



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Housing Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy



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Introduction

1. The purpose of this document is to set out the framework used by the department for monitoring and evaluation activities related to housing policy interventions.
2. Good quality monitoring and evaluation of policy interventions allows for systematic learning and the development of a robust evidence base. This is a key part of good policy development and delivery, as set out in the Green Book¹ and the Magenta Book².
3. The strategy complements the department's Single Departmental Plan³, which sets out our key objectives and how we will achieve them, and our Areas of Research Interest⁴ publication, which highlights our key evidence needs to the broader research community.
4. The strategy will inform departmental decision making and will be delivered as part of robust and proportionate governance arrangements. The strategy will be refined over time and progress will be reviewed at regular intervals, with the document refreshed as necessary.

Why monitoring and evaluation is important for MHCLG

5. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) aims to help create great places to live and work right across the country and to back communities to come together and thrive. One of our key departmental priorities is to ensure people throughout the country have access to affordable and high quality housing. The objective to 'deliver the homes the country needs' involves increasing the supply of homes and our 'make the vision of the place you call home a reality' objective involves implementing policies that will help people to access the housing market, whether they are renting or trying to buy.
6. In simple terms evaluation is about answering the question: how do you know which interventions worked? Robust evaluation is an important tool to determine the cost-

¹ The Green Book is HM Treasury guidance for public bodies, setting out a framework for appraisal before committing funds to a policy, programme or project <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

² The Magenta Book is HM Treasury guidance on designing ex post evaluations <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book>

³ The Single Departmental Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-communities-and-local-government-single-departmental-plan/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government-single-departmental-plan>

⁴ MHCLG Areas of Research Interest <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mhclg-areas-of-research-interest>

effectiveness of an activity or approach and provides insights into the value of a new approach, concept or way of working. In the context of housing policy programmes, evaluation of a new or changed service or intervention can provide the evidence to demonstrate whether the service or intervention represents value for money and whether it is delivering the expected outcomes.

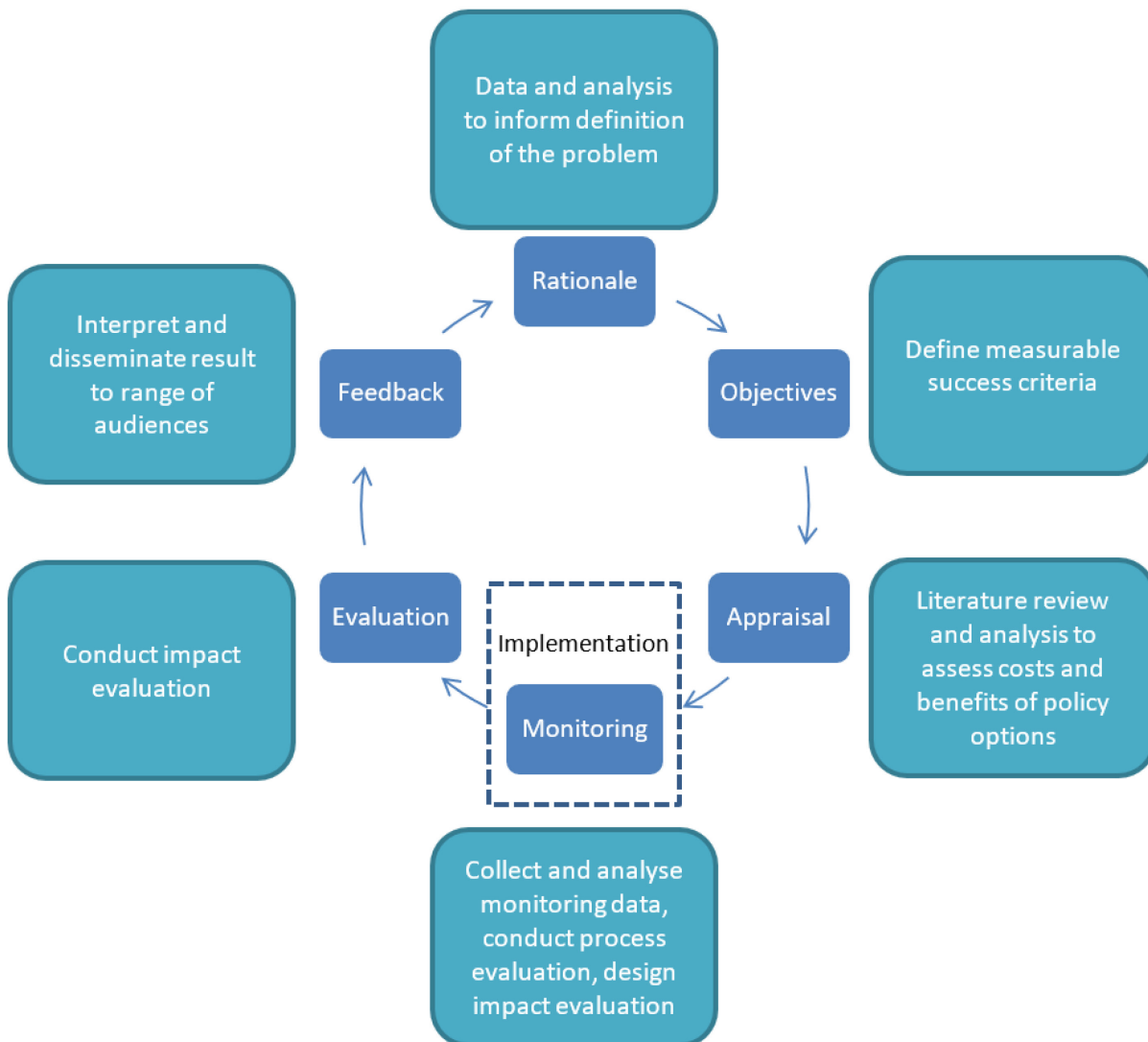
7. Adopting effective approaches to monitoring and evaluation can help to:

