

February 5th, 2026

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 11th February 2026** at **7:00 pm** in **Church Street, Newtownards.**

# Agenda

## Agenda

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- 12. Active & Healthy Communities Directorate Budgetary Control Report - December 2025 (Report attached)**  
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- 14. Smartphone Free Childhood (Report attached)**  
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## **19. Response to Notice of Motion 636 - Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex Celebration (Report attached)**

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## **20. Notices of Motion**

### **20.1. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Douglas and Alderman Cummings.**

That this council is deeply concerned regarding the length of time that people battling with Motor Neurone Disease must wait to receive help through the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Disabled Facilities Grant.

To write to the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Minister for Communities to ask what the current length of time is for MND sufferers to have home adaptations completed and to ask them to implement a scheme to fast track these vital and much needed home adaptations.

### **20.2. Notice of Motion submitted by Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Brady and Alderman McAlpine.**

This Council pledges to write to Stormont to request the introduction of femicide as a specific hate crime which therefore carries an appropriate sentence, as well as specific deradicalisation support while in prison in order to prevent reoffending.

Femicide is defined as the intentional killing of a woman due to factors such as hatred, discrimination or subjugation.

It also includes acts motivated by control, possession or domination over a woman, or in relation to her refusal to establish or maintain an emotional relationship, or as an act of limitation of her

individual freedom.

This Council recognises that the motivation for this crime is rooted in a desire for the control and subjugation of women, driven by patriarchal attitudes in society.

That perpetrators can be partners but as our communities are changing, we are also seeing a growing trend of 'honour based' killings of women by family members.

That while femicide lies at the extreme end of the spectrum of violence against women, other acts motivated by control, possession, or dominance—such as domestic abuse, coercive control, and harassment—create the conditions in which femicide occurs. These acts serve as warning signs that, when left unaddressed, can escalate to fatal violence.

And that by establishing femicide as a distinct criminal offence, we send a clear message that gender-based violence will not be tolerated and that the lives of women have inherent value deserving of specific legal protection.

### **20.3. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Ashe and Councillor Moore.**

That Council notes the success of the inclusion of effigies and emblems to the penalties for 'in-programme' bonfires; that Council tasks officers to engage with groups to add flags to the list of penalties for 'in-programme' bonfires; and that officers return a report updating Members on these actions by the June committee meeting.

## **21. Any Other Notified Business**

**\*\*\*ITEMS 22-24 IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

### **Reports for Approval Delegated to Committee**

#### **22. Tender for Advice Services (Report attached)**

📎 *22. Tender for Advice Services.pdf*

*Not included*

#### **23. Public Spaces CCTV Monitoring Contract - Extension Option (Report attached)**

📎 *23. Public Spaces CCTV Monitoring Contract - Extension Option.pdf*

*Not included*

### **Reports for Approval**

#### **24. Bangor & Newtownards Market Provision (Report attached)**

📎 *24. Bangor & Newtownards Market Provision.pdf*

*Not included*

## **ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

4 February 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a hybrid meeting (in person and via zoom) of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee of Ards and North Down Borough in the Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards and via Zoom on **Wednesday 11 February 2026 commencing at 7pm.**

Yours faithfully

Michael Steele  
Acting Chief Executive  
Ards and North Down Borough Council

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest

#### **Reports for Approval**

3. Mary Peters Trust (Report attached)
4. Decent Homes Standard – Consultation Response (Report attached)
5. Publication of the Single Construction Regulator Prospectus - Consultation Response (Report attached)
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**Reports for Approval**

- 24. Bangor & Newtownards Market Provision (Report attached)

**MEMBERSHIP OF ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE (16 MEMBERS)**

Alderman Brooks	Councillor Hollywood
Alderman Cummings	Councillor S Irvine
Alderman McRandal	Councillor W Irvine (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ashe (Chair)	Councillor Kerr
Councillor Boyle	Councillor McBurney
Councillor Chambers	Councillor McClean
Councillor Cochrane	Councillor McKee
Councillor Douglas	Councillor Moore

Unclassified

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**ITEM 3****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Leisure
Date of Report	22 January 2026
File Reference	CW32
Legislation	Recreation and Youth Services Order 1986
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Mary Peters Trust
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Mary Peters Trust Correspondence to Council

**Background**

Council received correspondence from the Mary Peters Trust (Appendix 1) in December 2025 seeking support from the Council to maintain a level of funding to ensure the number and value of grant awards provided by the Trust continues to grow.

