



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Review of Social Housing Regulation

Call for Evidence



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If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

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Scope of the Call for Evidence

Topic of this Call for Evidence:	This Call for Evidence seeks information to support the review of the regulatory regime for social housing, which was announced in the Social Housing Green Paper.
Scope of this document:	This Call for Evidence seeks information to support the review of the regulatory regime for social housing.
Geographical scope:	This Call for Evidence relates to England only.
Impact Assessment:	The purpose of this Call for Evidence is to gather evidence to inform the review of the regulatory regime for social housing. Any legislative changes brought forward as a result of this review would be subject to appropriate assessment.

Basic Information

Body/bodies responsible for the Call for Evidence:	The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Duration:	This Call for Evidence will last for 12 weeks from Tuesday 14 August 2018 to Tuesday 6 November 2018.
Enquiries:	For any enquiries about this Call for Evidence please contact socialhousingreview@communities.gsi.gov.uk
How to respond:	<p>Responses should be submitted by online survey:</p> <p>https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/socialhousingregulation</p> <p>We strongly encourage responses via the online survey, particularly from organisations with access to online facilities such as local authorities, representative bodies and individual landlords. Using the online survey greatly assists our analysis of the responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of the issues raised for each question.</p> <p>Should you be unable to respond online we ask that you complete the pro forma found towards the end of this document at page 13. Additional information or evidence can be provided in addition to your completed pro forma.</p> <p>In these instances you can email your pro forma to:</p> <p>socialhousingreview@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p>

Or send to:

Affordable Housing Regulation and Investment Division
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Third Floor – Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Call for Evidence

Introduction

1. The Social Housing Green Paper published today offers a new deal for social housing. It contains a series of proposals to improve residents' experience of their homes and their communities. A robust regulatory framework is essential to this by ensuring that existing homes are safe, of good quality, and that landlords deliver the right services. It is also crucial in attracting investment to build new social housing so that hardworking people and our more vulnerable citizens have access to safe, decent and affordable homes.
2. The last review of regulation was carried out nearly 8 years ago¹. Since then, there have been significant changes in the social housing sector. It is important the regulatory framework is able to adapt to these changes and has the appropriate tools it needs to ensure the sector remains well-regulated.
3. We announced in the Green Paper our intention to carry out a review of the regulatory framework for social housing to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, reflects changes in the sector and drives a focus on delivering a good service for residents. The review will have three key objectives:
 - a. to rebalance the relationship between social housing landlords² and residents, setting out the level of service residents should expect and clarifying how they can hold their landlord to account when they are not delivering;
 - b. to ensure private registered providers³ of social housing are well governed and financially viable – reflecting the changing business models and levels of risk in the sector; and
 - c. to make sure the Regulator of Social Housing (“the Regulator”) has effective powers to deliver the first two objectives and that there are clear lines of accountability between the Regulator and Parliament.

Why are we calling for evidence?

4. The regulatory regime is designed to ensure residents of social housing enjoy a secure home and quality service from their landlords, and that we continue to grow the sector so that there are safe and decent homes for everyone who needs one. This Call for Evidence is intended to gather information about how well the regulatory regime is delivering this vision - what works well, what does not and what drives behaviour.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-social-housing-regulation--2> (October 2010)

² Social housing landlords are local authorities who own housing and private organisations that are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

³ Private registered providers include housing associations, registered charities and “for profit” landlords.

5. Along with the questions posed in the Green Paper, it marks the start of a process of on-going engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, that will include technical workshops, a working group and sounding board to ensure we are as fully informed as possible about what change is needed and how that should be delivered.
6. By the end of the review, we will have a clear and demonstrable understanding of how the regulatory regime should change to deliver the objectives set out in the Green Paper, and how that should be delivered. We want residents to have a good experience of living in social housing. We want landlords to be financially robust and well run and to have faith in the regime. And we want lenders to be confident in the sector so that they continue to invest in the sector. We will consider a range of measures – including bringing forward changes to primary legislation, if necessary.

Scope of the review

7. The review of regulation will focus on the way social housing is regulated. We will look at whether the statutory objectives set the right direction for the Regulator, and whether the Regulator has the tools it needs to deliver against those objectives, including its powers to set standards and its monitoring, reporting and enforcement powers. It will also look into whether the right processes are in place with regard to the transparency and accountability of the Regulator.
8. The review will not include areas where the Government has recently set policy or legislated – for example, arrangements for the insolvency of a housing association or the setting of rents.

Principles of Regulation

Why regulate social housing?

