

NFA Membership and Services

As the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA), we aim:

- Where appropriate, to promote the ALMO/Housing company model
- To enable ALMOs and other council housing companies to maximise their potential to support local councils and communities.
- To enable members to diversify, adapt and provide solutions to meet council and community needs.
- To support members to be custodians of social purpose in the areas where they operate.
- To promote excellence in the provision of housing services.
- To promote resident and community empowerment.
- To share best practice across the sector.
- To lobby Government on issues which impact on vulnerable households in local neighbourhoods

The National Federation of ALMOs is the trade body representing all arms-length management organisations (ALMOs). The NFA represents the interests of ALMOs at national level, giving ALMOs a voice in discussion with civil servants, MPs and Ministers. In addition to lobbying and negotiating with central government on behalf of ALMOs, the NFA runs a website, organises events, regional meetings and an annual conference for its members as well as providing advice, training and briefings.

For the annual membership subscription ALMOs receive:

- Advice and information service for members – this can vary from very simple question answering to, assisting with sharing good practice, facilitating networking within the sector or quite detailed pieces of work to assist in council reviews and visits from the NFA Managing Director to discuss local issues, present to Boards, tenants groups or Executive team meetings.
- Access to high level policy officer advice and support on local issues and in negotiations, meetings and liaison with parent councils, government and other agencies.
- Support for new ALMOs, e.g. by brokering support on their behalf, attending and making presentations to members' Board, staff and tenants conferences etc.

- Free attendance for Chief Officer or deputy at regional meetings (each three times a year) in London & Southern, Midlands, North and South West regions for networking, discussion and policy briefings.
- Free attendance for Communications Officers at NFA Communication Officer meetings for networking, discussion, policy briefings and external speakers/training.
- Access to a dedicated website including password protected member only elements and three specialised Yammer Groups for Communications, New Business, Funding and Development and Welfare Reform.
- Monthly policy updates and specific policy briefings and parliamentary updates by email as and when appropriate, to ensure that member organisations are aware of national policy developments.
- Good practice briefings on issues pertinent to ALMOs and tenants.
- Discounted rates for the NFA annual conference and AGM.
- Discounted rates for bespoke ALMO seminars and workshops to ensure that member organisations are aware of new initiatives and matters affecting the ALMO movement and can share best practice and learn from others.
- Opportunity to become part of the NFA Board with meetings three times a year.
- Opportunity to become part of the NFA Executive Steering Group with meetings three times a year.
- Opportunity to get concerns or issues raised through the NFA in civil service and/or Ministerial meetings as well as through NFA responses to government consultation to further the agenda for ALMOs at a national level and ensure the ALMO voice is heard.
- Lobbying of MPs and other organisations that exercise influence over policy at a national level.
- Publication of NFA reports including the NFA Annual Review to contribute to national policy debates on issues affecting ALMOs.
- Communications services including the website, twitter, relationship building with press and press releases to ensure that matters relating to the ALMO movement are effectively publicised at a national level.
- Promotion of the ALMO option through presentations at external events and meetings with other agencies.

In 2016 the NFA provided the following:

- NFA Annual Conference, AGM and Awards and photography competition and exhibition – April 2016
- Three successful and/or profitable one day events:
 - Joint NFA/ARCH Housing and Planning Act and New Build seminar- July 2016.
 - ALMO Board Members – Oct 2016
 - Fixed term tenancies – Dec 2016
- Hosted and chaired two roundtable discussions for members on:
 - Value for Money - 9th Feb plus private dinner event with sponsor and policy discussion 23rd Feb.
 - LHA rates in the social sector with Crisis and PlaceShapers– Aug 2016

- Twelve regional chief officer meetings
- Three national communications officers meetings
- Three Executive Steering Group officer meetings
- Three NFA Board meetings plus one Board Away Day
- Two Housing and Planning Act member briefings
- Member briefing on the Welfare and Work Act
- Support to the NFA welfare group via email with updates from DWP meetings etc.
- Support to all ALMOs on the housing and planning Bill/Act via an email group with updates from technical working groups and briefings on progress and issues.
- Autumn Statement member briefing
- Representation at:
 - HCA Sounding Board meetings
 - DWP Core Landlord group meetings
 - Housing and Planning Act regulations technical groups on High Value Voids and Pay to Stay
 - LGA Housing Finance Group
- Kept up good relationships with LGA/ ARCH/ CWAG/ PlaceShapers/ SHOUT/ DCLG/DWP/HCA/NHS Alliance
 - spoke at CWAG Annual Conference 1st July
 - Engaged with CWAG around Housing and Planning Act regulation discussions with DCLG
 - Lobbied on Housing and Planning Act with ARCH and liaised with LGA on all issues.
 - Continued meetings with PlaceShapers
 - Promoted NHS Alliance work to members

NFA publications:

- NFA Annual Survey 2015 results - *Changing with the times* – Jan 2016
- NFA & ARCH 2015 Welfare Reform Survey Findings – *Measuring the impact* –half yearly update from 2015/16 – Jan 2016
- Annual Review – Apr 2016
- NFA 10th Annual Awards Winner and Finalists Brochure
- NFA Photography Exhibition Brochure *Ordinary People Extraordinary Lives*
- Value for Money briefing *Stretching the Pennies* - Apr 2016
- NFA & ARCH 2016 Welfare Reform Survey Findings *Universal Credit - One Year On* – June 2016
- *Building New Social Rent Homes 2016 Updated* – Capital Economics report – Oct 2016
- Governance publication 4th Oct 2016.
- NFA Board Member publication *ALMO Governance: The inside track*– Oct 2016
- Recruitment Pack: Become an NFA Board Member – Oct 2016
- Overview of the NFA including The NFA and its Members and NFA Asks brochure Oct 2016

