



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# A new deal for social housing

A Consultation



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## **A new deal for social housing**

### **Introduction**

This consultation seeks views on making sure that social housing provides safe and secure homes that help people get on with their lives. The consultation is open to everyone. We are interested to hear from a wide range of interested people including residents, landlords and lenders.

The consultation is divided into 5 parts:

Part 1: Ensuring homes are safe and decent

Part 2: Effective resolution of complaints

Part 3: Empowering residents and strengthening the Regulator

Part 4: Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities

Part 5: Expanding supply and supporting home ownership

Respondents are invited to respond to each specific part and the relevant responses to each part will be considered in taking forward that particular proposal.

This consultation begins on 14 August 2018 and runs for 12 weeks until 11.45pm on 6 November 2018.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A at the end of this survey. Individual responses will not be acknowledged.

## About you

### 1. Are you responding:

- On behalf of an organisation
- As a private individual

If you are responding as an individual, please tell us the following details below. It is not mandatory to answer, but it would help us understand if we need to reach out to all groups to respond to this consultation.

### 2. Do you live in social housing? This includes tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.

- Yes
- No

### 3. What age category do you belong to?

- 16-24                       45-54
- 25-34                       55-64
- 35-44                       65 and over

### 4. Where do you live?

- North East                       London
- North West                       South West
- Midlands                       South East
- East of England                       Other (please specify)

5. We may want to contact you about your response. If you are willing for us to do this please provide an email address.

### About you - organisation

6. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us which sector your organisation is in:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant Management Organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Association        | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Association              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative                | <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant Representation Group    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other                      |   |

7. If you chose 'other' please tell us the sector which your organisation is in:

8. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us the name of your organisation:

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

In addition to completing these consultation questions have any documents to support your response please attach them to this survey

9. We may want to contact you about your response. If you are willing for us to do this please provide an email address.

### A new deal for social housing

## Chapter one - Ensuring homes are safe and decent

Dame Judith Hackett's independent review of building regulation and fire safety states that residents have an important role to play in identifying and reporting issues that may impact on the safety of the building and in meeting their obligations, including co-operating with crucial safety-related works, to ensure their own safety and that of their neighbours.

### 10. How can resident's best be supported in this important role of working with landlords to ensure homes are safe?

The best way to support residents to work with landlords and to encourage their participation is giving them the knowledge and skills they need to make an informed contribution on fire safety matters. Measures which landlords' could consider include:

- Regular reviews of "Keep Safe" information to ensure it's up to date
- Information on safety awareness and how to report anything of concern. This could be provided across a variety of medium, (e.g. tenancy handbooks, leaflets, landlord's website, You Tube videos) to maximise access to this important information.
- Landlord's knowing their housing stock and the condition it is in. This will be achieved by taking a robust approach to asset management (e.g. through stock condition surveys) and listening to residents' concerns and issues to gain an understanding of their views on the safety of their homes.
- Having a joined up approach to Estate Inspections for condition and safety between Neighbourhood teams, Property teams and residents

There have been recent changes to drive up safety that apply to the private rented sector but not the social sector. For example, in 2015, we introduced a requirement to install smoke alarms on every storey in a private rented sector home, and carbon monoxide alarms in every room containing solid fuel burning appliances. Government has recently announced that there will be a mandatory requirement on landlords in the private rented sector to ensure electrical installations in their property are inspected every five years.

### 11. Should new safety measures in the private rented sector also apply to social housing?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

We believe the defining issue on safety standards should be about what is safe for human habitation across the board, not what tenure it is or how much rent is paid. Any standards required for safety and quality should be applicable to all accommodation regardless of private or social rent. Many social landlords (Welwyn Hatfield included), already provide the level of safety standards legislated for in the private sector as a matter of good practice. To ensure compliance and consistency across the social housing sector there needs to be greater clarity between standards in the private and social sector.

The Decent Homes Standard requires social homes to be free of hazards that pose a risk to residents, to be in a reasonable state of repair, to have reasonably modern facilities and services such as kitchens and bathrooms and efficient heating and effective insulation.