- Monitor progress in the implementation of policies against projected targets, outcomes and milestones and understand what elements of implementation may be working or not working;
- Provide accountability to investors and stakeholders as to the value of the interventions, including tangible 'proof' of success and value for money;
- Enable local and national partners to measure the economic and social impact of policy programmes;
- Inform decisions at all levels about the allocation of resources; and
- Generate ideas for improving future policy development through better co-design, consultation, implementation and cost-effectiveness.

How monitoring and evaluation fit into policy making

8. Monitoring and evaluation are essential to the policy making and delivery cycle, as set out in the HM Treasury Green Book and summarised by the 'ROAMEF' policy making cycle (Rationale, Objectives, Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback).
9. Monitoring and evaluation focus on measuring and assessing outcomes and impacts following the implementation of an initiative e.g. a programme or policy. This is distinct from appraisal which focuses on assessing the options before a decision is made. However, evaluation should not be considered a stand-alone activity that only takes place post implementation. Instead, it should be thought of as a set of linked tasks that are undertaken from the start and throughout the policy cycle, as depicted in Figure 1.
10. The advantage of considering evaluation evidence from the outset is that it increases the likelihood of generating timely and helpful information to assist in delivering the department's objectives. It also minimises the chances of 'benefits drift' where the appreciation of what constitutes a successful outcome subconsciously changes over time.

Figure 1 Use of evaluation evidence within the ROAMEF cycle



11. It is important to make the distinction between monitoring and evaluation. The HM Treasury Magenta Book says: “Evaluation examines the actual implementation and impacts of a policy to assess whether the anticipated effects, costs and benefits were in fact realised. Evaluation findings can identify “what works”, where problems arise, highlight good practice, identify unintended consequences or unanticipated results and demonstrate value for money, and hence can be fed back into the appraisal process to improve future decision-making.” In essence, evaluation can answer the questions ‘did it work?’, ‘what was the impact of the intervention?’ and ‘why?’
12. Monitoring can be a component of evaluation, as it can provide a valuable source of evidence, or a separate free-standing exercise. The key difference is that monitoring comprises the regular data collection exercise to provide oversight of the project. It can tell you how many units of ‘X’ are being delivered but not whether more units were

delivered than in the absence of the intervention. In essence, monitoring can answer the question 'did we do what we said we would do?'