Members may be aware that the Council has previously, on an annual basis, helped to support the Mary Peters Trust in the form of a contribution. The Mary Peters Trust does excellent work in supporting upcoming local athletes from a wide range of sports through the distribution of financial support that allows the athletes to train and compete at the highest levels.

Since its establishment more than 50 years ago, the Trust has made a difference to the lives of thousands of young athletes from across Northern Ireland, selecting the best athletes, supporting them financially and providing access to a team of experts,

Not Applicable

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who help support their pathway to success and aid them in achieving their sporting ambitions.

Throughout 2025/26 the Mary Peters Trust has provided financial support totalling £9,400 between 16 local athletes from 12 different sports across the Ards and North Down Borough, as detailed below:

- Archery
- Disability Football
- Football
- Golf
- Tennis
- Triathlon
- Yachting
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Netball
- Swimming
- Weightlifting

This support has proved hugely beneficial to the Borough's athletes particularly as it contributes towards some of the training and travelling costs of their sporting competitions.

It is proposed that the Council continues to support the work of the Trust through the award of a £5,000 contribution which can be met from the 2026/27 Sports Development budget.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council approves the award of £5,000 to the Mary Peters Trust from the 2026/27 Sports Development budget.

**APPENDIX 1**

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025

Ms Susie McCullough  
Ards and North Down Borough Council  
City Hall  
The Castle  
Bangor BT20 4BT

Dear Ms McCullough,

Over the years you have assisted the Mary Peters Trust, a local charity administered voluntarily by Directors, to provide encouragement and financial assistance to over 150 athletes every year. We invest our capital, and the interest is distributed in the form of sporting awards to upcoming athletes. Annually we add to this amount with extensive fundraising and support from commercial businesses, organisations and individuals. This assists us in growing the number of annual beneficiaries and retaining the value of the awards we make in the face of increasing training, equipment, and competition costs for the athletes in pursuing their sporting ambitions.

As a charity we are committed to supporting our young athletes and as such we have in the last year given awards to a number of young people in your Council area, whose names are listed in the attachment to this letter.

In the coming year we are seeking your support to help maintain a level of funding to ensure the number and value of awards continues to grow. Each year we receive many more applications than we have the funds to support. We need the support of your organisation more than ever this year as we face another year of families struggling to support athletes in fulfilling their sporting ambitions and becoming the role models of achievement that motivate the next generation.

This year the Trust is delighted to say that at some point in their sporting journey we funded every athlete from Northern Ireland that medalled at the Paris Olympics.

We recognise that many local councils either directly, or through local voluntary sports advisory committees or councils, have established grant assistance schemes for sports participants from their own area. However, we believe the Mary Peters Trust can provide further benefit to aspiring athletes from your area, either through additional financial assistance, or through access to a network of specialist advice and support utilising the experience of the many former beneficiaries of the Trust who have successfully developed sporting careers, including at the highest levels.

We would ask you to forward this letter to the relevant Council Committee and respectfully request the Council consider joining in our work of helping young people achieve excellence in sport, by making a contribution to the Trust for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027.

It would be wonderful to have the support of the Council. If it assists, a representative (Director) of the Trust would be happy to meet with an appropriate member of your staff and/or Elected Member/Members to explain in more detail the work of the Trust, and how we could work together in the interests of aspiring young athletes in your area.

Best wishes, and we would really appreciate the support of your organisation in keeping local sporting talent thriving.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Peters". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Lady Mary Peters LG CH DBE DL DSTJ OLY

President

Unclassified

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**ITEM 4****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Environmental Health and Regulatory Services
Date of Report	26 January 2026
File Reference	EHPD21
Legislation	Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1981
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Decent Homes Standard – Consultation Response
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Draft Response to Decent Homes Standard Consultation Appendix 2 - Proposals for the Review of the Decent Homes Standard Consultation

The Department for Communities (DfC) is consulting on the introduction of a statutory Decent Homes Standard intended to improve the condition, safety, and energy performance of homes in the social housing sector (See Appendix 2).