9. The review of regulation starts from the basis that social housing should continue to be regulated. The rationale for regulation is two-fold:
 - To protect and empower residents. There are over 4 million social homes in England. Residents in these homes have limited choices on who is their landlord. Regulation therefore provides a safety net which sets the minimum standard of service residents should demand and how landlords can be held to account if they fail to deliver. Their landlords also need to be well run and financially viable to maintain the homes they own.
 - To secure both public and private investment to enable delivery of new homes. We invest significant public funds in social housing. The Affordable Homes Programme is over £9bn and will deliver over 250,000 new affordable homes by March 2022, the vast majority of this funding goes to private registered providers. As well as public funding there is over £70bn of private finance invested in private registered providers to deliver new homes. Private registered providers will continue to require access to private finance if they are to contribute towards the Government's housing ambitions of building 300,000 homes per annum. Ensuring private registered providers of social housing are

well run, use their assets effectively and manage risk well encourages investment into the sector and the delivery of new homes for future residents.

10. We consider this is clear rationale for the continued regulation of social housing.

The legislative framework

11. The overarching regulatory framework is set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008⁴ (as amended). At the heart of the system is an independent Regulator. Parliament has given the Regulator a set of fundamental objectives against which it is required to deliver. The Regulator has statutory powers to set outcome-focused standards covering economic and consumer issues, and has a range of monitoring and enforcement powers to enforce these standards. A more detailed explanation of the objectives and standards, and how the regulatory framework operates, is set out in Annex 1.

Q1. We would welcome information on whether the current statutory objectives, and monitoring and enforcement powers are right, whether they need amending, and if so, how.

Approach to regulation

12. Regulation is an essential part of delivering the economic and social outcomes for social housing we want to achieve, and it is important that it is delivered effectively. Last year the Cabinet Office carried out a review of all regulators across Government⁵ and concluded that effective models of regulation focused on outcomes and operated on the basis of “regulated self-assurance”. This means avoiding unnecessary prescription on how providers operate and instead putting greater emphasis on the provider being accountable to their customers for the delivery of good quality services. Regulators should still have considerable regulatory and enforcement powers, including some powers of inspection, but such inspections should be proportionate and risk-based, with a focus on intervening where there is consistently poor delivery of service.

13. Many of these principles are embedded in the existing regulatory framework for social housing. The Regulator delivers against its statutory objectives by publishing standards setting out its expectation of landlords, the level of service their residents should expect and what a well-run and viable organisation looks like. Legislation requires the Regulator to operate in a way that minimises interference and (so far as is possible) is proportionate, consistent, transparent and accountable⁶.

Q2. We would welcome information on whether the “regulated self-assurance” approach to regulation of social housing is the right approach. If not, how should it be changed?

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/17/contents>

⁵ *Regulatory Futures Review*, Cabinet Office, January 2017, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-futures-review>

⁶ Section 92k(5) of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

Economic Regulation

The social housing sector

14. The social housing sector is large and varied. It consists of over 166 local authorities, which own a total of 1.6m social homes; and over 1400 private registered providers, which own 2.4m properties⁷. Private registered providers are a diverse group of landlords ranging from very large organisations with large building programmes, to very small organisations embedded in individual communities. Over 95% of these 2.4m homes are owned and serviced by around 20% of the larger providers. In contrast almost 80% of providers own fewer than 1,000 homes. A number of landlords have charitable status and are therefore driven by their charitable objectives.

Approach to economic regulation

15. The Regulator takes a proactive, risk-based approach to economic regulation⁸, which applies by law only to private registered providers (see Annex 1). This allows it to focus its resources on those landlords which own the most homes and are organisationally more complex, while still providing a basic level of oversight for all landlords. Such an approach enables the Regulator to identify and help resolve financial and governance problems, using its range of regulatory and enforcement powers as appropriate, which helps protect people's homes. It also helps secure lender confidence so that they invest in the sector at competitive rates, and ensures organisations are financially viable and well run.

16. We are committed to retaining strong economic regulation, and we are also clear that we will not introduce measures that risk the reclassification of private registered providers as public sector organisations.

Q3. We would welcome information on the effectiveness of the current approach to economic regulation.

The social housing sector is evolving

17. The social housing sector is not a single or static entity. It is diverse and constantly changing. Since the last review of social housing, we have seen at least four key trends:

- a. increasing exposure to the housing market. The private registered providers that have continued to develop homes are more reliant on revenue from building homes for private sale and other market activities to cross-subsidise development of social housing. Over 50% of new social or affordable homes built by private registered providers are subsidised by market sales. However, this model now means that they are exposed to sales risk, and the cyclical nature of the housing market and wider economic pressures, in a way they were not previously;

⁷ MHCLG Live Table 104

⁸

- b. mergers of housing associations have resulted in some landlords becoming more complex organisations to run. The largest housing association now has over 120,000 affordable homes;
- c. new “for profit” providers entering the sector, which have different models of behaviour to “traditional” not-for-profit housing associations and hence operate in a different way from them; and
- d. the emergence of new business models, including landlords who exclusively lease rather than own all their properties.