13. Evaluation can have different purposes at different stages in the policy delivery cycle. Most evaluations will use a combination of process and impact evaluations. Process evaluations offer a means of tracking progress and the effectiveness or appropriateness of the delivery process. Impact evaluations offer an assessment of the difference a service change has made against agreed outcomes.
14. Process evaluation is usually more straightforward since it is mainly a question of gathering views and information on how well the delivery has been carried out and any lessons arising. Impact evaluation is more complex depending on the innovative nature of the policy change and may require the application of experimental or quasi-experimental assessment methods. The next section discusses the particular context and challenges for carrying out robust evaluation on housing interventions.

The housing context

Policy context

15. MHCLG's key objectives are set out in our Single Departmental Plan⁵. Central to this is the over-arching aim to 'deliver the homes the country needs'. This will involve increasing the supply of homes to a million by the end of 2020 and half a million more by the end of 2022 and put us on track to deliver 300,000 net additional homes a year on average by the mid-2020s. Another important objective is to 'make the vision of the place you call home a reality', which relates to improving people's access to and experience of the housing market, whether they are renting or trying to buy.
16. The Single Departmental Plan builds on the Housing White Paper⁶ published in February 2017. They set out a broad range of plans to reform the housing market including:
- planning for the right homes to be built in the right places;
 - building homes faster;
 - diversifying the market to include small and medium-size enterprises; and
 - helping people now including with buying homes, making rent fairer for tenants and helping the most vulnerable who need support with their housing including tackling homelessness and rough sleeping through a range of measures.
17. The Government is taking action on a number of fronts as part of a comprehensive programme. Autumn Budget 2017 announced over £15 billion of additional financial support for house building over the next five years, and planning reforms to ensure more land is available for housing⁷. And Budget 2018 went further by confirming the Prime Minister's announcement that the borrowing cap faced by councils with a Housing Revenue Account would be lifted, which will support them to increase the number of new homes they provide.
18. The Government has committed to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminate it by 2027⁸. To achieve this, a number of important actions have been taken including a

⁵ The Single Departmental Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-communities-and-local-government-single-departmental-plan/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government-single-departmental-plan>

⁶ Housing White Paper <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>

⁷ Autumn Budget 2017 brief <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-the-homes-the-country-needs-autumn-budget-2017-brief>

⁸ Initiative to reduce rough sleeping strategy <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-initiative-to-reduce-rough-sleeping>

£1.2 billion investment to prevent and tackle local homelessness pressures; piloting the Housing First approach to support rough sleepers with the most complex needs; implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act, which places new duties on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness, including for single homeless people at greater risk of sleeping rough; and establishing the Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Reduction Taskforce to drive forward cross-Government strategy to reduce rough sleeping.

19. The Social Housing Green Paper⁹, published in August, set out how the Government aims to rebalance the relationship between residents and landlords, tackle stigma and ensure that social housing can be both a stable base that supports people when they need it and support social mobility.

⁹ Social Housing Green Paper <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/social-housing-green-paper-a-new-deal-for-social-housing>

Conducting monitoring and evaluation

20. This strategy builds upon existing work that the department has established on monitoring and evaluation. Recently completed evaluations of housing policy interventions include two evaluations of the Help to Buy Equity Loan Scheme in February 2016 and October 2018¹⁰, and on homelessness, the London Homelessness Social Impact Bond¹¹. See Annex A for recently completed evaluations.
21. With respect to monitoring we publish a series of National and Official Statistics that, for example, help to track progress on increasing supply as well as other key aspects of delivery¹². We also produce a set of statistics, including through the well-respected English Housing Survey¹³, that monitor changes in key housing outcomes, such as tenure trends, housing affordability and the decency of dwellings.
22. It is acknowledged that, compared with many other policy areas, conducting robust impact evaluations of spatial or area-based policies, such as housing supply interventions, is challenging¹⁴. This is because of the difficulty in establishing a credible counterfactual i.e. ‘what would have happened in the absence of the intervention?’ where those interventions occur in different, heterogeneous, locations whose characteristics are hard to control for in isolating the impact of a given intervention. Further, it is challenging to construct a counterfactual for policies that are rolled out nationally, such as reforms to the planning system. In contrast, in other policy areas where interventions are targeted at the individual, evaluators may have scope to assign people to intervention or control conditions to understand policy impact. For example, the department measured the impact of a community-based English language programme using a randomised controlled trial (RCT) in which some participants were on a waiting list for the intervention and served as the control group for those receiving it during the trial period¹⁵.
23. Despite the challenges of establishing a credible counterfactual, there are ways to overcome this. Quasi-experimental evaluation designs can be used to construct a comparison group that is ‘as good as random’, usually by exploiting natural randomness in a system. For example, if a policy is introduced in phases it may be

