



# Consumer standards consultation

August 2023



# Transparency, Influence & Accountability to Tenants Standard (1)

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

### **Fairness and respect**

RP's must treat all tenants with fairness and respect

- Fairness and respect is a required outcome and cross cutting in the delivery of all requirements
- Underpins the aims of the SHWP

### **Diverse needs**

RP's must take action to deliver fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services for all tenants

- RP's are expected to use data and information, taking action to improve access and equitable outcomes
- Greater focus on accessibility of communications, information & services
- These requirements are cross-cutting

### **Engagement with tenants**

RP's must take tenants' views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered

- New tenant involvement direction: influence and scrutinise landlord's strategies, policies and services
- Landlords must continually improve their approach to tenant engagement

# Transparency, Influence & Accountability to Tenants Standard (2)

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

<b>Information about landlord services</b>	RPs must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RPs must provide essential information that all tenants need in order to interact with their landlord</li></ul>
<b>Performance information</b>	RPs must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Includes current TSM requirements</li><li>• We also expect landlords to provide more holistic information to tenants about their overall performance and plans for performance improvement</li></ul>
<b>Complaints</b>	RPs must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy continuity with some prescriptive detail removed to avoid duplication with the HOS</li></ul>
<b>Self-referral</b>	RPs must communicate in a timely manner with the regulator on all material issues that relate to non-compliance or potential non-compliance with the consumer standards (SE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SHWP expectation with a new power in the SHR Act</li><li>• It largely mirrors the equivalent expectation in the G&amp;FV standard, extending the expectation to LARPs</li></ul>

# Safety and Quality Standard (1)

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

### **Stock quality**

RP's must have an accurate, up-to-date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that reliably informs their provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for tenants

- New requirements for RPs to have an accurate and up to date record of stock condition of individual homes
- And to use this understanding to ensure they provide good quality, well maintained and safe homes

### **Decency**

RP's must ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator

- We are directed by Government here
- Continuity with existing requirements
- We will need to revisit this following Government's completion of the DHS review

### **Health & Safety**

When acting as landlords, RPs take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas

- Explicit that all legal assessments are completed and arising actions carried out within timescales
- We expect landlords to consider the safety of tenants in all aspects of landlord service delivery

# Safety and Quality Standard (2)

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

### **Repairs, maintenance and planned improvements**

RP's must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible

- Getting repairs and communication around repairs right have been strong themes from our tenant engagement
- Requirements are more tenant-centric including an emphasis on easy reporting and good landlord communication
- Moved away from right first time repairs to setting timescales that achieve effective, efficient and timely repairs

### **Adaptations**

RP's must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services

- Greater prominence than in the existing standards – landlords to assist tenants to access service
- Recognition that responsibility to deliver adaptations rests with the LA

# Neighbourhood and Community Standard (1)

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

### **Maintenance of shared spaces**

RPs must work co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to contribute to the upkeep and safety of shared spaces associated with their homes

- Shared spaces are those used by tenants that are not the responsibility of the landlord, as opposed to communal areas where landlords have direct responsibilities
- Despite not having direct control, landlords have a role to play in co-operating with others (e.g. other landlords, LAs) so those spaces are safe and well-maintained for tenants

### **Local cooperation**

RPs must co-operate with relevant partners to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they provide social housing

- Very similar to our existing requirements
- When considering what role to play, landlords will be expected to consider their strategic objectives and views of tenants as well as their presence in an area

# Neighbourhood and Community Standard (2)

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

### **Anti-social behaviour**

RPs must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing

- SHWP highlighted the ongoing importance of requirements on ASB
- New requirements seek to better reflect the realities of an RP's role in deterring and tackling ASB
- We propose introducing requirements for landlords to have a specific approach for dealing with hate incidents

### **Domestic abuse**

RPs must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice

- SHWP expectation with a new standard setting power in the SHR Act
- Requirements recognise that landlords have a role to play in tackling domestic abuse

# Tenancy Standard

## *Required outcomes*

## *Key points*

### **Allocations and lettings**

RP's must allocate and let their homes in a fair and transparent way that takes the needs of tenants and prospective tenants into account

- Requirements are more tenant-centric, recognising landlords need to balance competing demands to ensure stock is used appropriately
- We have given great emphasis to allocating adapted housing appropriately, to make the best use of homes

### **Tenure**

RP's must offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.

- 2012 Directions are still in place for tenure. Future changes subject to a new Direction

### **Tenancy sustainment and evictions**

RP's must support tenants to maintain their tenancy or licence. Where an RP ends a tenancy or licence, they must offer affected tenants advice and assistance

- Policy continuity in this area. We expect providers to support tenants to stay housed whilst recognising there are circumstances where that is no longer appropriate

### **Mutual exchange**

Registered providers must support relevant tenants living in eligible housing to mutually exchange their homes

- New mutual exchange direction provides continuity in this area; RPs providing support to tenants seeking to mutually exchange
- Landlords will be required to offer those tenants with information on its implications