



# A guide to the Consumer Standards

## Home Standard

### Quality of accommodation

Registered providers shall:

- ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the
- Government's Decent Homes Guidance<sup>1</sup> and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard
- meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance<sup>2</sup>, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard
- in agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section six of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance.

### Repairs and maintenance

Registered providers shall:

- provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time
- meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes

## Tenancy Standard

### Allocations and mutual exchange

Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:

- make the best use of available housing
- are compatible with the purpose of the housing
- contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities

There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.

Registered providers shall enable their tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy with that of another tenant, by way of internet-based mutual exchange services.

### Tenure

Registered providers shall 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.

They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.

## **Neighbourhood and Community Standard**

### **Neighbourhood management**

Registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

### **Local area co-operation**

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties.

### **Anti-social behaviour**

Registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

## **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard**

### **Customer service, choice and complaints**

Registered providers shall:

- provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards
- have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly

### **Involvement and empowerment**

Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:

- the formulation of their landlord's housing-related policies and strategic priorities
- the making of decisions about how housing-related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards
- the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved
- the management of their homes, where applicable
- the management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made
- agreeing local offers for service delivery

### **Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants**

Registered providers shall:

- treat all tenants with fairness and respect
- demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs

## Making a complaint

The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) does not have a statutory mandate to deal with individual complaints and cannot mediate in disputes between landlords and tenants. They will direct tenants or other complainants towards the provider's own complaints system and the Housing Ombudsman.

If you feel SHAL is not meeting these standards you can make a complaint. We have a 2 stage complaints process.

You can also make a referral to the RSH if you feel SHAL is not meeting these standards. You can email [enquiries@rsh.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsh.gov.uk). However, they have a limited role in relation to the Consumer Standards. Their role is limited to considering whether a standard has been breached and then only in the event that the breach has caused or, may cause, 'serious detriment.'

If you'd like to find out more please visit [www.shal.org](http://www.shal.org) or call us on 01278 444344.