**12. Are there any changes to what constitutes a decent home that we should consider?**

Yes

√ No

Not sure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

We believe the current Decent Homes standard is sufficient and would only need very minor tweaking, but we accept however that we have a relatively good stock to start with in our borough.

**13. Do we need additional measures to make sure social homes are safe and decent?**

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered yes, are there measures you would suggest? Please answer below.

## A new deal for social housing

### Chapter two - Effective resolution of complaints

We want to understand whether more residents need to be able to access independent advice and potentially advocacy to support them in making a complaint.

Alternative dispute resolution and mediation services can be critical in allowing issues to be resolved swiftly and locally, while sustaining positive relationships between the parties involved. We are considering whether and how we might strengthen the mediation available for residents and landlords after initial attempts at resolution have failed.

#### 14. Are there ways of strengthening the mediation opportunities available for landlords and residents to resolve disputes locally?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered yes, you can provide suggestions below.

As an authority, we would welcome improved mediation opportunities for landlords and tenants. We would like to see an additional arm in the Ombudsman Service for just mediation or Government commissioning mediation services from an existing housing body e.g. CIH. Whichever option is considered, we are unanimous in our thinking that the body would have to be impartial to both tenants and landlords and have housing sector expertise.

Where a complaint is not resolved, a resident should refer their complaint to a “designated person”, such as a local MP, councillor or tenant panel, (known as the democratic filter), but if they do not want to do this or the designated person does not resolve or refer it on themselves, a resident must wait for eight weeks before the complaint can be referred to the Housing Ombudsman. There is a perception that the process of seeking redress took too long, and that the “democratic filter” contributed to delays.

#### 15. Should we reduce the eight week waiting time to four weeks? Or should we remove the requirement for the 'democratic filter' stage altogether?

Support the option to reduce the waiting time to four weeks

Support the option to remove the 'democratic filter' stage altogether

Support no change

Not sure

Reforming the filter stage would require primary legislation. We therefore also want to explore what more could be done in the meantime to help ensure that “designated persons” better understand their role and help to deliver swift, local resolutions for residents.

**16. What can we do to ensure that “designated persons” are better able to promote local resolutions?**

The Government needs to ensure that all people in roles eligible to be a “designated person” under the current legislation understand their role, receive training in promoting local resolutions, and have an appreciation of the importance of their intervention being carried out in a timely manner especially where safety is concerned.

We are looking at awareness of housing dispute resolution services more widely as part of our housing redress consultation. We also want to consider if there is a case for an awareness campaign to support social residents in particular to understand their rights to seek redress and to know how to make complaints and escalate them where necessary.

**17. How can we ensure that residents understand how best to escalate a complaint and seek redress?**

There needs to be a very clear and easy to understand process which is consistently applied across an organisation and in accordance with government/regulator’s guidance. The processes in place within an organisation must be clearly shared with residents as soon as they begin their relationship with the landlord. Landlords should take into account communication preferences of residents to ensure that no one is barred access to the information. Landlords should also publish to residents what is expected of them in terms of the regulatory framework, and how they are complying with it. Clear information should be provided for residents on how to escalate complaints to the ombudsman once internal processes have been exhausted. By having clear, published service standards in place landlords can also manage residents’ expectations.

We want to understand whether more residents need to be able to access independent advice and potentially advocacy to support them in making a complaint.

**18. How can we ensure that residents can access the right advice and support when making a complaint?**

We believe Government would only be able to ensure residents had access to the right advice and support, by setting a standard for how landlords deal with complaints and that standard is maintained and consistent across the social housing sector. If it isn't, then the regulator needs to be able to intervene.

There are no statutory guidelines setting out time frames within which providers should handle complaints. Dissatisfaction with the length of time it takes to resolve issues was mentioned at our engagement events. We therefore want to consider how to speed up landlord complaints processes.

**19. How can we best ensure that landlords' processes for dealing with complaints are fast and effective?**

We believe the best way to ensure landlords processes for dealing with complaints fast and effectively is to:

- Minimise the amount of escalation processes,
- Initiate reasonable target response times,
- Ensure at each response that clear concise information for escalation is available for the next stage
- Have in place clear service standards which the organisation commits to and which are clearly communicated to staff so that they understand what they are expected to achieve, with training provided.

