



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Easy
Read

New rules for supported housing

What you told us



Easy Read

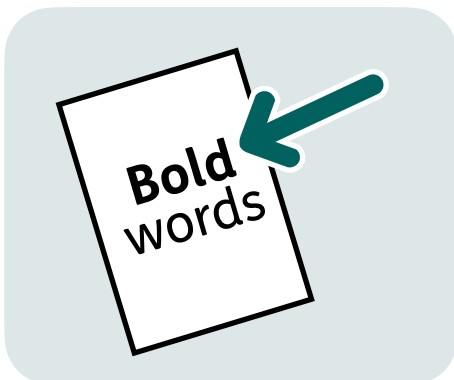


This is an Easy Read version of some information.

It uses easier words and pictures.



Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are **bold** to show they are important.



We explain bold words if they are hard to understand.

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About this booklet



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

We are the Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local
Government.

We are a part of the government.



We have written this booklet about
supported housing.

Supported housing is housing with
extra care and support from carers
and support workers.



Last year, we asked people what
they thought of our ideas to make
supported housing better.

This booklet is about what people
told us.

Why we are making changes



Supported housing is good when it is done well.



But not everyone in supported housing is getting the help they need.



This is because some **landlords** are not giving them the right support.

Landlords are people and organisations that provide people with homes.

We have written a new law to:



- Stop bad landlords.



- Make sure everyone who lives in supported housing gets the care and support they need.



The new law is called the **Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023**.

The new law has some ideas for how to make supported housing better. They include:



- **Licences.**

These are documents that say an organisation is allowed to run a supported housing service.



- **National Supported Housing Standards.**

These are rules about what good support housing should be like.



The law means we can also change **housing benefit**.

Housing benefit is money from the government to help people to pay for their homes.



The changes to supported housing will only affect people in England.



But the changes to housing benefit will affect people in England, Scotland and Wales.

Who we heard from



We asked people questions about our ideas.



581 people answered our questions.



Some of them were from councils and organisations that run supported housing.



Some were from people who live in supported housing.



Some people were worried about some of our ideas.



We have listened to what people told us.



We have changed some of our ideas, based on what people said.



This booklet will explain the changes we have made.

Licences



People mostly agreed with our ideas for licences.



They agreed that organisations should get licences to run supported housing.



But some people said our ideas could make things harder for good supported housing schemes.

Local council areas



There will be a team of council staff giving out licences in each local council area.



But local council areas are changing.



Some areas could work together.



This could help to make sure that the job is done well.

Asking for a licence



We want it to be easy to ask for a licence.



We wanted people to ask for a licence for each **scheme**.

A **scheme** is a building or a group of buildings with 1 address.



But most people did not like this idea.

They said it would be a lot of work.



So, we have changed the rules.

Now, one person can ask for a licence for many schemes in one area.

Then the council will:



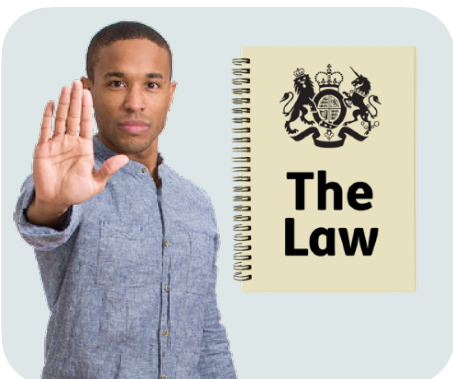
- Check if the housing and support is good enough.



- Ask for more information.



- Decide if the person can have a licence.

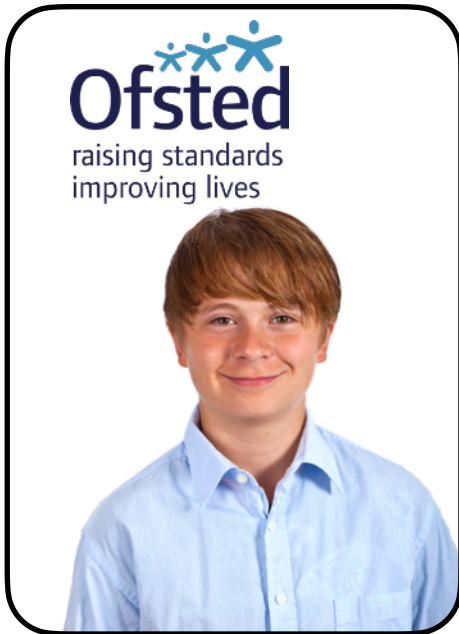


It could be against the law to run supported housing without a licence.

Schemes that will not need a licence



After listening to what people told us, we have agreed that these places will not need a licence:



- Supported housing for young people that is already checked by **Ofsted**.

Ofsted is a government organisation that checks places where young people learn, such as schools.



- Places that the government gives to people who have just left prison, who need support.

These places will also not need a licence:



- Places where the local council owns the housing and puts people there to get support.



