



ARCH Tenants Group Meetings

Monday 14 May 2018

National Council for Voluntary Organisations

Society Building

8 All Saints Street

London N1 9RL 11.00AM – 3.00PM

Refreshments and arrivals from 10.30am

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Introductions and apologies
2. Minutes of last meeting 26 March 2018
3. Matters arising
4. Feedback from ARCH Executive on key issues - **John Bibby**
5. Update on government policy/ legislation - **John Bibby**
6. Tenant Conference Update – **Jenny Hill**
 - 6.1 Venue
 - 6.2 Speakers
 - 6.3 Community Champions Awards Nominations (circulated)
7. A Voice for Tenants Steering Group (AV4T) - Feedback from a joint meeting (18 April) – **Marlene Price & John Bibby**
8. Providing an effective challenge – using data to hold your landlord to account
9. Updating Tenant Group member profiles
10. Future speakers - suggestions
11. Any Other Business – to be notified to Julie Morton by 12 noon on Friday 4 May 2018

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

12. Tenants' Group Work Plan 2018
13. Next meeting – 18 June & AGM & TG meeting

A light buffet will be available part way through the meeting

Association or Retained Council Housing Ltd

Minutes of the ARCH Tenants' Group Meeting

Held on Monday 26 March 2018 at the Wesley Hotel, 81-103 Euston Street, London

PRESENT:

Tenant Group members:

David Bown (South Derbyshire)
Yaw Boateng (Croydon)
John Ranshaw (Lincoln)
John Bradshaw (Woking)
Chris Gould (Norwich)
Jenny Hill (Runnymede) – Chair
Marlene Price (Wandsworth) – Vice Chair
Les Issacs (Stevenage)
Stella Parkin (Rotherham)
Nick Dainton (East Riding of Yorkshire)
John Kite (Sheffield)
Martyn Lund (Kettering)
Dennis Smith (Tendring)
Brian Tulley (Crawley)
Wyn Marshall (Epping Forest)
Brian Rhodes (Welwyn Hatfield)
Gary Jones (Brighton & Hove).

In attendance:

John Bibby (ARCH)
Matthew Warburton (ARCH)
Gez Kinsella (HouseMark)
Jo Linney (Independent Consultant)

1, WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Welcome to new members and apologies received from:

Eric Shipton (Birmingham City Council)

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (8 January 2018)

Agreed as a true record

3. MATTERS ARISING

1. Stevenage Scrutiny Presentation

Action: Now that the new Housing Director is in place, John will contact South Derbyshire to stress the important of engaging with residents.

2. Meeting with the Housing Minister

Spelling - 'Marlene' and not 'Marleen'

3. Voice of Tenants Meeting

John has spoken to Jenny Osbourne at TPAS, who has confirmed there are no specific issues of confidentiality. Issues raised at these meetings can be brought back for discussion at the ARCH TG

4. FEEDBACK FROM ARCH EXECUTIVE ON KEY ISSUES

The key issues are:

Social Housing Green Paper. This will form most of discussion for Board meeting on 9 April. There was a debate on who was responsible to pick up the cost of cladding, as well as the approach taken by different local authorities to charging tenants and leaseholders for such work. In term of additional funding, John confirmed no additional funds were available from central Government, only an offer to increase the borrowing ceiling for authorities.

Support services contract. The contract with HouseMark expires on 1 January 2019. Whilst the Board have established a working group to re-procure the contract, it is possible to extend the current contact for maximum of two years, providing the current terms and conditions remain unchanged. In current uncertain times, a recommendation for an extension will be made to the Board.

Action: Should any tenants wish to discuss the current support service offered by HouseMark, they should contact Gez

5. UPDATE ON GOVERNMENT POLICY /LEGISLATION

Full details at were provided in the presentation at the last meeting. The high value asset levy still appears to be part of the Government's thinking, with a pilot taking place in Birmingham. However, the levy is not expected to be in place until after the next financial year at the earliest.