**20. How can we best ensure safety concerns are handled swiftly and effectively within the existing redress framework?**

We think that the legislation changes must be given priority to address this.

In the interim, in our experience a designated person has rarely been used. Complainants if dissatisfied in our area have gone straight to the Ombudsman service (despite the condition to wait 8 weeks), so we suggest tenants are referred straight to the Ombudsman in the interim.

## **A new deal for social housing**

### **Chapter three - Empowering residents and strengthening the Regulator**

We consider that key performance indicators should be focused on issues of key importance to residents, covering those identified through our engagement, such as:

- Keeping properties in good repair;
- Maintaining the safety of buildings;
- Effective handling of complaints;
- Respectful and helpful engagement with residents; and,
- Responsible neighbourhood management, including tackling anti-social behaviour.

#### **21. Do the proposed key performance indicators cover the right areas?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

#### **22. Are there any other areas that should be covered?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

We believe that in general the KPIs suggested above cover the correct broad service areas. However because they are broad, they may be open to interpretation, and therefore impossible to bench mark. The final set of KPIs should be specific and underpinned by consistent formulae for calculating performance data.

#### **23. Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators every year?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**24. Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators to the Regulator?**

✓ Yes

No

Not sure

**25. What more can be done to encourage landlords to be more transparent with their residents?**

In order to encourage landlords to be more transparent we feel it's necessary for regulatory standards to be specific on how and when performance is reported so that landlords know clearly how to calculate (as set out in previous points) and then share performance data.

The Regulator already expects landlords to publish information about complaints each year, but approaches vary. We are considering setting out a consistent approach on how landlords should report their complaint handling outcomes, by asking those to report how many complaints were resolved, and how many were resolved after repeated complaints and how many were referred to the Ombudsman.

**26. Do you think that there should be a better way of reporting the outcomes of landlords' complaint handling? How can this be made as clear and accessible as possible for residents?**

Yes

No

✓ Not sure

If yes, how can this be made as clear and accessible as possible for residents?

It is very difficult to objectively assess tenants' perceptions of how their complaint has been handled. Residents' perceptions may be influenced by the outcome of a complaints investigation and not the way in which the complaint investigation is handled. This is especially the case where a decision is (legitimately) not made in favour of the resident, because it could be a landlord who doesn't address complaints.

**27. Is the Regulator best placed to prepare key performance indicators in consultation with residents and landlords?**

Yes

No

Unsure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

**28. What would be the best approach to publishing key performance indicators that would allow residents to make the most effective comparison of performance?**

We think there should be a Government website/ portal, where social landlords can all upload their data. The data can be published in an easy to read format.

We want to consider the role of financial incentives and penalties to promote the best practice and deter the worst performance. For example, whether key performance indicators should help inform or influence the extent to which landlords receive funding and link the Affordable Homes Programme funding to the Regulator's governance rating as well as the viability rating.

**29. Should we introduce a new criterion to the Affordable Homes Programme that reflects residents' experience of their landlord?**

Yes

No

Not sure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

**30. What other ways could we incentivise best practice and deter the worst, including for those providers that do not use Government funding to build?**

1. Publicise social landlords that are not accountable through the new reporting portal.
  2. Have more robust regulation, introduce the same transparency around governance ratings and financial viability of all social landlords, and ensure interventions from regulator when failings occur.

We want to understand more about whether the regulatory framework is setting the right expectations on how landlords should engage with residents, and how effective current resident scrutiny measures are. Landlords are required to consult residents at least once every three years on the best way of involving them in the governance and scrutiny of the housing management service, and demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and how they communicate.

**31. Are current resident engagement and scrutiny measures effective?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**32 What more can be done to make residents aware of existing ways to engage with landlords and influence how services are delivered?**

Landlords should provide more robust communication on provision and methods for engagement - Training / education and improved information should be available for tenants and landlords should set published targets on residents' involvement in decision making. Landlords should streamline resident's engagement, to avoid complex tenant involvement frameworks, making it simpler for people to get involved.

A number of national tenant and resident organisations in the sector have been exploring the option of an independent platform for tenants, based on widespread engagement with tenants, to enable them to have their voices heard more effectively at a national level.

