

Policy Update

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE HOUSING WORLD

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Championing
better homes and
communities

Government News

Spring Budget

The Chancellor gave his Spring budget at the beginning of March. In relation to Right to Buy, he announced that the government will increase the cap on the cost of a replacement home that can be funded by Right to Buy receipts from 40% to 50%. However, the 100% retention of sales receipts was not made permanent and only covers the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The Household Support Fund has been extended for six months until September 2024.

DLUHC

DLUHC has published its [March update on the government's work to improve the quality of social housing](#).

Government has published its guidance on second staircases in new residential buildings over 18m in height in [Approved Document B](#).

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)

The new regulatory regime came into force on 1 April. Information relating to the regime can be found on the [RSH's website](#).

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR)

The BSR has launched [a new campaign](#) to tell high-rise tenants about the new building safety rules and how they can hold their landlord to account. It has also launched a new [regular newsletter](#) for tenants

Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman has published its latest [Complaint Handling Failure Order report](#).

The Housing Ombudsman has also opened [applications for its next Resident Panel](#). The deadline for applications is 30 April 2024 (although the HOS reserves the right to close applications early).

[The Complaint Handling Code](#) became statutory from the 1 April 2024.

Other government departments

DESNZ has published the [next round of funding allocations](#) for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (wave 2.2).

DWP has published [guidance on using automation to confirm housing costs](#).

DWP has published the latest [family resources survey](#).

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) has published [a new service that makes it easier for people to explore local statistics](#).

The Work and Pensions Select Committee has published its [report on benefit levels](#).

The House of Commons Library has published a [briefing on social housing trends](#).

Research & Useful Information

CIH has published the [2024 UK Housing Review](#).

The Resolution Foundation has published its latest [Housing Outlook](#) covering the first quarter of the year.

Consultations

The Housing Ombudsman is consulting on its new [Business Plan](#), including the fee regime and a possible move to a polluter pays model. The deadline for responses is this Friday 5 April.

The Housing Ombudsman is consulting on its [power to publish good practice reports](#). The consultation will close on the 21 May. If you have any concerns with the proposals, please let Lisa know (lisa.birchall@almos.org.uk).

** DLUHC's [Competence and Conduct Standard consultation](#) deadline has been extended to Friday 5 April. **

Statistics

DWP has published [statistics](#) on the numbers of households that have had their benefits capped.

DLUHC has published [data on new housing starts](#) for quarter 4 of 2023.

DLUHC has published the [English Housing Survey: local authority housing stock condition modelling, 2020](#).

NFA UPDATE

Events

The NFA [annual conference](#) will take place on 25 April at the Eastside Rooms in Birmingham. Places can be booked on the NFA website, where the programme and speaker information is available.

Meetings

The NFA is hosting the following meetings over the next few months:

- Finance Directors group – 3 April
- Practical aspects of inspection, one off governance meeting – 8 April
- Repairs group – 18 April
- Housing Management meeting – 8 May
- Press & Comms meeting – 21 May
- Chief Officers meeting – 22 May

Consultation responses

The NFA submitted various consultation responses in March:

- [Awaab's Law](#).
- [the Allocation of Social Housing consultation](#).
- [Competence and Conduct standard consultation](#).

We are anticipating the government response to the Electrical safety consultation soon.