Fixed Term Tenancies. This appear to be something the Government want to pursue, but this will need to be part of the debate in Parliament as part of the legislative process.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This was addressed in the recent ARCH Bulletin <http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/news/latest-news/government-launch-overhaul-of-planning-policy.aspx>

The Government have announced a major overhaul of the NPPF, including reforms to the way developers contribute to affordable housing. An ARCH Briefing Paper has been published on the Framework.

http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/media/111768/arch_briefing_1-2018_-_planning_policy_changes.pdf

ACTION: Gez to send out hard copies of the ARCH Briefing Paper to Gary Jones, John Ranshaw and Stella Parkin.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Strengthening consumer redress

The drive for consultation arises post-Grenfell. The Government consultation paper includes an exploration of:

- A single ombudsman - currently varied and disparate
- House builders joining an Ombudsman scheme
- The 'naming and shaming' of poor practice and fines for breaches

Action: ARCH tenants can send views directly to the Government. Tenants may also be consulted by their landlords.

Following consultation with the ARCH TG, the following views were expressed:

- The complaints process should be simple
- Escalation – needs to be quick and ensure effective redress
- The Ombudsman seems remote
- Councils aren't impartial

Action: Individual ARCH TG members' views can be submitted to John via email. Responses can either be general or reflect questions in the consultation paper.

Action: Gez - following the discussion on redress, explore key note speaker option for Tenant Conference.

Action. Gez - invite Housing Ombudsman to September meeting

6.2 Green Paper

A dedicated team of civil servants are working on proposals, but the timetable remains uncertain. The Board are keen to get a paper out in advance of the Green Paper publication to influence its content.

Consultation with Arch TG residents took place based on the 'Rethinking Social Housing' - the CIH workshop model.

Detailed below are the 4 consultation questions and a summary of responses:

- *What is social housing?*

Affordable, meets need & offers security

- *What does social housing do?*

Similar to above, but also “keeps families together”, “builds communities” links to work, sets the standards that the private rented sector needs to match

- *Who is social housing for?*

For people who need it, for everyone who wants it

- *What should the role social housing be?*

The response to this falls out of the answers above

The outcomes of this consultation will be capture, feed in to the Board and form part of ARCH’s overall response to the consultation on the Green Paper

Action: To include at the Conference the workshop topic, “the need of social housing”

7. UPDATE TO BENEFIT TO SOCIETY CAMPAIGN

Jenny gave feedback. Media opportunities were maximised and the launch event was seen as a success, both in terms of challenging stereotypes of tenants, but also raising the profile of ARCH. Politicians of all persuasions were receptive to the message

Council can still pledge support using this link <http://benefittosociety.co.uk/pledge/>

8. TENANT CONFERENCE

Whilst suitable in many respects, Sheffield was not seen as a big enough venue. However, Sheffield were to be thanks for their offer.

Martyn proposed the Kettering Conference Centre, where there was lots of space to meet the potential numbers, as well as offering excellent breakout rooms.

Action: Martyn to discuss this with Kettering BC and get back to Gez. This proposal was made by Jenny and seconded John Ranshaw.

Action: Gez to advise HouseMark’s Events team, who will liaise with Kettering BC to establish suitability, cost and availability of Kettering Conference Centre.

Given that time is elapsing, it was agreed that Jenny should have delegated authority to decide on the venue rather than wait for the May meeting.

Action: Jenny given delegate authority to make decisions on the venue

Action: Revised Community Champions roll to be finalised before presenting to the Board.

9. Welfare Reform – Update

Jo Linney's presentation set out the ambition of DWP Universal Credit (UC) programme - full roll out by end of 2018. Jo also covered:

- Recent changes to UC
- Who can claim UC
- Local partnership for support
- Claim cycle
- Risks (eg, budgeting, evictions increase, bank account requirements, missing payments, etc.).

Action: If there are any addition questions these can be passed to Jo via Gez.

10. Any Other Business

Action: Tenants, including new members, to check their profiles and make sure they are up to date. Any changes to be passed to Gez

Action: Gez to check Gary Jones' profile and feedback

NEXT MEETING

Monday 14 May 2018. Venue to be confirmed.

ITEM 5: LEGISLATIVE/HOUSING POLICY UPDATE

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the government's housing policy & legislative programme.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The ARCH Tenant Group is asked to note this report.