¹⁰ Help to Buy Equity Loan Scheme evaluation reports

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme>

¹¹ The London homelessness social impact bond evaluation reports:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/london-homelessness-social-impact-bond-evaluation>

¹² Statistics at MHCLG <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>

¹³ English Housing Survey information and publications <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey>

¹⁴ Review of Government Evaluations: A report for the NAO <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/LSE-Review-of-selection-of-evaluations-with-appendices1.pdf>

¹⁵ RCT of community-based English language programme

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-based-english-language-programme-a-randomised-controlled-trial--2>

possible to compare areas in the first phase with those in later phases, assuming the areas selected are arbitrary. However, this requires consideration at the policy design stage to employ pilots or phased roll-outs and the department is considering how to make use of such policy delivery mechanisms to assist with evaluation.

24. It is also possible to use statistical techniques to construct a comparison group in an attempt to isolate the impact of the policy from other characteristics that may have influenced the outcome in question. However, such methods are technical and difficult to communicate and can be considered less robust than experimental designs¹⁶.
25. Evaluation is further complicated when we consider the housing market, which is complex and is influenced by multiple factors. It is therefore crucial to regularly test and question the assumptions behind interventions and maintain a clear line of sight on whether policies are delivering the intended results. Process evaluations can be particularly valuable in assessing whether policies are being implemented as intended and what, in practice, is felt to be working more or less well, and why.
26. Consequently, we recognise the value in strengthening our framework for monitoring and evaluation of housing initiatives, to ensure that activity is aligned to priorities and that plans are effectively delivered.
27. The department recognises the value of collaborating with external stakeholders and we conduct a variety of initiatives to ensure engagement, increase transparency and share good practice in monitoring and evaluation. For example, the Areas of Research Interest promotes our evidence needs to the broader research community¹⁷.

¹⁶ The Magenta Book is HM Treasury guidance on designing evaluations
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book>

¹⁷ MHCLG Areas of Research Interest <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mhclg-areas-of-research-interest>

Scope of evaluation strategy

MHCLG ambition

28. When considering and designing evaluations there is a need balance costs with robustness, independence and the ability to withstand scrutiny. The cost of the evaluation activity must be proportionate to the size of the initiative or the returns that can be generated by investment.

29. In guiding decisions around the appropriate approach we consider:

- Outputs, reach and impact of the policy (i.e. the policies with the highest number of output units or recipients would be considered as the highest priorities);
- The extent of innovation / novelty inherent in the programme;
- Costs, financial commitments and liabilities incurred by the policy;
- The likely level of scrutiny; and
- Contribution to the evidence base.

Housing evaluation activity

Monitoring activity

30. The department has a responsibility to monitor the delivery of its initiatives and interventions. Monitoring is achieved via regular data collection that provides an oversight of how policies are being delivered.

31. Alongside the department's commitments and ambitions for the coming years, MHCLG's Single Departmental Plan¹⁸ sets out the high-level context and outcome data that we will monitor in order to give an indication on our progress. For housing, these are net additional dwellings¹⁹, gross supply of affordable housing completions²⁰ and the rough sleeping count for England²¹.

¹⁸ The Single Departmental Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-communities-and-local-government-single-departmental-plan/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government-single-departmental-plan>

¹⁹ Net additional dwellings <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-net-supply-of-housing>

²⁰ Affordable housing supply <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-housing-supply>

²¹ Rough sleeping count <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2017>