NFA submissions and responses

- Labour Party Housing Commission.
- LGA Housing Commission
- DWP committee on Welfare Reform Bill
- Treasury and DCLG for Autumn Statement with ARCH
- The Housing Minister with ARCH, CIH & CIPFA on a proposal to create new initiatives for local authority investment in new housing

Other work

- Successful lobbying on Housing and Planning Act issues: Joint NFA/ARCH briefings sent out. Meetings held with supportive MPs and Peers. Work with ALMOs with supportive MPs providing briefings and support for local lobbying. Briefings to members on Act and work on regulations. Represented NFA on technical groups on Pay to Stay and HVA. Other meetings with DLGG. Fed in ALMO issues and examples. Outcome:
 - Pay to Stay no longer compulsory
 - HVA delayed
 - ALMO concerns fed into fixed term tenancy policy development.
 - ALMOs also excluded from regulations to reduce the influence of councils over RP's.
- Two Meetings with Lord Freud and one with his successor, The Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP – June and Dec 2016
- A meeting with the new Housing Minister The RT Hon Gavin Barwell MP with ARCH – Nov 2016
- Regular correspondence & meetings with MPs and peers and briefings for debates
- Ministerial liaison and parliamentary monitoring throughout the year.
- Hosted the NFA tenant photography exhibition at the House of Commons – Oct 2016
- Maintained good standing on policy platforms - spoke on Welfare Reform, HRA and ALMO issues at CIH, DODs, CAPITA and HQN events. Spoke to Lords, MPs and civil servants on Housing Act and Welfare issues.
- Supported new CIH apprenticeship scheme.
- Promoted the ALMO model in relation to the Government's work on the regeneration of social housing estates, led by a panel of experts headed up by Lord Heseltine. Wrote to Lord Heseltine and put forward a number of LAMO sites for the panel to visit, met with civil servants and attended a site visit at Northwards Housing in April 2016.
- Supported a number of members through reviews, working with their councils where possible to support the ALMO, including visits, telephone calls and information.
- NFA supported Smart Energy roll out programme – meetings and training sessions for ALMO staff and promoted NFA partnership with Smart Energy UK to both internal and external audiences.
- Successfully implemented the 2016 Communications Strategy –
 - Co-ordinated local and national press coverage of both Welfare reform Surveys in 2016. Achieved extensive coverage of joint universal credit survey findings with ARCH 'Universal Credit -One Year on'. In addition to several mentions of the research by Peers and MPs in parliamentary debates, the coverage in Inside Housing was ranked as the second most read article online that week. Further coverage was achieved in: The Guardian, Holyrood Magazine, Welfare Weekly,

- Local Government Lawyer, and IRRV Magazine. This was in addition to articles in all of the housing and local government trade publications.
- Housing and Planning Act: accurate reporting in Lib Dem Voice and the housing and local government trade press of our calls in relation to the Housing and Planning Act. In particular concerns associated with ALMO access to HMRC data, Pay to Stay, and RTB proposals. Briefings issued to MPs (in partnership with PAC) were cited by Peers voicing concerns or raise questions in the House of Lords debates.
 - ALMO model: Four separate feature articles giving positive coverage of the ALMO model, the importance of council housing, and arguments around the lifting of borrowing restrictions have been published during the last three months in Housing Excellence, Housing Magazine and the Local Authority Building Management publications. Interviews were secured with journalists and quotes attributed in each article to the NFA.
 - Social housing new build: Eight articles were published in the local government and housing press for the updated Capital Economics report published in October. The report, and accompanying infographic, received significant engagement on social media on its launch day, being streamed into the Conservative Party Conference twitter hashtag and being retweeted and responded to by the Labour Housing Group.
 - Promoting positive images: There has been an increase in local press coverage of the NFA's national campaign to tackle negative stereotypes. Individual ALMOs achieved coverage in eight regional papers linked to the photography exhibition.
 - National Awards: A number of ALMOs also secured coverage of their placements across various national awards, and the NFA has echoed these accolades via its social media platforms. A summary of the sectors accomplishments will be shown at Annual Conference April 2017.
 - #HousingDay: took place 19th September 2016. The NFA streamed portraits and profiles of all photographs entered by ALMOs into this year's photography award over the course of the day (approx. 50 images). The NFA also engaged with ALMOs participating in the event.
 - Increased NFA profile in both Inside Housing and 24Housing and good relationship developed with the Guardian
 - Social Media: Increasingly tenants and community members are engaging with the NFA twitter account. The photography exhibition at the House of Commons in October further attracted a number of cross party MPs to follow the NFA account on twitter.
 - Press releases and features including regular comment pieces for 24Housing

Key priorities in next 12 months

- Promoting ALMOs as a partner of choice for councils
- Protecting the financial viability of the sector: freedoms and flexibilities on the HRA, highlighting the impact of the roll out of UC and other welfare changes and lobbying against the introduction of the sale of High Value Voids
- Promoting the increase of social/affordable housing supply via ALMOs and LAs.
- Promoting and spreading good practice in Health and Housing.

April 2017