Social housing plays an important role within Ards and North Down, providing homes for approximately 17,700 residents living in 8,890 social housing households, which equates to 10.8% of the Borough's population. This sector therefore represents a significant proportion of local housing provision and is an essential source of accommodation for many households with higher levels of need.

## Not Applicable

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While the Council is not responsible for providing or managing social housing, it has statutory duties to assess and address housing conditions that may be prejudicial to health. Given these responsibilities, it is recommended that the Council supports measures to enhance housing standards across all tenures and stresses the importance of ensuring that any new provisions extend equally to the private rented sector, where many vulnerable households reside

A draft response has been prepared and is attached at Appendix 1.

Key messages in the draft response include:

- Broad support for the revised DHS, including the introduction of Pillar E, recognising its value for safety, sustainability and wellbeing.
- Need for clearer definitions and measurable criteria, particularly around mandatory vs desirable requirements, and to avoid overlap between pillars.
- Strong emphasis on ventilation, damp/mould prevention and thermal comfort, including ensuring upgrades do not inadvertently increase condensation risks.
- Recognition of practical challenges, such as older stock, EPC uncertainty, cost, grid capacity, workforce and tenant access.
- Support for robust repair timeframes and damp/mould response standards, provided they are proportionate and supported with clear guidance.
- Noting parity issues with the private rented sector, highlighting that similar standards would benefit PRS tenants and promote consistency across tenures.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approves the draft consultation response, attached as Appendix 1.

## Appendix 1

### Draft Response to Decent Homes Standard Consultation

Are you responding as:

(Required)

Social Housing Provider (Registered Housing Association or Northern Ireland Housing Executive)

Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations or housing provider representatives

Social Housing Tenant

Social Housing Building Contractor

Professional Body

Social Housing Consultant

Health Professional

- Other (please specify below)

Please do not provide individual names or details

Local authority - Ards and North Down Borough Council

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1. Do you find the table user friendly and easy to navigate?

**Yes** No

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2. Do you find the table easy to understand?

**Yes** No

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3. Do you agree that the extra Pillar E, "A home should be safe, secure, sustainable and promote wellbeing", should be included in the DHS?

**Yes** ~~No~~

---

4. Do you agree with all the elements included in Pillar E?

**Yes** No

## Comment

The Council would generally support the introduction of Pillar E, as it provides an opportunity to improve

- Tenant safety
- A sense of security
- Estate and communal area conditions
- Environmental sustainability
- Design features that support mental and physical wellbeing

The proposed changes improve alignment with policy in other regions of the United Kingdom, and increase recognition of the role housing plays in delivering improved health and social outcomes.

The Department should develop suitably detailed definitions in relation to terms such as 'wellbeing', 'security' and 'sustainability', with the use of practical examples, to ensure consistent application and clarity for tenants and regulators.

There is potential overlap between Pillar E and other pillars, particularly around:

- Ventilation and damp/mould
- Elements that relate to thermal comfort
- Parts of the statutory fitness standard

To avoid duplication or confusion, the Department should:

- Clarify the boundaries between pillars
  - Ensure Pillar E enhances, rather than complicates, the overall standard
  - Develop guidance that shows clearly where each requirement sits
- 

5. Do you believe there are extra elements that should be included in Pillar E?

**Yes** ~~No~~

## Comment

- Non-slip surfaces should also be provided in communal areas to ensure safe access.
  - Storage provision for larger items such as mobility scooters and bicycles should be considered, particularly in apartments/flats.
-

6. Having reviewed the proposed DHS table in its entirety, do you believe the revised DHS has incorporated the criteria required to ensure tenants are living in a safe, secure and comfortable home?

**Yes** No

### Comment

Yes, broadly.

The revised DHS includes stronger requirements for safety, thermal comfort and security, and the addition of Pillar E usefully addresses wellbeing and the wider living environment. However, some criteria need clearer definitions—especially what is mandatory versus desirable—and more guidance is required to ensure consistency and practicality across older or constrained stock. With these refinements, the revised DHS would more reliably achieve safe, secure and comfortable homes.

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7. Do you believe any sections within the overall revised DHS should be amended or changed?

**Yes** No

### Comment

Yes, the limitations referred to in the response to question 6 apply here also.