18. The regulatory framework needs to be able to adapt to these and any new changes in a way that ensures the financial health of the sector remains robust.

Q4. We would welcome information on any areas of the economic regulatory framework which might not work effectively or provide sufficient oversight when meeting the challenges of the evolving sector.

Consumer Regulation

19. Every resident has the right to expect their home to be safe and decent and to receive a good service from their landlord. As explained in the Green Paper, the legislation is clear that where a landlord (whether a private registered provider or local authority) breaches a consumer standard, the Regulator can only use its regulatory and enforcement powers if there is or may be a “serious detriment” to existing or potential residents⁹. The Regulator interprets this as meaning where there is “serious actual harm or serious potential harm to tenants”¹⁰. This is a higher threshold for regulatory intervention than for breach of economic standards. In addition, the Regulator’s approach to regulation of the consumer standards is reactive¹¹, in that it responds to issues as they emerge, and it does not monitor landlords’ performance on consumer standards.

20. The Green Paper sets out a number of specific proposals with regard to consumer regulation. These are set out at Annex 2. We would welcome any additional information you may want to provide on the approach to consumer regulation as part of this Call for Evidence.

The Regulatory System as a Whole

21. Whilst economic and consumer regulation are set out as individual objectives in legislation, it is clear that for the regulatory system to work, they must mutually reinforce each other and work together in harmony. It is in the interests of residents

⁹ Section 198A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

¹⁰ See

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698332/Regulating_the_Standards_April_2018.pdf - Page 28

¹¹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698332/Regulating_the_Standards_April_2018.pdf

that their housing provider is well run and financially sound to be sure that their homes are secure for the long term and the landlord is able to fund the repairs and support services they need. It is in the interests of landlords that residents are satisfied and well supported in order to deliver against their charitable purposes and they meet their obligations as social housing providers. It is in the interest of lenders that there is a robust regulatory framework in place to give them confidence in the security of their investments so that they can continue to lend at competitive rates.

22. In our engagement with residents from across the country as part of the work on the Green Paper, it has become clear that although many residents were satisfied with housing management services they received, some were not and a significant proportion reported very poor experiences. As a result, the Green Paper is clear that we will be strengthening consumer regulation, but it is crucial in doing so that economic regulation remains robust.

23. Consumer and economic regulation need to work together in one system – as we make changes to one side we need to consider the other. We would therefore welcome information on any issues that we should bear in mind as the review moves forward.

Q5. We would welcome information on any specific issues that we should be aware of as the review progresses, to ensure that we retain a coherent regulatory framework.

24. We want to make sure that the Regulator has the right enforcement tools available to ensure compliance with both economic and consumer regulation. The Green Paper sets out our ambition to improve the enforcement tools available to the Regulator to intervene where there is a consistently inadequate level of service to residents.

Q6. We would welcome information on any risks arising from improving the approach to consumer regulation enforcement.

Relationship with the Hackitt Review

25. Dame Judith Hackitt's Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety¹² called for major reform and culture change in the construction and fire safety industries. Dame Judith's Final Report recommended that we establish a new regulatory framework focused, in the first instance, on multi-occupancy, higher-risk residential buildings that are 10 storeys or taller. Her report also suggested that we consider whether some of her recommendations should apply to other buildings as well. The Review concluded that the new system needed to have greater transparency and clear accountability to ensure that residents are safe and feel safe in their homes.

26. We are committed to bringing forward legislation that delivers meaningful and lasting change, creating an improved system of scrutiny for building safety and giving residents a much stronger voice as part of this. We are considering the recommendations made in Dame Judith's report and how to implement them. An implementation plan will be published in the autumn. However, we have taken the

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-building-regulations-and-fire-safety-hackitt-review>

opportunity to set out some proposals in response that address issues raised by Dame Judith within the Social Housing Green Paper.

27. There are clear overlaps between the Dame Judith review and the regulatory framework for social housing. We are keen to make sure that regulatory regimes work effectively together – including through close information sharing between regulatory bodies – and avoid duplication wherever possible.

Q7. What are your views on risks and opportunities presented by the regulatory regime suggested by Dame Judith Hackitt and how that should work with social housing regulation?

Any Other Suggestions for Improvement

28. Finally, we would welcome any additional comments you have on the effectiveness of the existing regulatory framework (including any additional information you may want to provide on the approach to consumer regulation), and whether you have any further ideas of what changes you would like to make.

