Bad Oeynhausen was sold at auction.

locally as the White House, was used by the British brigadier at Herford Garrison until mid-2014. In Mülsen, a municipality in the district of Zwickau in Saxony, a rock-cut cellar built in the late 19th century and now a listed building, was sold by the BIImA in 2019. Prior to this, the way had been paved to both preserve the "Bergkeller", which bears testimony to the historic rural economy, and to incorporate it in a suitable fashion when mobilising an area of land for residential construction.

Opportunities for investors

The fact that bunkers too offer creative options for use and investment opportunities is illustrated by the high-rise bunker on Neustädter Straße in Bielefeld. The BIImA sold the property in 2010 in a public tender. The new owners have only retained the lower floors and two walls of the bunker, with the rest being demolished and replaced by a new building that sits encased inside the old bunker. The materials used for the new building's cladding is in stark contrast to the bunker's raw façade, thus emphasising the civilian nature of the new building. The bunker is still visible inside because some of the surfaces in the stairwell have been retained in their original state. As well as a retail space, there are eleven parking spaces for cars on the ground floor and a total of twelve apartments on the floors above. ■

The sustainable partner

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



Energy efficiency upgrades

A Herculean task

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

From insulating façades and roofs to replacing windows and installing renewable energy systems – there are many ways to make energy efficiency upgrades to existing buildings. These measures are designed not only to reduce energy consumption but also to increase renewable energy use and thus mitigate climate change and protect the environment.

With buildings accounting for 35 per cent of Germany's overall energy consumption, energy-efficient buildings are a vital component in the transition to renewable energy. The country's aim is to achieve a virtually climate-neutral building stock by 2050. In order to implement this objective, the Federal Government has set out a new framework for federal buildings with its Climate Action Programme, which was approved on 9 October 2019. Under the programme, the Federation must act as a

role model and the prescribed energy efficiency standards are accordingly strict. The Efficiency House Standard 55 (EH 55) is just one of the targets that an existing building requiring an energy efficiency upgrade will have to meet. New buildings are to meet at least the EH 40 standard. The BImA is already integrating these targets in its planning procedures.

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

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. This is where "mission E", a campaign launched by the BImA in 2012, can help. It is aimed specifically at all federal employees working in properties used for civic purposes. Given that these employees have a particular responsibility, the Federal Government has explicitly called on the BImA to scale up "mission E" among this group of users as part of its programme of sustainability measures. Campaign weeks or action days 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 why climate change has an important

political dimension, with a view to changing the way in which people are accustomed to using energy and identifying areas in the home and in the office where energy savings could be made. The campaign is constantly being refined but its primary focus to date has been on electricity use, heating and correct ventilation. Plans are also in place to add the area of mobility.

By April 2020, the BImA had carried out over 240 campaign actions and reached around 44,000 employees. In addition, all candidates for entry into service with the Federal Police and who attend training and development centres, are taught about energy efficiency in a training course designed especially for them. More information is available at <http://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 Germany's energy mix 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.

With its Climate Action Programme 2030, the Federal Government has laid the groundwork for Germany to achieve greenhouse gas neutrality. One of the targets reaffirmed in the programme is to increase the share of renewables in electricity consumption to 65 per cent by 2030. For comparison, this figure stood at 42.1 per cent in 2019. This ambitious target will require a further expansion of renewable power plants and lead to rising demand for sites offering 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. A property deemed suitable is

then either offered for sale or provided to the partner by way of a contract for use of the land with a 20 to 25-year term.

Harnessing potential

Since 2011, the BImA has put more than 100 open-air properties for renewable energy sources on the market. No fewer than 46 renewable energy projects have been implemented to date. These range in scope from a small photovoltaic power plant to a wind farm. The largest free-standing photovoltaic project can be found near Prenzlau in the Uckermark, and generates roughly 16 megawatts (MW), while the biggest wind farm is not far from Königs Wusterhausen and boasts an output of approximately 33 MW. Further sites owned by the BImA are being assessed using a specially developed potential analysis to see whether they can be used to harvest renewable energy. It is chiefly large properties set to be converted that offer huge potential in this respect. The challenge lies in making this potential

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 will in future be 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 updates the database so that the potential sites for renewable energy projects can be identified using the latest data.



usable by way of a structured portfolio analysis. Such analyses focus on properties to be converted within the meaning of the Renewable Energy Act, properties for which there are no alternative potential uses that would add greater value plus, increasingly, roof space on BImA properties. The possibility of putting properties used for official purposes, residential buildings and commercial real estate in the service of renewable energy is to be explored in future. For instance, the BImA is planning to fit solar panels onto the roofs of residential properties, with the tenants to receive the generated electricity for a reduced price, without it going through the grid. Any unused electricity will be fed into the mains supply.