To provide examples

- clearer distinctions between mandatory and desirable components
  - clear timeframes for new repair requirements, particularly in their application to older or constrained (such as flats) housing stock
  - Pillars C and E would benefit from having more measurable, specific criteria to ensure consistent application, as well as ensuring the standard is ambitious and deliverable.
- 

8. Looking at the standard in its entirety do you agree that 'reasonable' and 'reasonably' should remain in the DHS?

**Yes** No

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9. Do you agree that the 'age' requirement should remain in the DHS?

**Yes** No

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10. Do you agree that the key components list should be updated to include the additional components listed below?

- Ventilation **Yes**
  - Damp and mould **Yes**
  - Heating system inspection **Yes**
  - Fire safety **Yes**
  - Fire risk assessments **Yes**
  - Carbon monoxide **Yes**
  - Lifts **Yes**
- 

11. Are there any additional components you believe should be included on the key component list?

**Yes** ~~No~~

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12. Do you agree the multiple-choice option should remain in the revised DHS, (this means that 3 or more components must be lacking for the property to fail the DHS and this will assist housing providers to identify and categorise repairs for triage and set clear timescales)?

**Yes** ~~No~~

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13. Do you agree that the timeframes for repairs and maintenance, (emergency, urgent and routine), should also be included in the DHS?

**Yes** ~~No~~

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14. Do you agree the proposals in relation to repairs and maintenance, which includes dealing with damp and mould, as outlined below, are an appropriate and proportionate response for Northern Ireland?

From October 2025, Awaab's Law came into force in England. This law requires all social housing landlords to investigate and resolve dangerous damp and mould hazards within a set timeframe, as well as addressing all emergency repairs within 24 hours. The option to incorporate these timeframes into the DHS has been considered in this review.

The Department has worked closely with the sector to identify risks and support them to address these. We consider that a proportionate and appropriate response here may be to incorporate similar, robust standards around investigation and resolving hazards within existing Social Housing frameworks.

This will include introducing timeframes to assess risks and triage repairs and damage appropriately for investigation, with emergency and urgent repairs prioritised accordingly.

Yes No

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15. Do you agree including the new recommendations listed below, will enhance the thermal comfort within a property?

- Roof, loft and wall insulation Yes
  - Hot water cylinder insulation Yes
  - Draught proofing Yes
  - Heating controls Yes
  - Replacement glazing (Window and doors if inefficient) Yes
  - Install or upgrade inefficient heating systems Yes
  - Functional and adequate ventilation Yes
- 

16. Would you suggest any amendments and/or additions to the recommendations listed above?

Yes No

#### Comment

- Minimum ventilation performance, to ensure thermal upgrades do not inadvertently increase condensation or mould risk.
  - Design that supports affordable heating.
  - If whole-home ventilation systems (eg Drimaster or equivalent) are to be used, they should include a heating element to ensure cold air is not being drawn into the property. This is key to tenant comfort and confidence in the system.
- 

17. Given the level of uncertainty due to the continually evolving EPC reforms, do you agree that setting a minimum EPC band C rating should be a recommendation and not mandatory for all social housing homes?

Yes No

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18. Do you agree with the recommendation in the revised DHS, that social housing properties should achieve an EPC band C by 2030?

Yes No

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19. Would you suggest any amendments and/or additions to the recommended energy efficiency measures as listed below?

Yes No

#### Comment

- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) or dMEV, where feasible, to ensure that improved insulation and airtightness do not increase condensation or mould risk.
  - Air tightness improvements
  - Heat pump readiness or compatibility consideration
- 

20. What are the main challenges/barriers that would prevent a property achieving an EPC band C rating?

- Access to property X
- Age of property Yes
- Listed buildings Yes
- Size of property Yes
- Cost of works Yes
- Other Yes

#### Comment

- Construction type (such as solid walls)
  - Grid capacity limitations
  - Disruption to tenants
  - Tenant behaviour/cooperation
- 

21. Do you agree with the proposals for the public realm to be included as a desirable criteria within the revised DHS table?

Yes No

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22. Do you agree that housing providers should put provisions in place to minimise the risk of the following?

- Flooding **Yes**
  - Overheating **Yes**
- 

23. Do you agree that housing providers should install non-slip flooring in bathrooms and kitchens, with tenants responsible for all other floor coverings?

**Yes** No

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24. Do you agree it is crucial for both tenant and housing providers to engage and actively collaborate to achieve and maintain a decent home?