- Some services which are paid for by the local authority for people who are victims of **domestic abuse**.

Domestic abuse is when you are harmed by a family member or someone you live with.



- Some housing that is for older people aged 55 or over, which is regulated.



- **Almshouses.**

These are a type of home for people who do not have much money.

Who should have the licence



The law says that the person in charge of the supported housing scheme should have the licence.



But many people usually work together to provide supported housing.



So it is not always easy to say who is in charge.



People who provide services were not always sure which of their staff should have the licence.



We will give organisations information about who should have the licence.



Usually, it will be the person who looks after the housing each day.



But services can ask their local licence team in their council if they are not sure.

The fit and proper person test



We want to make sure that only the right people run supported housing.

So we think that they should do a test called a **fit and proper person test**.



The test would check if they are the right person to run supported housing.



People agreed that a test would help keep everyone safe.



We have decided to make the test stricter than it was before.



We will also check the people who run supported housing companies, not just the people with the licence.



The test will check if the person running supported housing has:

- Broken the law or been unfair to people.



- The right skills to run supported housing services.

Keeping a licence and license rules



To keep their licence, organisations will have to look after their supported housing.



If a place has a big problem, it will not get a licence.



Almost everyone agreed with this.



Some people said that they might need some time to fix problems.

They said that this should not stop them from getting a licence.

A good place to live

We asked people what makes a place bad for people to live in.



They said:



- Small or crowded rooms and not enough places to spend time with others.



- The wrong place, like near where people are taking drugs, or far away from shops.



- Buildings that are not safe or healthy places to live.

They also said:



- Buildings that are hard for disabled people to use.



- Buildings that are not run well, and staff who do not have the right skills.



We have listened to what people said.



Places must be safe, run well and accessible for the people who live there.

Otherwise, they may lose their licence.

Care Quality Commission



An organisation called the **Care Quality Commission** will check the care that people get.



Care Quality Commission is a government organisation that checks the standard of health and social care services in England.



It will only check places that give people care.

All places that give people care must be checked by the Care Quality Commission.

Needs assessment



People said that places should do a **needs assessment** for each person who moves in.

A **needs assessment** means looking at what care and support they need.



The rules will say that the person in charge must make sure that a needs assessment happens.



The person who does it must have the right skills to understand what people need.

Service managers



The person who has the licence should check that their staff are good enough to support people.



They must check if managers are safe to work with people who need support.



If they do not, they could lose their licence.



But we know that people can be good managers, even if they have been in trouble with the law.

It may not stop someone from being a manager.

Council rules for licences



Councils will not be able to make their own rules for licences.



This will help to make sure the rules are the same everywhere.

National Supported Housing Standards



Remember, **support standards** are how we will check if supported housing is good enough.

We will explain these standards over the next 16 pages.



Lots of people agreed with these support standards.



Based on what people told us, we have made some changes to these support standards.

Person-centred standard



The **person-centred standard** says that people get to choose the care and support that is right for them.



Each person should have a needs assessment and a plan for their support and **supervision**.



Supervision means guiding people and checking that they are staying healthy and safe.

Each person's support plan must say:



- What type of support and supervision the person needs.



- How much support and supervision the person needs.



The person or their **advocate** should be given the chance to help to write this plan.



An **advocate** is someone who helps you to speak up or speaks up for you.

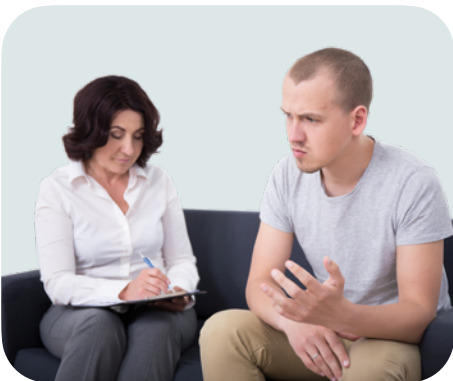
Each person's support plan should explain:



- How the person is doing.



- What is stopping them from doing better.



There should be a way to make sure the person is involved in choosing their support and supervision.



If possible, the person should have the same help all the time.

The person should get help to:



- Live as independently as they can.



- Learn and get better at things.



Staff should help the person to get training and, if they can, look for a job.



All information should be clear and easy to understand.



Staff should tell people and their advocates about the help they can get from other services.

We can check if supported housing is following this standard by looking at:



- Whether people are achieving the things they want to.



- Whether people are getting support that is right for them.

Giving people power



This standard says that people and their advocates should have the power to speak up about what they think.

Organisations should:



- Ask people and their advocates what they think and want.



- Make sure people understand what staff do in the organisation.



- Have an easy way for people to complain.

The right place



This standard says that people should live in a place that is right for them.



There should be plans for how people move into supported housing.



These plans should make sure that everyone is safe.



Staff should think about **risks**.

These are things that could go wrong and hurt someone.