Q8. We would welcome any further information that might inform the review of the regulatory framework.

Questions

About You

Are the views expressed on this consultation your own personal views or an official response from an organisation you represent?

- Personal view
- Organisational response

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the option which best describes your organisation

- Local authority
- Housing association
- Other registered provider of social housing
- Resident association or tenant panel
- Financial sector
- Trade association or interest group
- Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)
- Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)
- Other (please specify)

Please provide the name of your organisation

Principles of Regulation

Q1. We would welcome information on whether the current statutory objectives, and monitoring and enforcement powers are right, whether they need amending, and if so, how.

Q2. We would welcome information on whether the “regulated self-assurance” approach to regulation of social housing is the right approach. If not, how should it be changed?

Economic Regulation

Q3. We would welcome information on the effectiveness of the current approach to economic regulation.

Q4. We would welcome information on any areas of the economic regulatory framework which might not work effectively or provide sufficient oversight when meeting the challenges of the evolving sector.

The Regulatory System as a Whole

Q5. We would welcome information on any specific issues that we should be aware of as the review progresses, to ensure that we retain a coherent regulatory framework.

Q6. We would welcome information on any risks arising from improving the approach to consumer regulation enforcement.

Relationship with the Hackitt Review

Q7. What are your views on risks and opportunities presented by the regulatory regime suggested by Dame Judith Hackitt and how that should work with social housing regulation?

Any Other Suggestions for Improvement

Q8. We would welcome any further information that might inform the review of the regulatory framework.

Annex A – The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing

Who is regulated?

The regulatory framework applies to all “registered providers” of social housing. Local authorities who own homes are automatically registered and there is a registration process for private sector providers (such as housing associations, registered charities and “for profit” landlords) and bodies such as Arms Length Management Organisations.

What is the purpose of regulation?

Parliament has set the Regulator two fundamental objectives:

a) an **economic regulation objective**, which is:

- to ensure that registered providers of social housing are financially viable and properly managed and perform their functions efficiently and economically;
- to support the provision of social housing sufficient to meet reasonable demands (including by encouraging and promoting private investment in social housing);
- to ensure that value for money is obtained from public investment in social housing;
- to ensure that an unreasonable burden is not imposed (directly or indirectly) on public funds; and
- to guard against the misuse of public funds.

b) a **consumer regulation objective**, which is:

- to support the provision of social housing that is well-managed and of appropriate quality;
- to ensure that actual or potential tenants of social housing have an appropriate degree of choice and protection;
- to ensure that tenants of social housing have the opportunity to be involved in its management and to hold their landlords to account; and
- to encourage registered providers of social housing to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the areas in which the housing is situated.

What are expectations of landlords?

The principal regulatory tool is a set of **seven outcome-based standards** to deliver these objectives. This comprises:

Economic Standards

- **Governance and Financial Viability Standard (April 2015)** – ensure effective governance arrangements that deliver their aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner. Manage their resources effectively to ensure their viability is maintained while ensuring that social housing assets are not put at undue risk;
- **Value for Money Standard (April 2018)** – putting in place and delivering a comprehensive and strategic approach to achieving value for money in meeting their organisation’s objectives. This includes maintaining a robust assessment of the performance of all their assets and resources, managing their resources economically, efficiently and effectively to provide quality services and homes, and planning for and delivering on-going improvements in value for money; and
- **Rent Standard (April 2015)** – charging rents in accordance with the Government’s rent policy.

Consumer Standards

- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard (July 2017)** – which includes a requirement for landlords to provide choices and effective communication of information for residents on the delivery of all standards, and to have a clear, simple and accessible complaints procedure;
- **Home Standard (April 2012)** – requires homes to be safe, decent and kept in a good state of repair;
- **Tenancy Standard (April 2012)** – requires registered providers to let their home in a fair, transparent and efficient way, and enable tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy; and
- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard (April 2012)** – requires registered providers to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe; help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in areas where they own homes; and work in partnership with others to tackle anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods where they own homes.

How are the standards monitored and enforced?

Legislation requires the Regulator to carry out its responsibilities in a way that minimises interference and (so far as is possible) is proportionate, consistent,

transparent and accountable.

Consistent with this approach, the operation of the regulatory framework is based on the principle of “co-regulation”. This means that the Regulator regards Boards of organisations and local Councillors as responsible to their residents for ensuring that the business and its services are managed effectively and that providers comply with the requirements of all regulatory standards.