32. The department regularly publishes statistics relating to housing, homelessness, planning performance and land use²². Many of these are designated as National Statistics, meaning they have been assessed and accredited by the Office for Statistics Regulation.
33. The department also commissions external organisations to monitor delivery on various programmes. For example, Ordnance Survey are monitoring the build-out on Public Land for Housing programme.
34. The department continues to invest in the English Housing Survey which collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England²³. The Survey celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2017 and is used to provide a robust measure of key housing outcomes such as tenure trends, stock profile and dwelling condition and safety.
35. And where necessary, we have commissioned additional survey activity to deepen our understanding of different parts of the housing market – for example, a new Private Landlord Survey is being prepared for publication and will help inform Government policy to improve the private rented sector for landlords, agents and tenants.
36. Open Data Communities²⁴ is MHCLG's strategic Open Linked Data platform. The department uses it to provide a selection of official statistics and data outputs on a variety of themes related to MHCLG's objectives including driving up housing supply and increasing home ownership. The department is committed to continually adding and updating the data and enhancing functionality on the platform to increase transparency and value of our data for external organisations. The department is committed to improving the transparency of its data. An example is the recently published Brownfield Register, which won an award for iNetwork Innovation 2017-18 in the Information Standards UK category.
37. The department works closely with Local Authorities to ensure we have the appropriate agreements in place to make use of relevant administrative data for monitoring and evaluation. For example, we have introduced a new case-level data collection for Local Authorities to report their statutory homelessness activity²⁵. This collection was designed to capture the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act, as well as provide us with more information on people at risk of homelessness, the interventions

²²Statistics at MHCLG <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>

²³ English Housing Survey information and publications <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey>

²⁴ Open Data communities <http://opendatacommunities.org/>

²⁵ Information on the Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/working-with-users/dclg-homelessness-statistics-user-forum/>

offered to them and their outcomes. In addition, to evaluate homelessness interventions for people with complex needs, we have established a consent procedure which the department and authorities follow. The Troubled Families evaluations have also made use of data linkage and sharing agreements to ensure evaluations make use of the most relevant data available²⁶.

Evaluation activity

38. MHCLG and Homes England are driving forward a number of large, often complex and sometimes novel initiatives aimed at delivering greater housing supply (and a sustainable shift in market behaviour) and home ownership. In doing this we recognise the importance of strong evaluation in supporting delivery and this strategy seeks to provide a framework for that work and to strengthen it going forward.
39. One example of recent evaluation activity is the evaluation of section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy in England. These are used to make proposed developments acceptable in planning terms and secure developer contributions used towards mitigating the social and environmental effects of development. The evaluation, published in March 2018, focused on understanding the value and incidence of these developer contributions and the negotiation process and associated delays²⁷.
40. A further example is the evaluation of the Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme which was introduced in April 2013 with the intention of providing a stimulus to the housing market by increasing the supply of new build housing. The first evaluation, published in February 2016, was conducted by IPSOS Mori and the London School of Economics. It aimed to robustly assess the additionality of the scheme, i.e. the increased production of housing services (greater number of new homes or production of greater sized homes) as a result of the policy, over and above what would have been produced in its absence. The evaluation also provided evidence of the experiences and implementation of the scheme from the perspective of providers and consumers. A second evaluation of the Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme was published alongside Budget 2018²⁸.
41. Another area of housing policy with a track-record of evaluations is homelessness. For example, the London Homelessness Social Impact Bond (SIB), which ran between 2012 and 2015, used new finance and ways of working to improve the outcomes of rough sleepers whose complex needs were not being met. The evaluation included a

²⁶ Troubled Families evaluation reports <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-evaluation-of-the-troubled-families-programme-2015-to-2020-emerging-findings>

²⁷ Section 106 Research <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-106-planning-obligations-and-the-community-infrastructure-levy-in-england-2016-to-2017-report-of-study>

²⁸ Help to Buy Equity Loan Scheme evaluation reports <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme>

quantitative assessment, conducted internally, of the impact of SIB on key outcomes, such as reducing rough sleeping and enabling access to long-term accommodation²⁹. It also included a qualitative process evaluation, conducted by external consultants, to generate an in-depth understanding of the role and impact of the SIB. A further example is the evaluation of the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer programme which was a £20m fund created to help local authorities and their partners develop and implement innovative approaches to homelessness prevention, prior to the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act. The evaluation included a rapid evidence assessment of pre-existing approaches to homelessness prevention, qualitative case study research with six trailblazer areas and a quasi-experimental impact evaluation to establish whether trailblazer prevention activity had an impact on reducing levels of homelessness. Evaluations of other homelessness initiatives are currently underway or being commissioned.