**Yes** No

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25. If the revised DHS was published in 2026, do you agree it is achievable and realistic to set a compliance date for 2030? (This will mean that housing providers must ensure all annual reports after 2030 are compliant with the revised DHS).

**Yes** No

#### **Comment**

However, it will be dependent on there being adequate funding, workforce capacity and skills, stable supply chain of materials and clear guidance on implementation.

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26. Housing providers, what do you believe to be significant challenges to complying with the revised DHS? Please select all the options that apply.

**Not applicable**

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27. Are there any other issues you wish to raise in relation to the proposals for the DHS review?

**Yes** No

#### **Comment**

The Council would wish to highlight that similar improvements to safety, thermal comfort, ventilation, and wellbeing would be highly beneficial within the private rented sector. Many of the issues addressed in the revised DHS—particularly around damp and mould, energy efficiency, and security—are equally present in PRS

housing, and aligning standards over time would help ensure a more consistent level of protection for all tenants, regardless of tenure.

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Department for

**Communities**

[www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)



# Proposals for the Review of the Decent Homes Standard Consultation

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Please note this document is available in alternative formats. Please contact the team using the contact details in Section One of this document.

# Foreword

I believe that everyone deserves to live in good quality, affordable and sustainable housing. I am proud that the Programme for Government aims to ensure that everyone lives in a safe, warm and affordable home, with its first ever standalone outcome for housing.

We know that living in a substandard home impacts on a person's health and well-being, particularly for the most vulnerable in our society, and can be detrimental to a person's quality of life, leading to social isolation or impacting on their ability to engage in work or at school.

The Decent Homes Standard, which applies to Housing Executive and registered Housing Association homes, has been unchanged in Northern Ireland for over twenty years. I believe it's time to modernise and update this standard. Therefore, I am pleased to publish this consultation on the proposals for the review of the Decent Homes Standard, a standard which seeks to improve the quality and sustainability of social housing, with a focus on tenant wellbeing and comfort.

In developing these proposals, my officials have worked collaboratively with those who understand what is required to bring homes up to a standard that is compatible with modern day living, including technical experts, registered social housing providers and tenants themselves.

Using the input gathered during this engagement, I now set out a series of proposals to help achieve a minimum social housing standard which will increase health

and safety standards, make homes more energy efficient, and protect tenants.

I encourage you to play your part in this consultation to help guide and shape this important housing standard. Your contribution will ensure that this standard reflects and responds to the needs of those who are living in social homes.

**Gordon Lyons**  
**Minister for Communities**

# 1. Introduction

This section provides information on the consultation and how you can respond to it.

## The consultation

This public consultation sets out proposals to be considered for the revised Decent Homes Standard in social housing and seeks your views. It is important that all interested parties are given the opportunity to engage with the Department and to provide essential feedback. This will ensure a comprehensive review process where all feedback is considered, to identify issues and potential solutions.

## Why change is necessary

The Department first introduced the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in June 2004 and there have been no updates since. Comparable standards in other jurisdictions have been reviewed and updated, particularly in recent years. As the current DHS is now below the minimum standards implemented in other UK jurisdictions and has not kept pace with Building Standards, environmental issues, and health and safety issues; consideration must be given on how to enhance the standard.

In undertaking this review, our underpinning principles were to:

- improve the condition of all social homes
- focus on tenant wellbeing and comfort
- consider improved energy efficiency and net zero targets

- deliver homes better suited for modern living
- be practical and financially viable for delivery by social housing providers.

## What is covered

This consultation deals with proposals for a revised Decent Homes Standard. This is the minimum standard that all social homes are required to meet to ensure tenants live in a safe, warm comfortable home.

## How to respond to this consultation

The consultation period runs from Wednesday 26 November 2025 to Wednesday 4 March 2026. This document sets out the Department's proposals for inclusion and amendments into a revised DHS.

Ways you can respond to the publication are detailed below.

### Online

You can access an online survey at <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfc/decent-homes-standard-consultation/>

### By email

You can request an electronic copy of the consultation response form by emailing [socialhousingsustainability@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:socialhousingsustainability@communities-ni.gov.uk). You can send us your response at this email address.

