

Housing legislation – policy update

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ARCH Tenant Group 8 January 2018



Housing policy/legislation update:

- Part 4 Housing & Planning Act 2016
 - Fixed term tenancies
 - Housing association RTB/High Value Asset sales & levy - Still awaiting regulations
 - West Midlands HA RTB pilot funded by Govt announced in Autumn Budget
 - Councils will not be asked to pay Levy in 2018/19
- Housing White Paper
 - No further announcements on Bespoke Deals or 10/15yr fixed term council housing
- £2bn in AHP for social rented housing
 - “Areas of acute affordability pressure”
 - No details yet of bidding criteria

Housing policy/legislation update:

- Rent policy

- Return to rent increases limited to CPI+1% post 2020 – awaiting consultation on detail policy
- New policy on future funding of supported housing – consultation closes 23 January

- Homelessness Reduction Act

- New Code of Guidance consultation closed 11 Dec – awaiting govt response
- Public Accounts Committee report critical of Government – “a national crisis”
- Call to publish a cross-departmental strategy by June

Housing policy/legislation update:

- Welfare Reform – Autumn Budget announcements
 - From January 2018 those who need it, and who have an underlying entitlement to Universal Credit, will be able to access up to a month's worth of Universal Credit within five days via an interest-free advance. The government will extend the period of recovery of any advance from six months to twelve months. New claimants in December will be able to receive an advance of 50% of their monthly entitlement at the beginning of their claim and a second advance to take it up to 100% in the new year, before their first payment date
 - From February 2018 the government will remove the seven-day waiting period so that entitlement to Universal Credit starts on the first day of application. ARCH has previously called for the seven day waiting period to be removed in our report "Pause for Thought" submitted to the government in August this year.
 - from April 2018 those already on Housing Benefit will continue to receive their award for the first two weeks of their Universal Credit claim
 - The government will also make it easier for claimants to have the housing element of their award paid directly to their landlord but have not set out any further details as yet.

Housing policy/legislation update:

- Autumn Budget 22 November
 - £1bn additional HRA borrowing by end of 2002
 - Available from 2019/20
 - Councils must bid for additional borrowing headroom
 - Available in “areas of high affordability pressures”
 - £400m of loan funding for estate regeneration
 - Awaiting details

Housing policy/legislation update:

- Housing Green Paper
 - Housing Minister's Resident Engagement Meetings ongoing – some tenant group members have attended
 - DCLG officer Roundtables - (16 November)
 - Publication Spring 2018??
 - CIH Review “Rethinking Social Housing”
 - ARCH Board to prepare response
 - Tenant Group views

Housing policy/legislation update:

- Review of Building Regulations
 - Dame Judith Hackitt interim report published 18 December
 - Regulatory system for ensuring fire safety in high rise buildings is not fit for purpose
 - The Interim Report falls short of making specific recommendations for change instead setting out the direction of travel for changes to the regulatory system covering six broad areas:
 - Regulation & guidance
 - Roles & responsibilities
 - Competence
 - Process, compliance and enforcement
 - Residents' voice and raising concerns
 - Quality assurance and products
 - Summit in early 2018 – final report Spring 2018

Housing policy/legislation update:

- HMO reforms

- Extending mandatory licensing

- The current scheme of mandatory licensing for HMO's only applies if properties are 3 or more storeys. This is being changed so flats and one/two-storey properties will be brought within the scope of the mandatory licensing scheme.
 - In addition rooms used for sleeping by 1 adult will have to be no smaller than 6.51 square metres, and those slept in by 2 adults will have to be no smaller than 10.22 square metres. Rooms slept in by children of 10 years and younger will have to be no smaller than 4.64 square metres.

- Extending ban on rogue landlords

- Criminal offences which will automatically ban someone from being a landlord. From April next year, someone convicted of offences such as burglary and stalking can be added to the database of rogue landlords and be barred from renting properties.



More information on the *ARCH* website

Any questions?

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