



Regulator of Social Housing

THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING

Decision Instrument

Instrument number: RSH10

Title of Instrument: **Decision to issue the Rent Standard 2026**

Introduction

- A Pursuant to the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (the 'Act'), the regulation of registered providers of social housing ('registered providers') in England is the responsibility of the Regulator of Social Housing (the 'regulator').¹ The regulator is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- B Under the Act, the regulator has specific powers to set, revise or withdraw standards for registered providers in relation to certain matters ('standard setting powers'), including standards requiring registered providers to comply with specified rules about their levels of rent under section 194(2A) of the Act.
- C Under section 197 of the Act, the Secretary of State has the power to direct the regulator to (among other things) set a standard under section 193 or 194 of the Act (and about the content of such standards) if the direction relates, in the Secretary of State's opinion, to a matter listed in section 197(2) of the Act, which includes rent. The Secretary of State may also direct the regulator to have regard to specified objectives when setting such standards. The regulator must comply with any direction made by the Secretary of State in the exercise of their powers under section 197 of the Act ('direction making powers').
- D In the exercise of their direction making powers the then Secretary of State made:
 - (i) the Direction on the Rent Standard 2019 (which came into force on 27 February 2019) following which the regulator set the Rent Standard 2020 (which came into force on 1 April 2020); and
 - (ii) the Direction on the Rent Standard 2023 (which came into force on 15 December 2022) following which the regulator set the Rent Standard 2023 (applicable to rent periods beginning in the 12 months from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024).
- E On 28 January 2026, in the exercise of their direction making powers, the Secretary of State made the Direction on the Rent Standard 2026 which came into force on 29 January 2026 and provides that (among other things):
 - (i) the regulator must set a rent standard that applies from 1 April 2026;

¹ Regulation of registered providers was, prior to 1 October 2018, the responsibility of the Regulation Committee of the Homes and Communities Agency. Decision Instruments of the Regulation Committee of the Homes and Communities Agency can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/decision-instruments>

- (ii) the requirement for the regulator to consult under section 196 of the Act before setting, revising or withdrawing a rent standard is disapplied as further set out in paragraph 7 of the Direction on the Rent Standard 2026; and
- (iii) the Direction on the Rent Standard 2019 and the Direction on the Rent Standard 2023 are revoked on 1 April 2026.

F Under section 92O of the Act, the regulator has the power to delegate any of its functions to a member or a member of staff. The regulator delegated authority to its Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and/or Chief or Regulatory Engagement (on the basis that any one of them may exercise such authority) to exercise the regulator's standard setting powers to approve:

- (i) the revision and/or withdrawal of the Rent Standard 2020 and/or the Rent Standard 2023; and
- (ii) the setting of a standard in relation to matters referenced in the Direction on the Rent Standard 2026, the Rent Standard 2020 or the Rent Standard 2023.

G This document sets out the decision made for and on behalf of the regulator under the delegated authority referred to in paragraph F above (the 'delegated authority') following the coming into force of the Direction on the Rent Standard 2026.

Decision

Date decision made: 30 January 2026

Decision made by: The Chief Executive

Having noted the matters referred to in paragraphs A to G above, under the delegated authority the Chief Executive has decided the following for and on behalf of the regulator in the exercise of its standard setting powers:

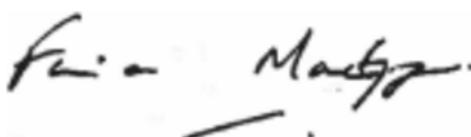
- 1 to set the standard set out in Schedule 1 (the 'Rent Standard 2026') for all registered providers with effect from and including the date specified in paragraph 3 below (the 'effective date');
- 2 that with effect from and including the effective date, the Rent Standard 2026 shall supersede the Rent Standard 2020 and the Rent Standard 2023;² and
- 3 that the Rent Standard 2026 shall come into force on 1 April 2026.

Authentication

Name: Fiona MacGregor

Position: Chief Executive – Regulator of Social Housing

Signature:



² For the avoidance of doubt, where standards are superseded (or replaced) they remain in force, and continue to have effect, in relation to any non-compliance or potential non-compliance with them that occurred before they were superseded (or replaced), unless stated otherwise.

Schedule 1 to Decision Instrument RSH10

Rent Standard 2026