3. Housing White Paper/Housing & Planning Act 2016

- 3.1 At previous Tenant Group meetings the Group have received updates on the Government's proposals set out in the Housing White Paper together with an update on matters outstanding in regard to Regulations and Guidance under Part 4 of the Housing & Planning Act in regard to the proposed Higher Value Asset (HVA) Levy and introduction of fixed term tenancies.

- 3.2 Given that the introduction of the High Value Asset Levy and Fixed Term Tenancies both require debate and approval of the necessary Regulations by both houses of Parliament under the "Affirmative Resolution" process there still remains a doubt as to whether the necessary Parliamentary time can be found and/or whether a minority Conservative Government would command the necessary majority to get the Regulations approved but there is no indication that the Government intend to back away from these policies and withdraw these proposals.

- **Extension of RTB to Housing Associations and the HVA Levy**

- 3.3 The Chancellor in the Autumn Budget announced that a £200million "extended regional pilot" of the RTB for housing association tenants would be introduced in the West Midlands area. This pilot is to be fully funded by Treasury and in a Written Statement to Parliament on 29 March the Housing Minister Dominic Raab confirmed the intention to proceed with introduction of the extended regional pilot in the West Midlands later this year but he gave no indication that the Government intend to abandon the idea of a HVA Levy to fund a full roll-out of the policy.

- **Introduction of fixed term tenancies**

- 3.4 There have been no further announcements on the proposals for introduction of mandatory fixed term tenancies under Part 4 of the Housing & Planning Act and discussions with civil servants suggest that this is currently "with Ministers" awaiting a decision but there is nothing to suggest that there is any intention to abandon this policy. We are currently asking ARCH member councils who have introduced fixed term tenancies to contact us to share their experiences of introducing such policies with a view to arranging a meeting with MHCLG officials: <http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/policy-and-practice/arch-consultations/has-your-council-introduced-fixed-term-tenancies.aspx>

- 3.5 The introduction of the **Secure Tenancies (victims of domestic abuse) Bill** in the House of Lords which would amend changes to the law on secure tenancies for social housing tenants introduced under Part 4 of the Housing & Planning Act 2016 (but not implemented as yet) suggests that the Government have not backed away from the idea of scrapping “old style secure tenancies” and introducing mandatory fixed term tenancies for council tenants.
- 3.6 The Bill contains measures to ensure that lifetime tenants of social homes who are victims of domestic abuse are granted a further lifetime tenancy where:
- They either need to leave or have left their home to escape domestic abuse and are being re-housed by a local authority.
 - They are a joint tenant and wish to remain a tenant of their social home after the perpetrator has left or been removed and the local authority decides to grant them a further sole tenancy in their current home.
- 3.7 The Bill will ensure that when provisions in Schedule 7 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 are brought into force to abolish “old style secure tenancies” and requiring local authorities in England to offer only fixed-term tenancies.
- 3.8 Speaking during the debate at second reading Shadow Housing Minister, Melanie Onn MP, asked when the Government intended to implement the provisions in the Housing & Planning Act 2016 saying:
- “..... I note that the Government have not published plans to go ahead with the change agreed in the 2016 Act, and I wonder whether they have seen sense and have reconsidered the changes that they proposed in 2016. If not, perhaps they will tell us today when they plan to implement the changes.”*
- 3.9 However in responding to the debate the Minister for Housing & Homelessness, Heather Wheeler MP, did not address the question of when the Government intend to bring forward regulations to implement the provisions of Schedule 7 of the Housing & Planning Act to introduce mandatory fixed term tenancies. The Bill was subsequently debated in Committee Stage on 27 March and is now awaiting the Report Stage.
- **Backing council’s to build & RTB receipts flexibilities**
- 3.10 Latest RTB statistics released on the morning of 29 March 2018 show that the Government is failing in its pledge to ensure that additional homes sold under the Reinvigorated RTB introduced in 2012 are replaced on a one for one basis.
- 3.11 Under the Government’s one for one commitment made under the Reinvigorated RTB local authorities have 3 years from the date of the sale of each additional home to provide a replacement home but can only use RTB receipts to a maximum of 30% of the cost of providing a replacement.
- 3.12 The latest figures show that the Government is currently falling short of its commitment to replace dwellings sold under the Reinvigorated RTB by over 1,000 dwellings: There were 17,072 additional RTB sales between Quarter 1 2012/13 and Quarter 3 2014/15 but only 15,981 additional affordable housing units were started or acquired by local authorities, Homes England and the Greater London Authority between Quarter 1 2012/13 and Quarter 3 2017/18.