### By post

If you would prefer a hard copy of the consultation response form, you can request this from the team by contacting us at the email address listed above or by writing to us at the address below. Once received, you can complete the form and forward it to:-

Social Housing Sustainability DHS  
Consultation  
Department for Communities  
4th Floor Causeway Exchange  
1 – 7 Bedford Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 7EG

If you have any queries about this document or require a copy in a different format you can contact us by e-mail at: **socialhousingsustainability@communities-ni.gov.uk** or in writing at the address above.

During the consultation period the Social Housing Sustainability Team will schedule engagement seminars.

### **Document linked to consultation**

Access to documents associated with this consultation are:

- Table to include proposals for the Revised Decent Homes Standard
- Table of current Decent Homes Standard
- Online survey link which you can use to complete the consultation response form electronically

A Regulatory Impact Assessment will be completed following the consultation.

### **What happens after the consultation closes**

Following the end of the consultation period, the Department will publish the responses in summary form. Unless respondents indicate otherwise, all responses, including personal information, may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please tell us, but be aware that we cannot guarantee confidentiality. We will process your personal data in accordance with our legal obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## 2. The Review

This section looks in detail at the background of the Decent Homes Standard and our proposals to review and enhance the current standard.

### Background to the current Decent Homes Standard

The Department for Communities implemented the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in 2004. This is the standard that all existing social housing is required to meet; new social homes are built to a specified standard set by the Social Housing Development Programme. The standard is regulated through the Department's oversight of the Housing Executive and its Regulatory Framework for Housing Associations.

To comply with the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) a home must:

- a. Meet the statutory minimum fitness standard for housing as set out in Article 46 of the Housing (NI) Order 1981<sup>1</sup>;
- b. Be in a reasonable state of repair;
- c. Have reasonably modern facilities and services; and
- d. Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

### The Social Housing Stock

As of April 2023, the housing stock for NIHE

totals 83,225<sup>2</sup> and NI Registered Housing Association totals 59,371<sup>3</sup>. The Social Housing Development Programme<sup>4</sup> which is a three-year rolling programme, is the primary means of addressing the need for new social housing in Northern Ireland and is delivered in partnership between the Department, the Housing Executive and registered Housing Associations, to increase the total social housing stock.

### The Policy Context

Taking recent changes in housing standards and regulations into consideration, the objective of this consultation is to improve the condition of all social homes with a focus on tenant wellbeing and comfort, and to deliver homes better suited for modern living. The Department must also ensure that the enhanced standards are practical and financially viable for delivery by all social housing providers.

The review of the DHS aligns with other work that has been carried out within DfC and wider Executive commitments. It aims to make a positive contribution to Objective 3 Quality and Safety and Objective 5: A Fair Path to Low Carbon Housing in the Housing Supply Strategy's (HSS). It also aims to sit alongside and work with the forthcoming NI Executive Fuel Poverty Strategy. All of these policies collectively work together to help deliver the Executive Programme for Government's outcome for housing, to aim to deliver good quality, affordable and sustainable homes.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1981/156/article/46>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/06fd9dcf-7c56-403d-a953-5f6596566966/Social-housing-stats-NI.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Social Housing Sector keeps on building in face of inflationary pressure - NIFHA

<sup>4</sup> The Housing Executive - Social housing development programme

The UK Government's and the NI Executive's aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050<sup>5</sup>; we are therefore considering including improved energy efficiency measures and introducing new standards into the DHS, which can support achieving this target. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022<sup>6</sup> requires publication of 5 yearly Climate Action Plans which set out how statutory emissions reduction targets will be met. The Department is sector lead for collating the residential sector's contribution to the first Climate Action Plan 2023-2027.

Another relevant consideration was the implementation of England's Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023<sup>7</sup>, which received royal assent in July 2023. The Act sets out a series of actions the government would take to ensure residents of social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes and have access to help when things go wrong. The proposals for Awaab's Law in England<sup>8</sup> included introducing timeframes for risk assessing repairs and triage appropriately for investigation, with emergency and urgent repairs prioritised accordingly and requirements for record keeping alongside other changes. The need for similar action here was considered in this review.

### Previous Stakeholder Engagement

In preparation for this public consultation, the Department engaged with social landlords and social housing tenants in 2024. This engagement has been useful in identifying key issues, challenges and in ensuring considerations were appropriate for both stakeholder groups.

Feedback was sought on early considerations for change and revision, which have supported the development of the final proposals. Some of these findings are reflected through the consultation document.