The Regulator is asked to adopt a proactive, risk-based approach to enforcing the economic standards, which apply only to private registered providers. In contrast, the Regulator’s role in enforcing the four consumer standards – which apply to both local authorities and private registered providers – is limited. It may only intervene for a breach of a consumer standard if it thinks there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a landlord’s failure to meet a consumer standard has caused, or may cause serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants. The Regulator may also intervene where it considers there is a significant risk that if no action is taken, the failure to meet a standard will result in serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants. The Regulator interprets ‘serious detriment’ as actual or potential harm to tenants and where there has been systemic failure.

Where there is a breach of standards, the Regulator will initially work with the landlord to improve its performance. However, if this approach doesn’t yield results or the landlord refuses to cooperate then the Regulator has a range of other powers it can use.

What powers of enforcement does the regulator have?

Should there be a breach of the standards, the Regulator has a range of regulatory and enforcement powers available. The key powers are set out below.

Power	Applicable to private registered providers^a	Applicable to local authority landlords
Survey to assess the condition of stock	x	x
Inspection to establish compliance with the regulatory requirements	x	x
Hold an inquiry where it suspects landlord mismanagement	x	x
Issue an Enforcement Notice	x	x
Issue fines	x	
Order payment of compensation to a resident	x	
Appointment of manager to improve performance of the landlord	x	
Transfer land to another provider to improve management of land (following an inquiry)	x ^b	
Suspension and removal of officers in cases of mismanagement (during or after inquiry)	x ^c	

Appoint a new officer to address service failure and improve management of company	x ^c	
Appoint an adviser to improve performance		x
Requirement to tender some or all of its management functions	x	x
Requirement to transfer management of housing to a specified provider	x	x

a) This includes registered charities, housing associations and "for profit" private sector landlords, b) Does not apply to registered charities, c) Applies to not-for-profit providers only

Annex B – Green Paper Questions on Consumer Regulation

<i>Speeding up the complaints process</i>
How can we best ensure that landlords’ processes for dealing with complaints are fast and effective?
How can we best ensure safety concerns are handled swiftly and effectively within the existing redress framework?
<i>Arming residents with information on landlord performance</i>
Do the proposed key performance indicators cover the right areas? Are there any other areas that should be covered? Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators every year? Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators to the Regulator? What more can be done to encourage landlords to be more transparent with their residents?
Do you think that there should be a better way of reporting the outcomes of landlords’ complaint handling? How can this be made as clear and accessible as possible for residents?
Is the Regulator best placed to prepare key performance indicators in consultation with residents and landlords? What would be the best approach to publishing key performance indicators that would allow residents to make the most effective comparison of performance?
<i>Strengthening choice over services</i>
Are there any other innovative ways of giving social housing residents greater choice and control over the services they receive from landlords?
<i>Understanding what a good service looks like</i>
Does the Regulator have the right objective on consumer regulation? Should any of the consumer standards change to ensure that landlords provide a better service for residents in line with the new key performance indicators proposed, and if so how?
Should the Regulator be given powers to produce other documents, such as a Code of Practice, to provide further clarity about what is expected from the consumer standards?

Strengthening regulation of consumer standards

Is “serious detriment” the appropriate threshold for intervention by the Regulator for a breach of consumer standards? If not, what would be an appropriate threshold for intervention?

Should the Regulator adopt a more proactive approach to regulation of consumer standards? Should the Regulator use key performance indicators and phased interventions as a means to identify and tackle poor performance against these consumer standards? How should this be targeted?

Should the Regulator have greater ability to scrutinise the performance and arrangements of local authority landlords? If so, what measures would be appropriate?

Are the existing enforcement measures adequate? If not, what additional enforcement powers should be considered?

Is the current framework for local authorities to hold management organisations such as Tenant Management Organisations and Arms Length Management Organisations to account sufficiently robust? If not, what more is needed to provide effective oversight of these organisations?

What further steps, if any, should Government take to make the Regulator more accountable to Parliament?

Embedding good customer service and neighbourhood management

What key performance indicator should be used to measure whether landlords are providing good neighbourhood management?

How are landlords working with local partners to tackle anti-social behaviour? What key performance indicator could be used to measure this work?

Annex C – Personal Data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name, address and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gsi.gov.uk

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, MHCLG may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

4. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation.

5. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/>, or telephone 0303 123 1113.

6. The data you provide directly will be stored by Survey Monkey on their servers in the United States. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in terms of data protection will not be compromised by this.

7. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.

8. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system. Data provided to Survey Monkey will be moved from there to our internal systems by April 2019.

About this Call for Evidence

This Call for Evidence document and the Call for Evidence process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this Call for Evidence, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the EU General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included in Annex C.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this Call for Evidence has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#).