



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
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14 August 2018

Dear All,

At the resident engagement workshop you attended, we promised that we would let you know when we publish our Green Paper, “A new deal for social housing”.

We held the workshops to hear residents’ views on key questions and to give you the opportunity to raise issues with us. We have used the themes from those workshops to develop the issues and ideas included in the Green Paper. We understand that the Grenfell Tower tragedy has had a profound and lasting impact on you and your community and your contributions to the workshop have helped to drive our thinking. It is right that your experiences shape our understanding of social housing and that your voice is carried through this Green Paper. Many of your views were also shared by social housing residents at the other workshops we ran across the country.

We have taken the time to consider these and have now published our Green Paper. This is a consultative document and we welcome further views from you. The consultation is open for 12 weeks, until 6 November 2018.

The Green Paper has five key principles:

- **Ensuring that homes are safe and decent** – we heard that you were not only concerned about safety but also concerned about the quality and maintenance of your homes. The Government has welcomed Dame Judith Hackitt’s Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety and is clear that more must be done to support residents and landlords to properly engage on issues of building safety. . The Green Paper will also consider whether the current ‘Decent Homes Standard’ is demanding enough and delivers the right standards for social housing residents.
- **Swift and effective resolution of disputes** – we heard your concerns about how complaints were dealt with when things go wrong. We want to make the process of handling and resolving complaints faster, easier and more effective. As part of this Green Paper we will consult on reforming or removing the ‘democratic filter’, where if residents wish to submit their unresolved complaint to the Housing Ombudsman for a

formal investigation they must currently first refer it to a “designated person” – a local councillor, MP or tenant panel – or wait eight weeks. In addition we want to explore whether more could be done to strengthen mediation opportunities so that landlords and residents can resolve disputes locally, and ensuring there is support for residents to access the right advice.

- **Empowering residents** – we heard your concerns about the balance of power between social housing residents and landlords and want to ensure that you are empowered, with landlords operating with greater transparency. The Green Paper therefore contains proposals to assess landlords against standards that matter to residents and to publish these assessments. We also want to strengthen the regulatory framework for social housing so that it remains fit for purpose, including how the regulator can act when things go wrong. We are publishing a Call for Evidence which seeks views on how the current regulatory framework is working, alongside this Green Paper. We are also seeking views on options that ensure residents’ voices are heard and strengthen their choice over services.
- **Elimination of stigma** – you talked about the stigma you experienced being a social housing resident and this was one of the most consistent themes raised by residents at workshops around the country. We are therefore seeking views on a number of proposals to tackle this issue including; ways that thriving communities can be celebrated, how to encourage greater professionalisation amongst housing management staff as well as promoting good social housing design. We also want to seek views on how neighbourhood management can be improved and how anti-social behaviour is addressed, another key issue raised by residents.
- **Boosting the supply of social housing and supporting home ownership** – you also told us that you want to see more affordable homes delivered. To support local authorities to deliver more homes, in addition to our recent announcement inviting local authorities to bid for £1 billion additional borrowing, we have confirmed in the Green Paper that we will seek to repeal legislation that would have required local authorities to make payments in respect of their vacant, high value council homes. This will give local authorities confidence to plan ahead and build the homes their communities need. We have also published the Right to Buy Consultation which sets out our proposals exploring new flexibilities around how local authorities can use their Right to Buy receipts, so they can build more council homes. We are also exploring how we can help people living in affordable home ownership schemes progress more easily to owning outright; and building on recently announced strategic partnerships with housing associations to boost the number of affordable homes they build, we will actively investigate the benefits of providing funding certainty to some housing associations over an even longer period.

To view the Green Paper ‘A new deal for social housing’, you can click here or type this link into your browser: [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-deal-for-social-housing](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-deal-for-social-housing). There you will also find information on how you can respond to our consultation and let us have any suggestions.

Alternatively, if you would like to receive a hard copy of the published document, please send an email to [SocialHousingGreenPaper@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SocialHousingGreenPaper@communities.gsi.gov.uk) or please write to us with your name and address. Our address is:

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Many thanks again for your help and input into this important work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kit Malthouse". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**KIT MALTHOUSE MP**