**33. Is there a need for a stronger representation for residents at a national level?**

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered yes, how should this best be achieved?

We believe that frameworks should take into account the local context and that costly, national arrangements do not necessarily support residents with local concerns. There should be a resource available to support tenants who need it when engaging with landlords, but not necessarily through a large national arrangement.

We want to offer residents greater opportunity to exercise more choice and influence over the day to day housing services. We are exploring options to demonstrate how community leadership can be embedded in the governance and culture of mainstream landlords.

**34. Would there be interest in a programme to promote the transfer of local authority housing, particularly to community-based housing associations?**

Yes

No

Don't know

If you answered yes, what would it need to make it work?

Our council believes that it is best placed to own and manage its own housing stock. However if the Government took the decisions that councils should transfer their housing asset to a tenant –led association and this was the will of tenants then we believe that the Government would need to re-visit current arrangements in relation to the debts taken by local authorities in relation to self-financing.

**35. Could a programme of trailblazers help to develop and promote options for greater resident-leadership within the sector?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

We believe this is much-needed.

**36. Are Tenant Management Organisations delivering positive outcomes for residents and landlords?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain your answer further below if you wish to.

TMOs and ALMOs do not have full autonomy over the housing stock on the basis that they do not own the asset. As such their ability to make truly strategic decisions is greatly reduced and accountability may be confused, being a joint matter for both the management agent (TMO/ALMO) and the landlord (the council).

**37. Are current processes for setting up and disbanding Tenant Management Organisations suitable? Do they achieve the right balance between residents' control and local accountability?**

- Yes – the current processes are suitable and achieve the right balance.
- Yes – the current processes are suitable but do not achieve the right balance
- No – the current processes are not suitable and do not achieve the right balance

√ Not sure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

It is questionable to what degree tenants are (genuinely) involved in the decision to set up the new organisation or to disband it. There would also be local variance in this, so difficult to give a decisive answer.

There have been schemes, such as Local Management Agreements and Community Cashback (called Give it a Go grants) which have been designed to support social residents to take responsibility for a service within their local community.

**38. Are there any other innovative ways of giving social housing resident's greater choice and control over the services they receive from landlords?**

We believe that a well-designed and managed grant system where tenants bid for local improvements is a good idea and should be encouraged.

**39. Do you think there are benefits to models that support residents to take on some of their own services?**

Yes

No

√ Not sure

If yes, what is needed to make these work?

We accept that in some individual incidences there might be scope for this to work because of a particular set of resident's abilities, qualifications and/or previous experience. However on the whole we have concerns that some residents who would like to take on this role will not necessarily have the skills and expertise to run the services they take on. We also have concerns about potential conflicts of interest. Instead we believe that tenants should be able to influence services through a robust involvement process to which landlords are held accountable,

**40. How can landlords ensure residents have more choice over contractor services, while retaining oversight of quality and value for money?**

We would suggest having tenant representatives on procurement panels, and provide them with some education/training on the principles/regulation of procurement, including the selection of contractors and contract management.

The Government has recently announced a significant programme of leasehold reform which will benefit all leaseholders, both in the private and social sectors.

**41. What more could we do to help leaseholders of a social housing landlord?**

We would suggest improved transparency over roles and responsibilities of landlord and leaseholder. Improved guidance for tenants and future purchasers at the purchase stage in plain English on legalities of entering into the lease, possible outcomes and potential charges they might face in the future.

## A new deal for social housing

### Chapter three continued - Empowering residents, making sure their voices are heard

Parliament has set the Regulator of Social Housing a consumer objective, which is:

- to support the provision of social housing that is well-managed and of appropriate quality;
- to ensure that actual or potential tenants of social housing have an appropriate degree of choice and protection;
- to ensure that tenants of social housing have the opportunity to be involved in its management and to hold their landlords to account; and,
- to encourage registered providers of social housing to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the areas in which the housing is situated.

#### 42. Does the Regulator have the right objective on consumer regulation?

Yes

√ No

Not sure

We believe the objective needs to be more prescriptive about the rights tenants and landlords' service standards, to reduce any ambiguity. They also need to be well promoted and enforced. More proactive enforcement would be beneficial and as such the requirements would need to be more clearly stated.