3.13 Following publication of the RTB figures, Housing Minister, Dominic Raab issued a **Written Ministerial Statement (HCWS 614)** to Parliament on the afternoon of 29 March 2018 under the heading “Social Housing Update”. In the Statement he announced that the Government will consult with the sector on providing greater flexibility around how local authorities can use their RTB (Right to Buy) receipts. He also restated the Government’s commitment “to support local authorities to build more council homes”

3.14 The full text of the Minister’s Statement was as follows (key text underlined):
“Nearly 2 million households have been helped to realise aspirations to own their homes through the Right to Buy since 1980. The Right to Buy gives more people the opportunity to own their home, improves social mobility and provides greater financial security. It brings the benefits of home ownership to those who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

In 2012 the Right to Buy scheme was reinvigorated and the maximum discounts were increased to realistic levels. Of the 90,730 sales since April 2010, 83,272 were under the reinvigorated scheme demonstrating there is a continued substantial demand for the Right to Buy.

Our record on the provision of affordable housing is a strong one with over 357,000 affordable homes delivered since 2010. This included 257,000 homes for rent. Whilst 69,000 local authority homes have been sold since 2010, there have been 127,000 new homes provided for social rent during the same period.

The Government is committed to a step change in council house building. However, statistics released today show that while the number of homes available for social rent has increased, some local authorities have not been building enough Right to Buy replacements to match the pace of their sales. It is clear that local authorities need to increase their rate of delivery of new homes.

Helping to support this, the Chancellor announced in the Autumn Budget that we will raise the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap by a total of up to £1 billion in areas of high affordability pressure for local authorities who are ready to start building new homes. This will offer local authorities in such areas the opportunity to increase council house building to meet the needs of local communities.

Additionally, local authorities are able to bid alongside housing associations, or in partnership with them, for £9 billion Affordable Homes Programme grant funding (2016-21) to deliver a wide range of affordable homes. This includes £2 billion of additional funding announced at Autumn Budget to deliver affordable housing with funding also being made available for social rent in areas of acute affordability pressure. Alongside these programmes, we have also announced that local authorities and housing associations will be able to increase rents by up to CPI +1% from 2020. This will provide a stable investment environment to deliver new affordable homes.

In the Spring Statement we also announced a £1.67bn funding package for London, to build 26,000 more affordable homes that the capital desperately needs. This deal, as part of the government's commitment to actively boost affordable housing supply, will overall see 116,000 more affordable homes in London and bring the total funding for affordable housing in London to £4.8bn. This move is a key part of supporting councils and housing associations in the city to build more homes at rents that are affordable to local people. This additional funding was granted on the condition that some of it will be used to deliver high quality homes for social rent. This will be in addition to continuing to deliver homes for London Affordable Rent, flexible shared ownership and rent to buy. At least two thirds of the homes built with this additional funding must be for rent.

As well as increasing investment in new social housing, we remain committed to the Right to Buy, helping people into home ownership and replacing the homes sold. This year we will be rolling out a pilot of the Right to Buy for Housing Association tenants in the Midlands. We have engaged with local authorities to get a better understanding of the barriers to delivering new homes. To help councils build more homes, we believe there is a case for greater flexibility on the use of receipts from Right to Buy sales. We will consult further with the sector on providing greater flexibility around how local authorities can use their Right to Buy receipts, and how to ensure that we continue to support local authorities to build more council homes. We will consider social housing issues as part of our work on the forthcoming Green Paper.”