### Other jurisdictions

Across the United Kingdom other jurisdictions have either introduced new standards or are currently in the process of reviewing social housing standards.

**Scotland** introduced the Scottish Housing Quality Standard<sup>9</sup> (SHQS) in February 2004, with a focus on social landlords ensuring homes are energy efficient, safe, secure, not seriously damaged and have kitchens and bathrooms in good condition. The SHQS target was incorporated into the Scottish Social Housing Charter<sup>10</sup>, which came into force in April 2012, which sets out standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve for tenants.

Scotland also introduced the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)<sup>11</sup> to improve energy efficiency of social housing to help reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and the emission of greenhouse gases. Milestones were set for compliance dates, however these are now temporarily on hold, pending a review of the EESH. Scotland intends to introduce a new Housing Standard to cover all tenures, rented and owner-occupier named "Housing to 2040". The ambition is that everyone in Scotland should have access to a warm, safe, affordable and energy efficient home that meets their needs.

<sup>5</sup> Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 'Path to Net Zero Energy' | Department for the Economy

<sup>6</sup> Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

<sup>7</sup> Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

<sup>8</sup> Awaab's Law to force landlords to fix dangerous homes - GOV.UK

<sup>9</sup> Improving housing standards - Social housing - gov.scot

<sup>10</sup> Scottish Social Housing Charter - gov.scot

<sup>11</sup> Energy efficiency in social housing - Home energy and fuel poverty - gov.scot

The Scottish Housing Regulator monitors compliance for the SQHS and the Scottish Social Housing Charter which came into force in April 2012, also sets standards and outcomes that all social housing providers should aim to achieve.

**Wales** introduced the Welsh Housing Quality Standard<sup>12</sup> (WHQS) in 2002 to provide a common standard for physical condition of all housing in Wales; this was in response to the National Housing Strategy, “Better Homes for People in Wales”. Following a public consultation in 2022, a new WHQS was launched in October 2023, building upon the original standards with a greater focus on decarbonisation, energy efficiency and tenant wellbeing.

Section 111 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014<sup>13</sup> and Section 33A of the Housing Act 1996<sup>14</sup> contains legal powers for the Welsh Government to sanction housing providers for non-compliance.

**England** launched a review of the DHS in 2023<sup>15</sup>, with a focus on potentially applying the standard to the private rented sector. A consultation on a new DHS launched recently, with a focus to ensure safe, secure housing in both social and private rented sectors. England has brought forward legislation for Awaab’s Law in the social rented sector. Landlords must comply with new targets for timescales by October 2025<sup>16</sup>, for the investigation and remedy of hazards such as damp and mould. Implementing this legislation for social housing and extending protections to the private rented sector will support tenants to secure faster repairs,

reducing health and safety risks.

England also plan to introduce a new access to information requirement for housing associations to enable tenants to hold their landlords to account and improve the quality of the housing and services provided. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)<sup>17</sup> was introduced in England and Wales under the Housing Act 2004. This is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety identified in a property. The HHSRS is used in England and Wales to monitor compliance of the current Decent Homes Standard. Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation Act) 2018<sup>18</sup> also provides legal powers if a property is in serious disrepair.

**Ireland** has regulated for minimum standards for rented accommodation as set out in the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019<sup>19</sup>. The regulations set the minimum requirement including the provision of appliances such as cookers, washing machines and dryers, where the house does not have a private garden or yard. Ireland is also regulated under part IV of the Housing Act 1966<sup>20</sup>, to ensure a house is fit for human habitation.

<sup>12</sup> Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023

<sup>13</sup> Housing (Wales) Act 2014

<sup>14</sup> Housing Act 1996

<sup>15</sup> Measures to ensure decent homes for all - GOV.UK

<sup>16</sup> Awaab’s Law to force landlords to fix dangerous homes - GOV.UK

<sup>17</sup> Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS): guidance for landlords and property-related professionals - GOV.UK

<sup>18</sup> Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

<sup>19</sup> S.I. No. 137/2019 - Housing (Standards For Rented Houses) Regulations 2019

<sup>20</sup> Housing Act, 1966

# Proposals to Review and Enhance the Current Standard

The draft proposals are summarised as follows:

To adopt a more holistic approach that considers a wider range of elements that can contribute to making a home decent, such as external areas and communal space. Each criterion will confirm if a component is mandatory or desirable (if practical) requirement. (For example, depending on the layout of a property there may not be space to provide facilities for drying clothes, however, where practical, housing providers are encouraged to adopt a best practice approach.)

