

# HM Land Registry

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Chair

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Baroness Taylor  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Housing  
and Local Government

31 March 2026

Dear Baroness Taylor,

Thank you for your letter of 12 March 2026 setting out the Government's priorities and expectations for HM Land Registry (HMLR) for the coming year. I look forward to working with you as our Minister.

I welcome the clarity you have provided and the opportunity to reaffirm how the Board will hold the organisation to account for delivery against Strategy 2025+ and the Business Plan 2026+. HM Land Registry plays a critical role in supporting the property market across England and Wales and we remain focused on ensuring customers experience a faster, more reliable and transparent service.

The Board and Executive team fully share the Government's focus on improving service performance, strengthening the efficiency and resilience of the property market, and ensuring HMLR plays its full part in delivering wider housing, planning and land reform priorities. As you note, this is a year of transition for HMLR and will be pivotal in restoring consistent service performance while continuing the modernisation of our services, systems and data. The Board is focused on providing strong leadership, continuity and effective scrutiny as we move forward.

## **Organisational performance, business planning and KPIs**

I fully recognise the importance of clear accountability, transparent performance information and sustained service improvement for all customers. I will ensure the Board holds the Executive team to account for delivery against Strategy 2025+ and Business Plan 2026+ with a clear and direct connection between operational performance and customer experience. HMLR will develop a strategic workforce plan to deliver this while providing value for money to taxpayers and aligning with ministerial ambitions for the size and shape of the Civil Service.

Our focus is on delivering improved, timely and reliable services that are resilient to market fluctuations and meet customer expectations to support the effective functioning of the housing market. Recent progress demonstrates that sustainable improvement can be achieved, and the priority now is to embed that progress and ensure we are responsive to any changes in future market conditions.

The timely processing of our services is what matters most to HMLR's customers. Our essential pre-completion Guaranteed Information Services, which have the greatest impact on the operation of the housing market, continue to perform strongly and reliably. As you have set out, continued and sustained improvements in our post-completion services are essential to maintaining confidence in land registration services. A key priority is therefore to continue to build on the real progress made in the last year to further reduce the age of outstanding applications, ensuring that processing times do not cause real-world problems for customers. Where a delay could have legal, financial or personal consequences, applications can be fast-tracked. Alongside this, we remain committed to reducing the number of outstanding applications, building on the positive progress of the last few months.

Work is already underway to optimise the organisation's performance framework. We are developing clearer, more outcome-focused Key Performance Indicators as well as defined service level agreements across our services. This will enable customers to better understand what they can expect and provide a transparent and consistent basis for scrutiny and accountability. The revised KPIs are being designed to be robust, comparable over time and to focus attention on what matters most to further drive service performance improvements.

Customer focus remains central to delivery. I am closely monitoring progress in implementing the recommendations of the customer care review, with most recommendations now implemented. This is supported by continued engagement with the Independent Complaints Reviewer and the systematic use of customer insight to inform service design and performance expectations.

Investment is being directed towards activity that delivers tangible benefits for customers in the near term while strengthening longer term service resilience. This includes expanding the use of automation and new technologies for high volume, lower complexity transactions, particularly residential mortgages. Digital validation and quality assurance are also being improved to reduce avoidable errors and rework earlier in the application process, ensuring expert colleagues are increasingly focused on complex and judgement-based applications where human expertise adds the greatest value. Together, these interventions are explicitly focused on improving service reliability and the overall customer experience, drawing on wider government expertise where appropriate.

### **Delivery of Government policy priorities**

We are clear that consistent service performance and modernising our services, systems and data are essential enablers of delivering Government policy priorities. We will continue to work closely with MHCLG to articulate and monitor our contribution to delivering 1.5 million homes and New Towns during this Parliament, supporting MHCLG and Homes England with access to HMLR data.

As set out in Business Plan 2026+, this includes:

- Earlier and more proactive engagement with developers and infrastructure providers
- The continued expansion of managed services for complex and large-scale developments
- Improving access to data on land and property ownership and control, to support planning, design and delivery decisions

During 2026/27, we will continue to support the implementation of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 and work closely with your officials on the design and delivery of further reforms, including those set out in the draft Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill. This will include analysing the impacts on services, systems and customers, continuing workforce and systems planning to ensure the organisation is ready to support a reinvigorated commonhold system and providing clear communication and support for customers and industry as reforms are implemented.

HMLR will continue to support reform to the Home Buying and Selling process, through improvements to the system of property transactions to make them easier, faster and less stressful for customers, and we will input into the development of the Home Buying and Selling Roadmap. HMLR will build on the digitalisation capability developed during the Local Land Charges programme, which is progressing towards full national completion by 2028/29, to support opening up more locally held property data.

Business Plan 2026+ also reflects the priorities you have set out on fees, data and transparency, as we continue our shift from a data repository to an organisation that uses its data and expertise to unlock value for customers, the public sector and the wider economy. In particular, we will work to:

- Design a simpler fees and charging model, aligned with wider Government objectives on cost of living and the home buying and selling process
- Continue progress on reforms to improve transparency of land ownership and control, including readiness of the contractual controls data collection system for the launch in April 2027
- Enable better use of HMLR data across government and the whole public sector, including supporting policy design, analysis, implementation, service delivery and evaluation
- Expand use of common identifiers such as UPRNs and INSPIRE IDs
- Further to your steer, we are exploring options to accelerate completion of the Land Register and will revert to you with further advice later this year

I look forward to discussing further how all these plans can come together in a sustainable way to help deliver government's ambitious agenda.

## **Governance and leadership**

As is required, the Board will continue to provide stability, continuity and effective challenge to HMLR's executive team. As Chair, I have been working closely with interim Chief Executive and Chief Land Registrar Iain Banfield and been very happy with positive improvements to staff and customer satisfaction. I will continue to work closely with MHCLG on the appointment and induction of a permanent Chief Executive and Chief Land Registrar and ensure that strong succession planning is in place across both the Board and Executive team.

Alongside this, as Chair I will support Board members to develop their capability and effectiveness, and work with Iain and the Executive Team to build strategic sponsorship partnerships that underpin delivery of government priorities. This will help ensure that our leadership remains aligned, confident and equipped to guide the organisation through the year ahead. The Board will maintain the highest standards of probity and governance, remain focussed on its own performance and foster constructive and collaborative relationships with MHCLG. Through this, we will provide the assurance and leadership required to deliver the shared priorities set out in your letter.

## **Conclusion**

The Board remains fully committed to improving service performance, safeguarding the integrity of the register, while ensuring HMLR continues to deliver the digital services, expertise and accessible property information that support a better, faster and less stressful property market. Through sustained investment, increased use of automation, clearer performance measures and close partnership with MHCLG, HMLR will continue to strengthen the foundations of the property market and support housing, planning and land reform objectives.

I welcome continued engagement and hope we can meet again in the very near future along with Iain to discuss these priorities. I will continue to provide quarterly updates on progress across the areas set out in your letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Sachdev', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Neil Sachdev  
Chair, HM Land Registry