The Regulator has published four outcome-based consumer standards to deliver the consumer regulation objective. These are:

1. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard (July 2017) which includes a requirement for landlords to provide choices and effective communication of information for residents on the delivery of all standards, and to have a clear, simple and accessible complaints procedure.
2. The Home Standard (April 2012) which requires homes to be safe, decent and kept in a good state of repair.
3. The Tenancy Standard (April 2012) which requires registered providers to let their home in a fair, transparent and efficient way, and enable tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy.
4. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard (April 2012) which requires registered providers to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas

associated with the homes that they own clean and safe; help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in areas where they own homes; and work in partnership with others to tackle anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods where they own homes.

**43. Should any of the consumer standards change to ensure that landlords provide a better service for residents in line with the new key performance indicators proposed?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If yes, how?

There should be a revised framework, bringing together all the various elements as listed above. The new consumer standards would need to align with the new performance indicators. We also want to know whether landlords and residents would benefit from further guidance on what good looks like, without being overly prescriptive.

**44. Should the Regulator be given powers to produce other documents, such as a Code of Practice, to provide further clarity about what is expected from the consumer standards?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Where a landlord breaches a consumer standard, the Regulator can only use its regulatory and enforcement powers if there is or may be a “serious detriment” to existing or potential residents. The Regulator interprets this as meaning where there is “serious actual harm or serious potential harm to tenants.”

**45. Is “serious detriment” the appropriate threshold for intervention by the Regulator for a breach of consumer standards?**

- Yes
- No

Not sure

If no, what would be an appropriate threshold for intervention?

We believe the appropriate threshold for intervention would be when a landlord persistently fails to meet consumer standards, to include wider areas of performance.

To support a more proactive approach to enforcing the consumer standards we are considering arming residents with information through the introduction of a number of key performance indicators and for landlord performance to be published. Our current thinking is that the Regulator should monitor the key performance indicators to identify where there may be issues of concern with performance. The Regulator would then be able to make a risk-based assessment of how and where to intervene, including through more regular or phased interventions.

**46. Should the Regulator adopt a more proactive approach to regulation of consumer standards?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**47. Should the Regulator use key performance indicators and phased interventions as a means to identify and tackle poor performance against these consumer standards?**

Yes

No

Not sure

If yes, how should this be targeted?

More proactive assessment of landlords' management of performance, with interventions where KPIs are not met. Risk-based intervention would be ideal, depending on the service area where performance targets are consistently not met.

We want to make sure that regardless of whether someone is a resident of a housing association or a local authority, the same minimum standards of service apply. The

Government respects the democratic mandate of local authorities, but this must be balanced against the need to ensure that residents are protected.

**48. Should the Regulator have greater ability to scrutinise the performance and arrangements of local authority landlords?**

Yes

No

Not sure

If yes, what measures would be appropriate?

Where a breach of the consumer standards meets the “serious detriment” test, the Regulator will publish a regulatory notice and consider the most appropriate course of action.

The Regulator is able to use a number of regulatory and enforcement powers where necessary to ensure compliance with the standards. The Regulator has different tools available depending on the landlord, and has published guidance setting out how it will use its powers. The key powers include:

Powers applicable to all landlords :

- Survey to assess the condition of stock
- Inspection to establish compliance with the regulatory requirements
- Hold an Inquiry where it suspects landlord mismanagement
- Issue an Enforcement Notice
- Requirement to tender some or all of its management functions
- Requirement to transfer management of housing to a specified provider

Powers applicable only to private registered providers:

- Issue Fines
- Order payment of compensation to a resident
- Appointment of manager to improve performance of the landlord
- Transfer land to another provider to improve management of land (following an Inquiry)
- Suspension and removal of officers in cases of mismanagement (during or after Inquiry)
- Appoint a new officer to address service failure and improve management of company

Power applicable only to local authority landlords:

- Appoint an adviser to improve performance

**49. Are the existing enforcement measures described above adequate?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you answered no, what other enforcement powers should be considered?

As part of examining the scope of the Regulator's role we want to consider the case for extending its remit to other organisations that manage social housing. The Regulator will hold the local authority landlord to account for the way services are delivered so it is vital that the local authority has good oversight arrangements in place to ensure that management organisations provide a good service.