3.15 Following the Minister's Statement we have been in touch with officials at MHCLG and have been put in contact with the officials leading on the consultation on RTB receipt flexibilities and hope to meet with them for an informal discussion. An official from MHCLG accepted an invitation to speak at the meeting of the ARCH New Build Network on 16 April.

3.16 The situation regarding “Bespoke Housing Deals”, which was a key element of the Housing White Paper and was also referred to in the 2017 Conservative election manifesto, remains uncertain although a number of “deals” with Elected Mayors and City Regions have been announced including:

- A Greater Manchester Housing Package:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greater-manchester-housing-package>
- A West of England Housing Package:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/west-of-england-housing-package>
- A Oxfordshire Housing Deal:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxfordshire-housing-deal>

3.17 There have been no further announcements or signs of progress on the idea of “Fixed Term Council Housing” set out in the Conservative Party election manifesto which said:

“We will work with (local authorities) to improve their capability and capacity to develop more good homes, as well as providing them with significant low-cost capital funding. In doing so, we will build new fixed-term social houses, which will be sold privately after ten to fifteen years

with an automatic RTB for tenants, the proceeds of which will be recycled into further homes”

4. Allocation of £2bn additional AHP resources for social rented housing

- 4.1 The Prime Minister at the Conservative Party Conference announced plans for what she described as “a new generation of council and housing association homes” by increasing funding for affordable homes by a further £2 billion. However it remains unclear how much of this will be available for council housing. We have been in contact with Homes England to seek a meeting to discuss the prospectus for accessing these funds.

5. £1bn additional HRA Headroom

- 5.1 The Chancellor announced in the Autumn Budget a selected lifting of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing caps “in areas of high affordability pressures” by up to £1bn across England by the end of 2022 subject to some form of bidding process. The government also promised to monitor how authorities respond to this opportunity, and consider whether any further action is needed. Councils will be invited to bid for increases in their caps from 2019-20, up to a total of £1 billion by the end of 2021-22.
- 5.2 The Prospectus and bidding process have not yet been announced and we have been in touch with MHCLG officials to stress the importance of an early announcement to enable local authorities to plan accordingly and ensure that bids for the additional borrowing headroom are not undersubscribed. We understand that an announcement on the bidding criteria may now not be made until after the local council elections next month.

6 Future rent policy post 2020

- 6.1 The announcement on a return to a rent policy of CPI+1% beyond 2020 will be reflected in a direction to the Social Housing Regulator (even though the Rent Standard does not apply to local authorities) and the government promised formal consultations on this in 2018. We await publication of the consultation document. In the meantime the report by Capital Economics which ARCH jointly commissioned with the LGA has been completed and published and will assist in formulating a formal ARCH response to consultations on the new Rent Policy: <http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/news/latest-news/report-calls-for-new-government-thinking-on-affordable-rents.aspx>

7. Welfare Reform

- 7.1 The Government came under increasing pressure to pause and reform the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) and the Chancellor in the Autumn Budget made a number of concessions including:
- 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.

7.2 In a further surprise announcement on 29 March in a Written Statement to Parliament the Work & Pensions Secretary, Esther McVey, announced the government would “amend regulations so that all 18 to 21-year-olds will be entitled to claim support for housing costs in Universal Credit”.

8. Housing Green Paper

8.1 It remains unclear when the Government will publish the Social Housing Green Paper which was expected “in the Spring” but no date has yet been announced for its publication. A separate report has been included on the agenda for this meeting to ensure that ARCH is ready to respond to the Green Paper when published.

8.2 However in advance of the Housing Green Paper the Government have published consultation on “**Strengthening consumer redress in the housing market**” setting out options and seeking ideas for a simpler and better system for dealing with housing complaints so future disputes can be resolved faster and consumers can access swift redress and compensation where it is owed.

8.3 Options considered in the consultation paper include:

- introducing a single housing ombudsman to cover the whole of the housing market both public and private, owner-occupied and rented sectors
- whether home builders should be required to join an ombudsman scheme, following on the government’s commitment to expand redress to tenants of private landlord
- the naming and shaming poor practice to help tackle the worst abuses
- sanctions and financial awards of up to £25,000 and more.