Finding out which of the 460,000 hectares of land owned by the BImA are suitable for the production of renewable energy is the responsibility of the

Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy at the BImA's Bonn headquarters. When analysing sites, experts from the BImA ensure that negative impacts on nature and the environment can be avoided. And, of course, information on the essential requirements – namely sunshine and wind speed and flow – is also incorporated into the assessment, because the power of wind and sun can only be fully exploited where they can be found in sufficient quantities.

Concentrated expertise

Under the control of the BImA's Portfolio Management division, the Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy is supported by renewable energy specialists from the regional offices and the local Federal Forestry Offices. The Centre of Excellence pools expertise in identifying and developing suitable sites and facilitating their use for wind farms and 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 Sales or Facility Management.

The Centre of Excellence passes its accumulated knowledge on internally through training programmes as well as bulletins and guides on specific subjects, but also by exchanging ideas with national and international partners. Information regarding the sites on BImA properties which are suitable for renewable energy purposes can be found on the website <http://erneuerbare-energien.bundesimmobilien.de>. ■



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



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 BImA 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 BImA operates. The Federal Government's "Blue Ribbon Germany" scheme is also geared towards preserving biodiversity and protect-



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

ing 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 BImA is restoring riverbank habitats, for example by planting and maintaining riparian forests. It is committed to focusing particularly on nature

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 2020 and the Action Programme for Insect Protection.



and landscape conservation objectives when it cultivates land, manages buildings and repurposes federal property. Both within their own remits 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. Bogs and bog woodlands are being secured and

are to be restored where possible. The Federal Forest Service is also currently formulating a strategy for rejuvenating woodland areas in order to make them even more adaptable to the challenges of climate change.

The Federal Government also intends to reduce the amount of space taken up by new buildings to 30 hectares a day by 2030, and converting properties formerly used for military purposes into housing or commercial premises is helping to meet this target. To achieve the transition to renewable energy, more electricity is to be generated from renewable sources – particularly solar and wind power – in the areas outside federal properties than is do so at present. The BImA is also having solar panels fitted to the roofs of its buildings. Wind turbines and solar panels that can generate some 300 megawatts of electricity have already been installed across Germany.

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. There are also plans to create more nesting sites, for example by providing bee hotels.

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. ■



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



Florian Euler has been looking after the open land alongside the Danube on the BImA's behalf for the past 15 years.

Unique landscapes

Wetlands and river banks

Home to rare plant and animal species, one of Europe's most valuable floodplain habitats can be found alongside the Danube not far from Straubing. Protecting and maintaining this area is the job of federal district forester Florian Euler and his team.

“A floodplain landscape wouldn't exist without the ebb and flow of the water. Some parts are always so wet that you sink down to your knees when you walk through them,” Florian Euler explains. The 43-year-old is a district manager at the Hohenfels Federal Forestry Office. He began work in the Danube district in 2005, immediately after finishing his degree and forestry apprenticeship. “It was the perfect job for me. I'd studied forestry as well as ecological environment and landscape planning and had written my dissertation on the restoration of floodplains. At the time, that ticked all the boxes for the vacancy at the BImA.”

The open land, for whose upkeep Florian Euler was now responsible, was created by human hands as a result of the Danube's increasing use for shipping over the past hundred years. The latest of five barrages was planned along the federal waterway near Straubing in the 1970s, a major intervention in the natural landscape that was to be offset with compensatory areas. Some 1,900 hectares were identified for this purpose, complemented by the

purchase of agricultural land. The barrage at Straubing was completed in 1993 and a floodplain landscape has been gradually created in the compensatory areas, which make up Germany's largest contiguous space of this kind.

Captivating biodiversity

The area is still home to numerous plant and animal species that have long since disappeared from the surrounding landscape: orchids such as marsh orchids, dragonflies such as mosaic darners, wading birds such as black-tailed godwits, Eurasian curlews, redshanks and greenshanks as well as other endangered bird species including purple and night herons and even ospreys and sea eagles. Some bird species only come to find food, while many roost here during their twice-yearly migration and others use the meadows to nest. Rare snails, Danube ruffles and aquatic plants lurk beneath the surface of the water. “It's fantastic when you suddenly discover a species that you'd only ever seen in books,” says



Eurasian curlews have returned to nest in the meadows near Straubing, which are also home to protected species of orchid.