**50. Is the current framework for local authorities to hold management organisations such as Tenant Management Organisations and Arm's Length Management Organisations to account sufficiently robust?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you answered no, what more is needed to provide effective oversight of these organisations?

This is difficult to answer because there is likely to be variation in approaches. Accountability could be strengthened if the regulator proactively monitored the way in which local authorities manage the contract with ALMOs and TMOs.

We want to be clear and transparent about how the Regulator is accountable to Parliament for meeting its statutory objectives. Upcoming legislative changes will

shortly establish it as a standalone Non-Departmental Public Body. As such it will be accountable to Parliament in the same way as other Non-Departmental Bodies.

**51. What further steps, if any, should Government take to make the Regulator more accountable to Parliament?**

We do not have a specific view on this.

## A New Deal for Social Housing

### Chapter Four - Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities

We want to celebrate residents' role in shaping fantastic places by recognising the best neighbourhoods.

#### 52. How could we support or deliver a best neighbourhood competition?

Provide adequate resourcing. Develop a framework. Promote funding and incentivise.

#### 53. In addition to sharing positive stories of social housing residents and their neighbourhoods, what more could be done to tackle stigma?

1. Funding for delivery of new social homes is key; social housing is currently in such short supply councils have had to prioritise it for the most in need / vulnerable, if there was more available and it was accessible to more people, increasingly diverse communities would be created and stigmatisation would naturally abate.
2. Providing the funding necessary to enable regeneration and modernisation of social housing.
3. Acknowledging the fact many social landlords have been fighting the phenomenon of stigmatisation for years, and it doesn't come from one source alone, there are many contributing factors e.g. housing policy promoting homeownership above all other tenure, use of language (which has been criticised in the past) as well as media portrayals/stereotyping, there needs to be a complete culture change, it's not something social landlords are the most guilty of or can resolve alone, it needs to be led from the top (Government) down.

We want to embed a customer service culture and attract, retain and develop the right people with the right behaviours for the challenging and rewarding range of roles offered by the sector.

#### 54. What is needed to further encourage the professionalisation of housing management to ensure all staff delivers a good quality of service?

CIH and NHF have high profiles within the housing sector, there is a need for Government to increase funding for education to facilitate the provision of sponsored qualifications from these organisation, as used to be the case a few decades ago

We are minded to introduce a key performance indicator that will capture how well landlords undertake their neighbourhood management responsibilities.

**55. What key performance indicator should be used to measure whether landlords are providing good neighbourhood management?**

We believe the Government standards proposed are sufficient alongside the engagement standards that are being put forward in this consultation. So many other factors influence peoples' perceptions it may be very difficult to obtain a consistent measure

**56. What evidence is there of the impact of the important role that many landlords are playing beyond their key responsibilities?**

Landlord recognition and awards are a positive way to acknowledge and promote good practise and give recognition to the good work of the sector.

**57. Should landlords report on the social value they deliver?**

- ✓ Yes
- No
- Not sure

Please explain your answer further below, if you wish to.

This would help demonstrate how the use of resources can help deliver real value for residents and landlords. It would help recognise how residents are involved and can make a difference.

We are proposing to introduce a key performance indicator to help tackle anti-social behaviour, but we will want to consider how this could impact on areas, and whether it could lead to some people feeling more stigmatised.

**58. How are landlords working with local partners to tackle anti-social behaviour?**

We have a strategic responsible authorities group (RAG) to ensure partnership work is in place (Emergency services, probation, health service etc.) Regular meetings are held on a three monthly basis to review the strategic Community Safety Partnership action plan where preventing ASB is a strategic priority. We also have a joint agency group (JAG) which has operational responsibility for delivering the Action Plan and solving problems.

**59. What key performance indicator could be used to measure this work?**

PI could be "feeling safe"

We want to ensure that the revised National Planning Policy Framework is applied to social housing in the right way. In particular we will:

- Strengthen planning guidance to take into account the principles of Secured by Design: to ensure that external spaces, parks, streets and courts are well-lit and well maintained so they are safe from crime and the fear of crime.
- Strengthen guidance to encourage healthy and active communities: building on the NPPF's healthy and safe communities' chapter.
- Strengthen guidance to encourage new affordable homes to be designed to the same high-quality as other tenures and well-integrated within developments.
- Encourage design that reflects changing needs: for example, inclusive design for an ageing population and family housing at higher densities for effective use of land.