Upcoming priorities

42. This section provides a selection of upcoming priority areas for evaluation; priorities for further evaluative work are considered on a regular basis.

Deliver the homes the country needs

43. Several priorities for monitoring and evaluation relate to the objective to ‘deliver the homes the country needs’.

44. Drawing on existing headline statistics the department publishes, and other information, the department is exploring ways to further examine the impact of planning reforms. This will include engaging with academics on their research in this area.

45. To help develop our evidence on building homes faster the department will evaluate the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), launched in July 2017, to unlock housing in high demand areas. Homes England is responsible for monitoring HIF and the department are at the early stages of developing an evaluation plan. We have had initial conversations to test thinking with the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth and are considering how the evaluation can assess the additionality of the scheme (i.e. greater number of new homes over and above what would have happened anyway). As HIF has a long delivery timeframe, with many homes anticipated by 2035, evaluation is planned throughout the lifetime of the programme. This is likely to include process evaluations to help understand how the infrastructure and housing are realised.

²⁹ Social Impact bond evaluation <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/london-homelessness-social-impact-bond-evaluation>

46. The department will work with Homes England to consider the how best to evaluate the Home Building Fund.

Make the vision of a place you call home a reality

47. The department has a number of monitoring and evaluation priorities relating to 'make the vision of a place you call home a reality'.
48. This includes evaluations in the priority area of homelessness which are being commissioned or are underway. The department is undertaking an impact, process and economic evaluation of the Housing First Pilots, taking place in Liverpool City Region, the West Midlands, and Greater Manchester, designed to provide rapid access to permanent housing for those with multiple and complex needs who are at risk or are currently homeless.
49. MHCLG has also committed to review the implementation and resourcing of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA), which came into force on 3rd April 2018. HRA is the most ambitious legal reform in decades and places new duties on councils to prevent and relieve homelessness, including for single homeless people who are at greater risk of sleeping rough. The review includes user research to understand what the customer experience of the Act has been, stakeholder research with local authorities and delivery partners to understand how the act is being implemented and quantitative analysis to understand the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the Act.
50. The recent Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI), which is a targeted £30 million fund for 2018 to 2019 for local authorities with high levels of rough sleeping, also includes research to evaluate how local authorities are delivering RSI funded interventions and how effective they are in supporting and reducing the number of people sleeping on the streets. This research includes interviews with key partners such as commissioners, providers and other stakeholders to understand the successes and challenges of set up and delivery and a quasi-experimental impact evaluation which will compare rough sleeping numbers in the 83 areas where RSI has been introduced with those who haven't received any funding.
51. The department will use the results and underlying data from the current Private Landlord Survey to support policy work on the private rented sector. A review of how selective licensing is working is underway.
52. Following the abolition of the Housing Revenue Account borrowing caps, the department will monitor how local authorities are delivering a new generation of council housing. This is expected to include exploring potential for research to build evidence of how local authorities are using the borrowing flexibilities to build new homes, and how good practice learning and innovative approaches can be shared widely.

Cross-cutting

53. The department's Areas of Research Interest publication further highlights some wider cross-cutting priorities for deepening the evidence base³⁰. This includes: improving the transparency and accessibility of planning and land ownership data; projecting demand for supported housing in England; estimating how to best monetise external impacts of residential and commercial projects on previously developed land; and developing the evidence and learning lessons from early prevention strategies targeted to help vulnerable groups (e.g. those at risk from domestic violence and homelessness).
54. A further cross-cutting priority is to improve the evidence base on additionality of housing market interventions, i.e. assessing the extent of benefits that would not have occurred in the absence of intervention. This will be useful to inform future additionality assessments, with a view to improving the extent to which government interventions are targeted to the most effective use and will be commissioned shortly.