Supported housing should help people to feel safe, healthy and comfy.



The supported housing should be clean. People should feel at home.



People's family and friends should be able to visit.



There should be rules to make sure things are fixed if they break.

We can check if supported housing is following this standard by looking at:



- Videos from inside the housing.



- Rules about cleaning.



- **Risk assessments.**

These are when staff check on things that could go wrong.

Keeping people safe

This standard says that staff in supported housing should understand:



- How to keep people safe.



- How to deal with problems.



- Serious issues, like domestic abuse and **anti-social behaviour**.

Anti-social behaviour is when you do things to upset and annoy other people.



Services should support their staff to get **qualifications**.

This means passing tests and courses.



There should be rules about how to keep people safe.



Staff should get a **DBS check**.

This is a government check to make sure they are safe to work with people who need support.



Organisations should have ways to deal with staff who are not doing a good job.



They should also have ways to reward staff who are doing well.



There should be:

- Enough staff to help people safely and well.



- A plan for how to deal with people who behave badly.



- A plan for what happens when someone is ready to leave or told to leave the supported housing.

We can check if supported housing is following these standards by looking at:



- Rules for training staff, and proof that they have had training.
- Rules for keeping people safe.



- What the organisation did when people broke the rules.



- How the organisation checks on its staff.



- How many members of staff work in each scheme.

What local areas need



This standard says it is important to look at how much supported housing each local area needs.



Organisations should listen to local people before starting a new supported housing scheme.



The scheme should:

- Work with care and support services that are already there.



- Try to get on well with neighbours and other local people.



Each local council will write a plan saying how much supported housing they need.



Each supported housing scheme should fit in with this plan.

Statement of purpose



A **statement of purpose** says what the supported housing scheme stands for and what it wants to achieve.



This standard says that supported housing schemes must have a statement of purpose.



It should say:

- How the supported housing scheme will work with other support services.



- How the scheme will work with local people.

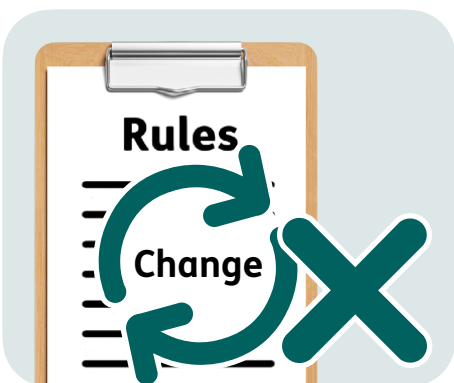
Planning



Planning is how we decide where to build new buildings.



People told us what they thought of our ideas.



There was no agreement on planning rules, so we have decided to not make any changes.

Housing benefit



Housing benefit is money from the government to help people pay for their homes.



We are thinking about changing the rules for housing benefit.



People living in supported housing can get more housing benefit than other people.



We would like housing benefit to fit in with licences for supported housing in England.

Most people agreed with this.

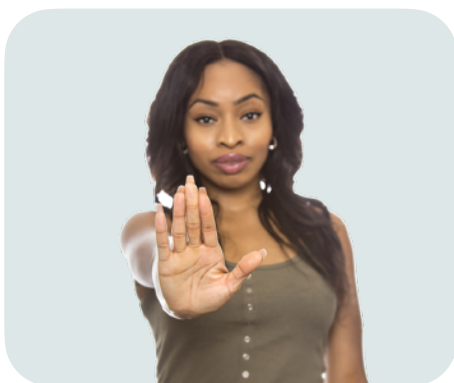
This will mean that:



- Supported housing gets better.



- Bad supported housing does not get money from the government.



We want councils to quickly stop bad landlords.



Councils will help people find somewhere else to live and make sure that they still get care and support if they need it.



If people lose money because of these changes, they might be able to get extra help from the council.

Scotland and Wales



There will not be licences in Scotland and Wales.



We will not try to fit housing benefit in with the systems that they use in Scotland and Wales.

What is care, support and supervision?



People living in supported housing get care, support and supervision.



But the law does not say what care, support, and supervision mean.



When we asked people about this, they did not agree on what the words mean.



So we will not try to say what care, support and supervision mean in law.

The future of housing benefit



Some people said we need to change housing benefit before we make it fit in with licences.



But we need to do something about bad landlords straight away.



Licences will help us to stop these bad landlords.

Paying for licences



Many people were worried about how much the licences would cost.



They said that it should be paid for with housing benefit.



We have listened to people, and we will allow licences to be paid for with housing benefit.

Work



Some people are worried that people in supported housing will not want to work.



This is because they could lose housing benefit if they get a job.

We agree that this is a problem.



We are going to fix this.



We want people in supported housing to have more money if they get a job.

What we will do next



We are writing new rules for supported housing and for housing benefit.



We will ask people what they think about the new licensing rules.



We will not be asking people what they think about the new Housing Benefit rules.



We will also think about how to help people in supported housing in the future.