



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group

Invitation to submit Expressions of Interest



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## **Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group**

The purpose of the Best Practice Group will be to help identify how landlords and residents can best work together in ensuring that buildings are and remain safe to live in.

Dame Judith Hackitt's '*Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety*' was published on 17 May 2018. Government is committed to bringing forward legislation that delivers a far-reaching overhaul of the system, and gives residents a much stronger voice in an improved system of fire safety.

The Government published, '*A new deal for social housing*' on 14 August 2018. Paragraph 33 outlines the Government's commitment to establish a pilot with a small group of social landlords which will work closely with residents to develop best practice in communicating and engaging with residents on safety issues. This pilot will be known as the Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group ("Best Practice Group").

'*A new deal for social housing*' asks "How can residents best be supported in this important role of working with landlords to ensure homes are safe?" (Question 1). We will ensure that we feed in responses to this question to the Group so they can reflect these in the Terms of Reference and use them as a basis for the options to be taken forward.

The aims of the Best Practice Group will be to use social sector expertise in engaging closely with residents to develop best practice in the fields of engagement and communication to influence policy development and foster culture change specifically on building and fire safety issues.

Specifically, the Group will develop:

- Best practice in standards for communicating critical building safety information to residents with diverse needs to shape the development of guidance;
- Best practice in ensuring residents who wish to are able to access more detailed building safety information;
- Best practice in involving residents in decision-making and the development of resident engagement strategies;
- Best practice in ensuring concerns are listened to and that robust systems for responding to safety concerns are in place; and
- Options for how residents will be made aware of their role in ensuring their own safety.

The Group will comprise social landlords to build on the sector expertise. We will be particularly interested in applications from social landlords which include proposals to nominate a resident to be part of the Group who will play a key role in the development of the proposals. The Group will also include two fire and building safety experts to provide advice to the Group. The Chair will have relevant background to support and guide the Group during its work.

We will work with the Group to develop its work programme through from initial development. We anticipate that this may result in sharing best practice across the sector through the use of buddying, peer-mentoring schemes or workshops. We are planning for the first meeting to be in January 2019, with a report to MHCLG Ministers prepared by June 2019. There may be scope to extend the life of the Group for a further six months if required to develop proposals further.

Equalities analysis will be factored into the development of the Group's ideas, delivered with support from the Department if required.

MHCLG will provide administrative, policy and drafting support as required.

## **Expressions of Interest**

We are inviting Expressions of Interest from social landlords who are interested in taking part in the Best Practice Group, with a view to commencing work in January 2019 with the aim to produce a report on its findings and recommendations to Ministers by June 2019.

Participating organisations would be required to attend monthly meetings usually held at MHCLG offices at 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF with collaborative fieldwork to be undertaken at a pace agreed with the Chair and the Department.

MHCLG would like the Best Practice Group to reflect the diversity of the sector and invite applications from all social landlords and social housing management organisations, including resident-led organisations. We would be particularly interested in hearing from landlords who manage high-rise, complex buildings or sheltered accommodation, as well as those who manage market rent housing who can offer both a social and private sector engagement perspective.

Applicants are asked to submit a statement to the Department (using the application form provided). Successful applicants will demonstrate innovation and successful performance in the fields of resident engagement and/or communication. We are particularly interested in those innovations that have the potential to be deliverable at scale.

We want to see how organisations intend to include their residents in this work, for example ensuring that they are involved in the design and evaluation of the pilots. As mentioned above, we will be particularly interested in applications that include the intention to nominate a resident as a member of the Best Practice Group.

Statements should include:

- Details about your organisation (size, governance structure, ethos, whether it is receiving funding from the Government or its agencies). Please specify if your portfolio includes any high-rise or multi-occupancy properties. (Max 250 words)
- Details of your current tenant engagement structure and evaluation methods. (Max 500 words)
- Details of any strong examples of innovation and/or performance in the fields of resident engagement and/or communication. (Max 500 words)
- Reasons why you wish to be involved in the Best Practice Group, what you can contribute and what you hope will be achieved. (Max 500 words)

- Details of how you intend to involve your residents in the design and evaluation of initiatives we are piloting and proposals for how you will support a resident to attend the Group. (Max 500 words)
- A confirmation from your Chief Executive or equivalent that the organisation is committed to the Best Practice Group and has the resources and capacity to participate in full.
- If possible, letters of recommendation from your Fire and Rescue authority and local authority about your fire safety and building safety practices.

MHCLG will not pay participants, although reasonable expenses could be met from existing departmental budgets.

Please send your applications by email to [SHGPbestpracticegroup@communities.gov.uk](mailto:SHGPbestpracticegroup@communities.gov.uk).

For any further details please contact Sarah Carpenter ([sarah.carpenter@communities.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.carpenter@communities.gov.uk)) or Helen Kelly ([helen.kelly@communities.gov.uk](mailto:helen.kelly@communities.gov.uk)).

The closing date for applications is 23:45 on 2 December 2018.