³⁰ MHCLG Areas of Research Interest <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mhclg-areas-of-research-interest>

Ensuring evaluation is embedded and robustly governed

Research Gateway and programme boards

56. In order to deliver good quality monitoring and evaluation it is important to embed the requirement for monitoring and evaluation into the key decision making processes.
57. At MHCLG there are a number of assurance functions for monitoring and evaluation and as part of the Strategy we will seek to strengthen these.
58. Firstly, the internal Research Gateway (a team of senior analysts, with procurement and finance colleagues) scrutinises all requests. This process enhances the quality assurance of monitoring and evaluation plans by providing feedback and oversight of commissioned research projects.
59. And more broadly, evaluation and monitoring activity will report to and be sponsored by the relevant programme and portfolio boards that oversee delivery for those policy areas.
60. Specific evaluations that the department undertakes will where appropriate be overseen and peer reviewed by advisory groups involving key stakeholders. This can include academics as well as analytical leads from other government departments. These groups provide advice, expertise and quality assurance of publications as well as broad oversight of project delivery, as discussed in the next section.

Engagement with external organisations

61. The department recognises the delivery of many monitoring and evaluation activities will be in collaboration with, or led by, other organisations. The department has a number of initiatives to ensure engagement with external organisations, increase transparency and share good practice in monitoring and evaluation. This includes a regular seminar series of external experts, bespoke roundtables and practitioner sessions to discuss policy issues and short and long term internships for undergraduates and postgraduates.
62. The department regularly engages with other government departments and local authorities via advisory groups. For example, the evaluation of homelessness prevention trailblazers has a cross government advisory panel which includes Department for Work and Pensions, Home Office, Department for Health and Social

Care and Ministry of Justice. It also includes a virtual evaluation advisory group for local authorities involved in the evaluation.

63. Further, the department have good links with the Cross Government Evaluation Group (CGEG) which brings together analysts from across Whitehall to share good practice and discuss emerging methodologies.
64. In addition we have links with Centres of academic excellence, such as the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research, the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, the Centre for Homelessness Impact and the ESRC funded UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE). The latter was launched in October 2017 and has several themes of work that directly relate to MHCLG priorities, such as understanding the housing markets, housing aspirations, choices and outcomes and homelessness. Within a number of these themes representatives from MHCLG are involved with prioritisation exercises to identify gaps in the evidence base.
65. The department has hosted PhD students from the University of Sheffield for short placements with a focus on understanding the evidence on housing for older people and international comparisons of affordability.
66. Further, the department has worked closely with the University of Southampton on the ethical aspects of the evaluation of homelessness interventions for people with complex needs.
67. The department is also open to exploring innovative ways in which it can engage with wider academia to support more effective policy making. This might include knowledge sharing and networking events on particular themes or topics aligned with strategic objectives relating to housing.
68. To further facilitate the transparency of the department's priorities for monitoring and evaluation the Areas of Research Interest document will be revisited annually and refreshed as needed³¹.

Capability and awareness raising

69. We are raising the awareness of the value and importance of monitoring and evaluation activity within the department. Training and development is being focused to

³¹ MHCLG Areas of Research Interest <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mhclg-areas-of-research-interest>

help give people the skills they need to design and deliver new monitoring and evaluation activities but also to make use of existing evidence more effectively.

70. Concurrently, the department will look to develop tools for guidance and support with monitoring and evaluation in a cost effective way. Technical support and advice is available from the Analysis and Data Directorate which will be supplemented by the development of new resources to disseminate within the department.

Next steps

71. This strategy outlines the department's ambition for monitoring and evaluation in housing policy. It provides an overarching plan of what we currently do. The department is currently assessing priorities for monitoring and evaluation. We will actively seek views from stakeholders to help with these initiatives.

72. To ensure success collaboration with partner organisations is essential and we will actively engage and seek views. If you have views please contact housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk.

73. The strategy will be refined over time and progress will be reviewed at regular intervals, with the document refreshed as necessary.

Annex A: Recently completed housing evaluations

This section contains links to a selection of published outputs of monitoring and evaluation projects of housing policies since commissioned since 2011.

2014

[The impact of recent reforms to Local Housing Allowances: Summary of key findings](#)
[Evaluation of the New Homes Bonus](#)

2016

[Evaluation of Help to Buy Equity Loans Scheme](#)

2017

[The value, impact and delivery of the Community Infrastructure Levy](#)
[Evaluation of London homelessness Social Impact Bond](#)
[Fair Chance Fund evaluation](#)

2018

[The Incidence, Value and Delivery of Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy in England in 2016-17](#)

[Evaluation of Help to Buy Equity Loans Scheme 2017](#)
[Skills, Training, Innovation and Employment \(STRIVE\) Evaluation](#)