Euler, describing why the work in his district is always so fascinating.

Being out and about every day to ensure the upkeep of their land, he and his four-strong team have ample opportunities to make discoveries. And their district is huge: it stretches from Kelheim to the west of Regensburg all the way to Jochenstein to the east of Passau and encompasses 245 kilometres of riverbank, 120 kilometres of inland drainage systems including five barrages, 100 kilometres of dams and embankments and 180 kilometres of service roads. The team is mainly responsible for providing environmental, traffic safety and landscape conservation support to the Federal Waterways and Shipping Office for the Danube/Rhine-Main-Danube Canal (MDK) on federal land alongside the Danube waterway.

Tending with care

“We look after around 1,000 hectares of meadow and grassland near Straubing,” says Florian Euler. “Some 80 local farmers manage half of it. They mainly use

the grass for feed, bedding or to fertilise the fields.” Where the grass is extremely wet or matted with bulrushes and reeds, there is no way to make economic use of it. But it still needs to be mowed. This is done by specialist firms handle on the BImA’s behalf, using tracked mowers. The large footprint of these specially designed machines gives them an improved weight distribution, meaning that they do not leave any marks in the grass.

Up to 12 million square metres of meadow are mowed four times a year. The federal district forester first checks whether mowing is even allowed to go ahead. This involves inspecting each of the 2,000-or-so individual areas twice. If he finds any eggs laid by species that are strictly protected in Germany, such as the Eurasian curlew, mowing is postponed or limited to a smaller area. “We do the same if we find any heath spotted orchids or British yellowheads that are still to flower,” Euler explains. As well as relying on machinery to help them manage the land, the Danube team also look after two shepherds and a farmer with Galloway cattle, who provide support of a more natural kind. “Without any upkeep, the area would cease to be a highly valuable floodplain landscape,” Euler emphasises.

In winter, the team is mainly responsible for maintaining road safety and the care of the trees and shrubs along the waterway. The Danube banks are popular destination for leisure and local recreation. “There’s a fair bit growing here, from single trees and gallery forests through to small riparian forests on the compensatory areas. So I’m certainly not left twiddling my thumbs,” Euler says, laughing. He also knows how to handle a rifle. “If we want to protect the rare ground-breeding birds, we need to control the numbers of foxes and wild boars.” ■



A snow groomer converted into a mower.



Animals of distinction: Red deer help to preserve rare species.

Biodiversity

Game management works

The BlmA relies on natural helpers such as rare sheep breeds or red deer to tend areas of countryside that it owns. Many projects have been awarded prizes as part of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

With the number of species worldwide plummeting, the United Nations declared the period from 2011 to 2020 as the United Nations (UN) Decade on Biodiversity. The Decade supports 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, which is why the UN Decade awards projects that make a particular contribution towards preserving biodiversity. One such project can be found on the Grafenwöhr Training Area in Bavaria. Tanks have been roaming this military area and soldiers practising here for decades, yet it is also home to many different habitats. More than a third of the 23,000 hectare training area is open landscape and almost 85 per cent is designated as a fauna-flora-habitat area.

Monitoring proves success

In Grafenwöhr, 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. A study project examining the benefits of these animals was completed in late 2019. Researchers fitted 44 animals with GPS trackers and monitored when and where the deer grazed and how the vegetation developed over 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. The red deer project was chosen as the project of the month for February 2020.

This accolade was already achieved in April 2019 with protective measures for a species of bat. Hohenburg in Upper Palatinate is home to Germany's last remaining roost of a colony of greater horseshoe bats. The insect diversity on the neighbouring Hohenfels military training area is unique in the surrounding area, even compared with very good habitats.



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

On the Wahn Heath, a major local recreational area in the Cologne-Bonn region, a project which has converted a former military site into home for meadow pipits and Icelandic horses received the UN Decade award in summer 2019. The restoration and grazing project 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.