8.4 The consultation paper seeks responses from tenants, leaseholders, landlords, homeowners, and existing ombudsman schemes across 3 key areas:

- the effectiveness of the current complaint process, or if more can be done to improve the experience
- what standard of service should be expected and if a single housing ombudsman is needed
- how to fill the existing gaps in the current system, such as private landlords not having to register with a redress scheme

8.5 The consultation began on 18 February and closed on 16 April 2018. ARCH has submitted a response based on feedback from the ARCH Tenant Group meeting on 26 March 2018 and the ARCH Executive Board meeting on 9 April 2018.

9. Labour Party Review of affordable housing & Green Paper

9.1 Following the announcement by the Government of the intention to publish a Social Housing Green Paper, the opposition Labour Party have published a review of its policy on social housing.

9.2 Over 70 individuals and organisations made submissions to the Review including ARCH – we submitted our ARCH policy statement “*Social Housing We All Be Proud Of*” and on the 19 April 2018 the Labour Party published the initial outcome of its Review in the form of a Green Paper, *Housing for the Many*.

9.3 The document’s central proposal is a commitment to build one million genuinely affordable new homes over 10 years, of which the majority will be for social rent, with the rest at a Living Rent (defined as being no more than one third of average local incomes) or for low-cost home ownership.

9.4 Amongst the key measures proposed in the Labour Party Green Paper are:

- Establishment of a separate Department for Housing with a Secretary of State with Cabinet membership, together with an OBR-style Office for Housing Delivery, with a specific remit to monitor and audit delivery of the affordable housing programme.
- The suspension of the Right-to-Buy with councils only allowed to reinstate it if they had a proven plan to replace homes sold on a one-for-one, like-for-like basis and the proposed Higher Value Asset levy would be scrapped.
- The lifting of caps on HRA borrowing to prudential limits, and a review of the way this borrowing is recorded in the national account;
- Scrapping of the bedroom tax, protect housing benefit for under-21s and a proposal to “pause and fix” Universal Credit;
- A new “Decent Homes 2” programme, to be completed within 5 years, would include a new fire-safety standard to add to the existing four Decent Homes criteria, including retro-fitting sprinklers in all high-rise blocks.

9.5 A number of measures are proposed to strengthen the rights and power of tenants including proposals to:

- Consult on and set up and support an independent national organisation and a Commission to give tenants a stronger voice;
- consult on a duty for housing associations to have tenant representatives on their boards and consider how to improve the representation of council tenants in governance arrangements;
- consult on strengthening the regulatory regime to improve consumer standards and the involvement of tenants;

- reform the system of complaints and redress and consult on plans for a single housing Ombudsman;
- scrap the potential ban on long-term council tenancies;
- clarify the law to make sure that councils can offer homes to local people first without facing challenge in the courts;
- clampdown on illegal sub-letting and right-to-buy fraud;
- look at ways of improving access to legal aid in housing cases; drop the currently-proposed reforms to the funding of supported housing and work with the housing sector on a new plan for long-term funding, while encouraging the provision of more homes for older and disabled people.

9.6 A copy of the Labour Party Affordable Housing Review and Green Paper “Housing for the Many” is available to download from the ARCH website together with an ARCH Briefing Paper summarising the main points: <http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/news/latest-news/labour-party-publish-results-of-their-affordable-housing-review-green-paper.aspx>

10 Independent Review of Building Regulations & Fire Safety

10.1 The interim report of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety led by Dame Judith Hackitt was published on 18 December.

10.2 The work of the Review to date has found that the current regulatory system for ensuring fire safety in high rise buildings is not fit for purpose. This applies throughout the life cycle of a building, both during construction and occupation, and is a problem connected both to the culture of the construction industry and the effectiveness of the regulators.

10.3 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

10.4 The Review Team set up a number of Working Groups to take forward the recommendations in the Interim Report and having been invited to nominate representatives to sit on the Working Groups ARCH was advised that the nominations were “oversubscribed” and along with a number of other organisations in the sector (including the NFA and London Councils) we were not offered a place on any of the working groups.