## **60. What other ways can planning guidance support good design in the social sector?**

From a planning perspective, we would consider the requirement for high quality design to apply equally to all development proposals regardless of whether they propose social housing or market housing, the same principles will still apply. On this basis, we do not think that there is anything in particular that is required beyond the myriad of existing local and national guidance on high quality design.

Neighbourhood planning gives communities power to agree and implement a shared vision for their neighbourhood. However, we are aware that too often local people hear about schemes after a planning application has been submitted.

## **61. How can we encourage social housing residents to be involved in the planning and design of new developments?**

1. From a statutory planning perspective, we would always consult with local residents on any planning application, be that directly with those who share a boundary, or by way of press and/or site notices. Beyond this, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages developers to consult with residents and local communities when they are proposing new development, and this is something that the Council as Local Planning Authority would also encourage.

2. In housing we engage with the local community and future residents
  - a. We hold resident consultation planning events – which includes residents in social housing – consultation outcomes are fed into architects design and can result in changes to original planning application
  - b. New social housing residents are offered the opportunity to influence fixtures and fittings colour schemes etc. to personalise e.g. tiling, kitchen units, floor coverings
  - c. In the redevelopment programme for Minster Close sheltered housing scheme, residents who wish to return to the new development have been invited to be part of the design team through inclusive resident workshops
3. It may also be relevant to find a way to include those awaiting an offer of social housing (i.e. on the housing needs register) in the planning consultation process.

## A new deal for social housing

### Chapter Five: Expanding supply and supporting home ownership

#### **62. Recognising the need for fiscal responsibility, this Green Paper seeks views on whether the government's current arrangements strike the right balance between providing grant funding for Housing Associations and Housing Revenue Account borrowing for Local Authorities**

- Yes, current arrangements strike the right balance
- No, they don't strike the right balance
- Not sure

Please explain your answer further below if you wish to.

We think it would be appropriate for the government to provide grant funding for RPs and councils and increase the amounts of grant funding for both. Both housing associations and local authorities are equipped to deliver more and this should be facilitated across both types of organisation.

#### **63. How we can boost community led housing and overcome the barriers communities experience to developing new community owned homes?**

We want to give housing associations and others the certainty they require to develop ambitious plans to deliver the affordable homes this country desperately needs

It would be necessary to promote this more widely and showcase previous successes. Reassurance would need to be given that communities could obtain the right type of practical support and advice.

**64. What level of additional affordable housing, over existing investment plans, could be delivered by social housing providers if they were given longer term certainty over funding?**

Unable to answer this in detail as we are currently developing a new business plan and this will now take into account the recent good news that the HRA borrowing cap will be lifted. However, in general it is felt that considerable numbers of new housing could be provided across councils and our authority will certainly be developing as much housing as is viable for us to do so.

We are determined to remove the barriers that many shared owners face. We want everyone who enters shared ownership to have the opportunity to increase equity in their home.

**65. How can we best support providers to develop new shared ownership products that enable people to build up more equity in their homes?**

To best support providers to develop new shared ownership products to enable people to build up more equity in their homes we think:

1. The government should put in place a realistic and achievable framework that is deliverable, won't create un-necessary burdens on the resident and is viable for landlords.
2. Consideration should be given to the way in which valuations are timed, so that there is not an inflated price by the time of the sale.

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS**

# About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, , may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the EU General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the complaints procedure at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/complaints-procedure>.

# Annex A

## Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name, address and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

### **1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [dataprotection@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

### **2. Why we are collecting your personal data**

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

### **3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data**

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, MHCLG may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

### **3. With whom we will be sharing your personal data**

Your data will not be shared with anyone outside MHCLG.

### **4. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.**

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation

### **5. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure**

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/>, or telephone 0303 123 1113.

**6. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.**

7. The data you provide will be directly stored by Survey Monkey on their servers in the United States. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in terms of data protection will not be compromised by this. Your data will also be stored in a secure government IT system.