

Changes to supported housing- what do you think?

This is a plain English summary of the *Funding for Supported Housing* consultation from the government. You can find the full version here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-for-supported-housing>

What is supported housing?



Supported housing is where people live as a tenant but also get some support to live there.

Supported housing can be living in a flat by yourself, living in a shared house or living in a network or block of flats where everyone gets support.

If you have been asked to say what you think about these changes, it is probably because you live in supported housing. Though you might not call where you live supported housing and just call it 'home'.

What the government wants to do



The government wants to change how the money works for supported housing.

They want to do this because they think that planning for supported housing should happen locally.

They also want to do this so that it fits with Welfare Reform.

This means that the money you get to pay your rent will be part of what is called Universal Credit.

Universal Credit is bringing all of your benefits together in one payment.

The most money you will get for your rent will be the Local Housing Allowance.

The Local Housing Allowance is a fixed amount of money that is set at what the lowest local rents are in your area.

The government knows that this is not enough money for some supported housing.

They want the extra money that pays for supported housing to go to local councils. They think that local councils can plan and decide how the extra money for supported housing is spent better.

How will it affect tenants with learning disabilities?



At the moment, supported housing providers develop housing for people with learning disabilities and they say how much the rent will be.

Sometimes they do this in partnership with the local council and sometimes they don't.

Supported housing providers usually charge more rent than most other landlords because they have extra costs to support tenants and make the housing right for them.

Now supported housing landlords will get the same rent as other landlords.

The extra money for supported housing will go from the government to the local council.

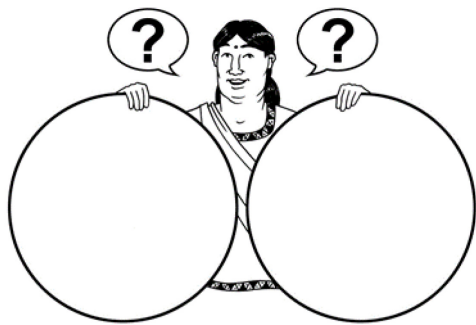
The local council will make the decision about whether they give the landlord extra money or not.

The local council will also decide how much extra money they will give the landlord.

This means that the landlord and council have to work together and agree.

It is important that tenants with learning disabilities and their families are involved and say what they want.

Some good opportunities?



There will be better co-ordination and local planning for supported housing if landlords and councils work together well.

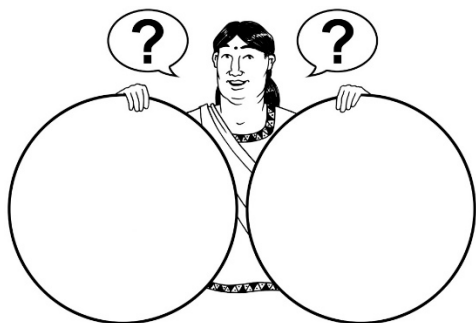
It will be especially good if councils involve people with learning disabilities and families in planning what supported housing there should be locally.

This will stop any landlords that charge too much rent when they don't need to.

The old rules meant that people who organised their own housing and support had difficulty getting extra money for their rent because it wasn't considered to be supported housing.

This can change under the new rules.

Some worries?



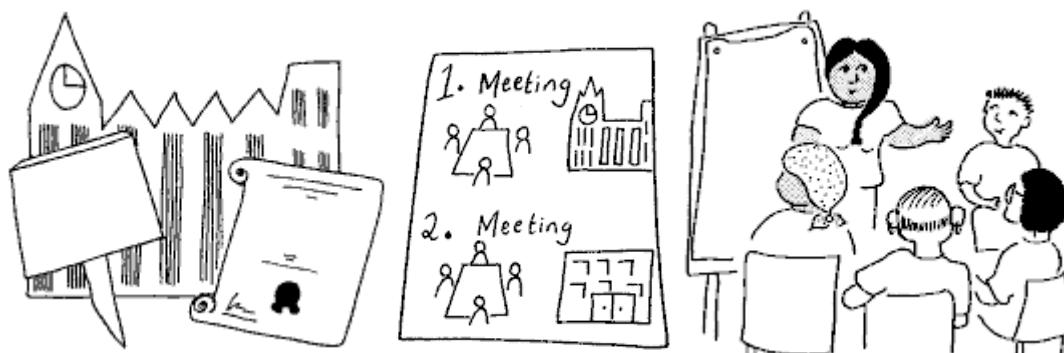
If councils and supported housing providers don't work together well there may be no other way to make supported housing work.

It will be more complicated to make supported housing happen as the money has to come from 2 different places and there has to be more planning.

Because it is more complicated, it may put off some supported housing providers from developing supported housing.

Current tenants may be worried about the future of their tenancies.

What the government is asking?



From now until the 13th February 2017, the government is asking landlords, tenants and councils to say what they think about these plans. This is called a consultation.

They are asking questions about these 5 areas:

1. How can they make sure the funding councils give for housing is fair for everybody that needs support?

Questions:

Who should hold the money in the council, the housing department or social services?

How should the money work to make sure all the local commissioners and housing organisations work together locally and fairly?

How do we make sure that the money councils get from the government is enough for all people that need supported housing?

2. What is needed locally to plan and pay for housing?

Questions:

What local roles do we need to make this work and what should they be responsible for?

What partnerships do we need to make this work?

How do we check it is working locally and nationally?

For councils, what do you need in your local authority to make this work?

3. How can we make sure that that supported housing gives tenants what they want and is good value for money?

Questions:

What are your ideas for making the new way of getting supported housing work for you?

4. How can we make sure that housing providers and funders will keep building supported housing if the money is not guaranteed from central government?

Questions:

How do we make sure that people's tenancies are safe?

How do we make sure that the changes don't stop more housing for people with learning disabilities?

How do we make sure that the changes are smooth and tenants don't suffer?

5. The plans suit people in longer tenancies but what about people who need temporary housing?

Questions:

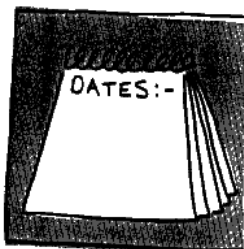
How do you think short term accommodation like hostels and refuges could be funded?

Say what you think!



We would like you to tell us what you think. You can see the consultation here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-for-supported-housing> and send your response to supportedhousing@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

What will happen next?



The government is asking all of these questions in a consultation.

The consultation will last until the **13th February 2017**

When the consultation is finished, we will think about what people have said and write a proposal for how they will make the changes to supported housing. This is called a Green Paper.

You will get a chance to say what you think about the Green Paper.

In Autumn 2017, the government will say how we are going to make the changes.

In April 2018, there will be a 1 year transition period

In April 2019, the new way of funding supported housing will be in place.

The Government thanks Learning Disability England for their kind permission to use this plain English summary of the *Funding for Supported Housing* consultation.



Learning Disability England