10.5 However following further representations we secured a meeting with the Review Team on the afternoon of 9 April at MHCLG Marsham Street to discuss the sorts of ideas that have been developed and bring an ARCH perspective to the work undertaken by the Review Team. John Bibby, Brian Reilly

Wandsworth), Janet Sharpe (Sheffield) & Rob James (Birmingham) attended on behalf of ARCH.

10.6 At the meeting we stressed the following points:

1. The confusion and overlap between the HHSRS and the Fire Safety Order and our view that the Fire Service Authority should take the lead role as national regulator in application of fire safety standards across all sectors rather than rely on application by local authority Environmental Health teams of the HHSRS
2. The need for a clear line on the undisputed safety benefits of retrofitting of sprinkler systems and the need for consistency both within and across the sectors to bring older high rise buildings up to the current building regulation standards of new high rise buildings which are required to be fitted with sprinkler systems for the safety of residents. Linking this strongly to a risk based assessment which majors on the profile and vulnerability of residents across social housing high rise stock would be helpful and avoiding ambiguity of guidance whereby neighbouring councils and other registered providers of social housing can adopt different approaches to retro fitting sprinklers in pretty much identical blocks making some tenants much safer than others.
3. The need for large scale fire safety testing of cladding systems prior to installation (rather than reliance on “desk top” assessments) and the duty to make the results of such tests available to residents in recognition that residents will not be reassured and will probably object to any refurbishment works unless proposed cladding systems have been proven to be safe in such fire safety tests (We note that subsequent to our meeting, MHCLG have issued consultation on this matter and we will be responding accordingly) .
4. The need for pro-active provision of information (and access to information) for residents on FRA, remedial works & timescales for completion of such works, duty holders and how & who to complain to.
5. The need for absolute clarity of primary responsibility for the management of fire safety between the local authority and any Tenant Management Organisation or Arms-Length Management Organisation involved in the management or maintenance of a high rise building and an over-riding legislative duty on leaseholders to co-operate on fire safety works and access (recognising that reliance on existing leases is insufficient).

11. Review of NPPF

- 11.1 The Government have announced a major overhaul of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) including reforms to developer contributions to affordable housing & infrastructure.
- 11.2 The planning reforms were announced by the Prime Minister on 5 March 2018 and the Government claim the reforms will provide a comprehensive approach for planners, developers and councils to build more homes, more quickly, in the places people want to live. Councils and developers will be required to

work with community groups to ensure those affected by new developments will have a say on how they look and feel.

11.3 The Government say that the reforms focus on the following areas:

Greater responsibility: Local authorities will have a new housing delivery test focused on driving up the numbers of homes actually delivered in their area, rather than numbers planned for. Developers will also be held to account for delivering the commitments, including affordable housing and the infrastructure needed to support communities.

Maximising the use of land: More freedom will be given to local authorities to make the most of existing brownfield land to build homes that maximise density. Redundant land will be encouraged such as under utilised retail or industrial space for homes, with more flexibilities given to extend upwards on existing blocks of flats and houses as well as shops and offices. The Government say this will mean more homes can be built while maintaining strong protection for the Green Belt.

Maintaining strong protections for the environment: Ensuring developments result in a net gain to the environment where possible and increases the protection given to ancient woodland so they are not lost for future generations.

Ensuring the right homes are built: Delivering more affordable homes, including sites dedicated for first time buyers, build to rent homes with family friendly tenancies, guaranteed affordable homes for key workers and adapted homes for older people.

Higher quality and design: Introducing new quality standards so well designed new homes are built in places people are proud to live in and live next door to.

More transparent planning process: Local authorities will be encouraged to work together and continue to close the gap between planning permissions granted and homes built. A new standardised approach to assessing housing need will be introduced with new measures to make the system of developer contributions clearer, simpler and more robust, so developers understand what's expected of them and will be in no doubt that councils will hold them to their commitments.