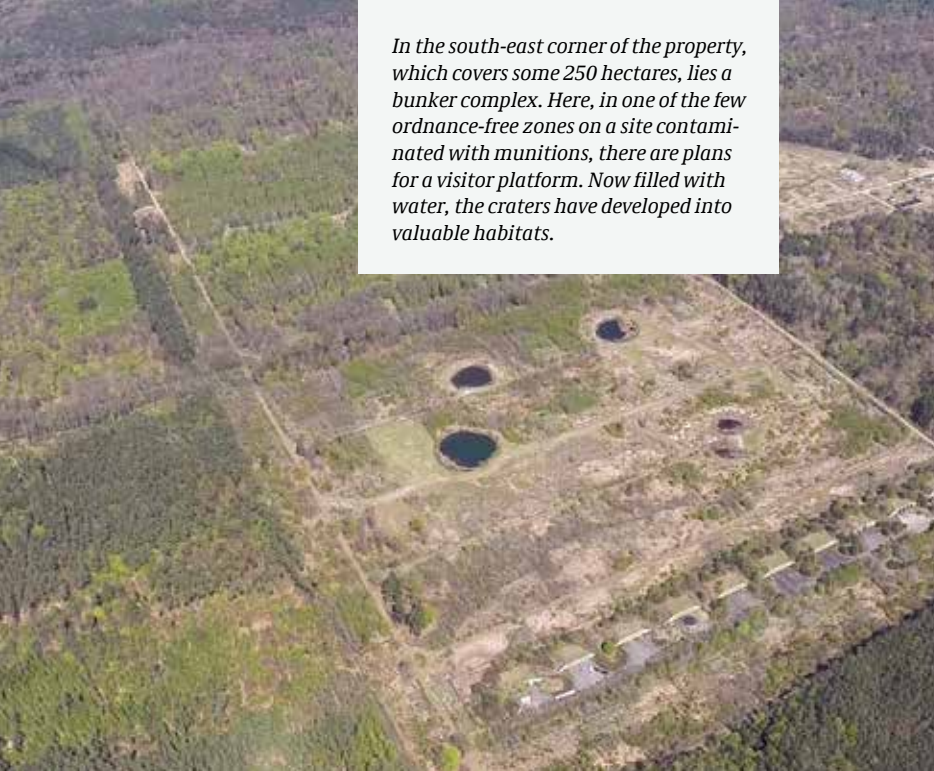
Tending the countryside with sheep

Another grazing project to receive a UN award, 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. The BImA property Campo Pond has been home to Przewalski’s horses since autumn 2009. This is 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. If they did not graze on the ground vegetation, browse on woody plants, or create wallows where they have walked or rolled around on the ground, the valuable sandy grassland with its species-rich carpet of flowers would soon become overgrown with scrub. The annual monitoring of birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects as well as vegetation confirms the success achieved at Campo Pond. ■

The National Natural Heritage

Since 2000, around 156,000 hectares have been secured as National Natural Heritage. The BImA has contributed roughly 127,000 hectares, usually properties but also the “Green Belt”, the former border zone between East and West of 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 the Council for National Heritage since its creation in 2018.



In the south-east corner of the property, which covers some 250 hectares, lies a bunker complex. Here, in one of the few ordnance-free zones on a site contaminated with munitions, there are plans for a visitor platform. Now filled with water, the craters have developed into valuable habitats.



The site has not been used for military purposes since the late 1990s, and work is now ongoing to demolish the buildings – here you can see the tower of the former U.S. General Depot being torn down.

A new home for bison

The former munitions facility in the town of Münster in southern Hesse is a BImA property that is one of a number of compensatory areas. Here, Deutsche Bahn is offsetting the impact of the new Frankfurt-Mannheim high-speed rail link – the major project in the Rhine/Main–Rhine/Neckar corridor – through biodiversity measures. This means restoring the entire facility premises to their natural state. A grazing project run by the Schwarzenborn Federal Forestry Office and involving European bison (also known as wisent) and Przewalski's horses is scheduled to get under way on the site in 2020, by which time the former military buildings will have been demolished.



The fact that most of the site is strewn with munitions prevents it from being exploited commercially. To be grazed by livestock, however, it need not be completely free of ordnance. Parts of the site that have been cleared can house the necessary infrastructure, for instance feeders.



The site of the former Münster munitions facility will soon be home not only to bison but also Przewalski's horses, a species that is endangered and strictly protected in Germany. The Federal Forest Service will introduce a herd structure to the area so as to help build up a viable wisent population in Europe.



The loading station dating from the National Socialist period has been demolished and will present an ideal environment for grazing European bison in its new life as a green space.

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