11.4 The proposed reforms are set out in two consultations which will run until 10 May 2018 to seek views on “reforming developer contributions to affordable housing and infrastructure” and the “text of the National Planning Policy Framework”

11.5 ARCH Policy Adviser, Matthew Warburton, has produced an ARCH Briefing Paper on the proposed reforms: <http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/news/latest-news/government-launch-overhaul-of-planning-policy.aspx>

Community Champion Award



Our 2018 Tenants' Conference will again include the **ARCH Community Champion Award**. This is a special ARCH award to recognise the dedication, willingness, inspiration and devotion that our tenants freely give to others and it is hoped that this can motivate others or give them examples of things that they can do in their own community.

Note that the deadline for submitting entries for this Award is **Monday 13th August 2018** and the presentation will take place during the conference. Please register your interest and request an entry form by emailing Bethany Hall at bethany.hall@housemark.co.uk where entries should be submitted. You are eligible to apply if you are a tenant, a member of the tenant's household or if you are contributing to the HRA.

This award is decided by the ARCH judging panel based on entries received from ARCH members. It recognizes the individual who has dedicated their time to improving social housing. They don't necessarily have to be part of a formal panel, group, committee or forum to enter.

You are eligible to apply if you are a tenant, a member of the tenant's household or if you are contributing to the HRA.

ARCH Awards 2018 entry form questions.

The following questions could be used to help you in presenting your candidate's proposal. Our Judges will be looking for evidence of positive practice demonstrating your tenant is actively involved in making changes in their community.

Name of Entrant

Council

Community Champion Award



Your relationship to the Tenant

Your email Address

Your contact mobile/phone number

1. Provide a brief summary of why you are nominating your tenant?

2. How has the tenant's work made an impact on their local community? How has their work made a difference?

3. Please provide information about the tenant you are nominating for the Community Champion award

4. What challenges has the tenant faced and how did they overcome them? (200 words maximum)

Community Champion Award



If you have any queries, please contact Bethany Hall Tel: [024 7646 0500](tel:02476460500) or bethany.hall@housemark.co.uk

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Item 12: Work Plan ARCH Tenants' Group 2018

Work stream	Jan- March 2018	April – June 2018	July- Sept 2018	Oct –Dec 2018
1. Meetings of Tenants Group	8 January 26 March	14 May 18 June (AGM)	3 September – lunch with Exec & afternoon meeting	5 November
2. Chair & Vice Chair attending ARCH Executive meetings	15 January	9 April 21 May	9 July 3 September –see above	12 November
3. Consultation on policy, legislation and regulation to feed into ARCH responses	At meetings and by email	Consultation on Housing Green Paper	Consult on HouseMark support services contract specification.	At meetings and by email
4. Tenants Conference Date: tbc - Sept 2018	Liaising with HM Event Manager Working Group set up Venue identified Time scheduling for conference activities	Working Group phone conference Visit venue with Event Manager - May Programme planning – May/June	Working Group activity Final planning with event Manager - Sept Conference - Sept	Feedback at 5 Nov meeting Promotion of outcomes from conference
5. Presentations to Tenants Group	Scrutiny and the future resident engagement agenda (Stevenage BC) – 8 January Welfare reform Update (Jo Linney) - 26 March	Review of consumer redress issues - Housing Ombudsman – 14 May or 18 June meetings. Providing an effective challenge - using data to empower tenants – 14 May	Attending Exec meeting as observers	

Item 12: Work Plan ARCH Tenants' Group 2018

	<p>Bloggging & Vlogging – cascading Benefit to Society training – 26 March</p>			
<p>6. ARCH seminars attendance by Chair/ Vice Chair and members of Group if place booked for them by their Council</p>	<p>Topics and dates to be confirmed for the year. Some sessions cancelled due to limited take up</p>			
<p>7. Communication and marketing</p>	<p>On-going bulletin articles fortnightly</p> <p>Website pages updated by GK</p> <p>Benefit to Society campaign – photos added to website</p>	<p>On-going bulletin articles fortnightly</p> <p>Sharing what your council is doing</p> <p>Benefit to Society campaign – implement marketing plan</p>	<p>On-going bulletin articles fortnightly</p> <p>Sharing what your council is doing</p> <p>Publicity around Tenants Conference in September</p>	<p>On-going bulletin articles fortnightly</p> <p>Sharing what your council is doing</p>