To increase the Component list to further enhance health and safety standards.

To set a baseline for investigating and completing maintenance and repair works.

To enhance Pillar D, which requires a home to have a reasonable degree of thermal comfort, by providing effective insulation, efficient heating and adequate ventilation, to contribute positively to energy efficiency and carbon reduction targets, and as well as fuel poverty indicators.

To include a fifth, additional Pillar E, which requires that a home should promote safety, security, sustainability and foster the overall wellbeing of those living in the home.

A more detailed breakdown for each pillar is provided below:

## Pillar A

A property must meet the statutory minimum fitness standard for housing as set out in Article 46 of the Housing (NI) Order 1981. The order states a property is fit for human habitation unless it fails to meet one or more of the following requirements —

it is structurally stable

it is free from serious disrepair

it is free from dampness prejudicial to the health of occupants

it has adequate provision for lighting, heating and ventilation

it has adequate piped supply of wholesome water

there are satisfactory facilities in the house for the preparation and cooking of food including a sink with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water

it has a suitably located water-closet for the exclusive use of the occupants

it has for the exclusive use of the occupants a suitably located fixed bath or shower and wash-hand basin each of which is provided with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water and has an effective system for draining foul waste and surface water.

Social housing stock is not all the same, nor do all occupiers have the same needs, so the aim is, therefore, to take a holistic approach and interconnect all the elements that make a home decent. In reference to pillars B to E of the revised DHS detailed below, many of the elements or components within the pillars overlap. Each pillar will confirm if a component is a mandatory requirement or desirable (if practical), for example depending on a property layout there may not be space available to provide adequate facilities for drying and airing clothes, however, where practical to do so, housing providers are encouraged to adopt a best practice approach to providing these.

Desirable components do not affect the integrity of a building and cannot be considered as “key” or “other” components, however inclusion of them, where possible, will improve the safety, security and sustainability of the home and the overall wellbeing of the tenant.

### **Pillar B**

A home must be in a reasonable state of repair. Properties that fail to meet this criterion are those where either:

one or more “KEY” building components<sup>21</sup> (like a roof or heating system) are old and because of their condition, need replacing or major repair or

two or more “OTHER” building components are old and because of their condition, need replacing or major repair

### **Pillar C**

A home must have reasonably modern facilities and services. Properties that fail to meet this criterion are those that lack three or more of the following:

a reasonably modern kitchen (20 years old or less)

a kitchen with adequate space and layout

a reasonably modern bathroom (30 years old or less)

an appropriately located bathroom and WC

adequate insulation against external noise (where external noise is a problem)

adequate size and layout of common areas for blocks of flats

### **Pillar D**

A home must provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort; this requires effective insulation, ventilation and heating.

### **Pillar E**

The Department is considering adding an additional Pillar, E, “A home should promote safety, security, sustainability and foster the overall wellbeing of those living in the home”. Pillar E encapsulates many desirable aspects of the DHS but it also contains some components which, for the safety and wellbeing of the tenant, should be considered essential mandatory requirements.

<sup>21</sup> Minimum fitness standards | Department for Communities

## 3. What are the potential impacts?

This section considers why change is necessary.

### What are the potential impacts

Better housing for tenants living in a safe, warm and comfortable home has a positive impact on tenants' health and education as well as jobs and employment opportunities. A decent home with good insulation and energy efficient measures including low carbon heating systems, could result in lower energy bills for tenants.

Failure to review the DHS can lead to negative consequences, including tenants living in substandard homes, not reflective of modern day living, outdated standards, potentially leading to non-compliance and issues for both social housing providers and tenants. A comprehensive review of the DHS is crucial to ensure the standard remains relevant and effective, particularly in light of evolving housing conditions and the introduction of new technologies.

## 4. Human rights and impact assessments

### Human rights

The Department believes introducing the review of the DHS will enhance human rights by ensuring a minimum standard of housing quality and safety for tenants. This standard addresses various human rights aspects, including the right to a safe, warm and affordable home, which will impact the health and well-being of tenants. The revised DHS aims to mitigate risks associated with substandard housing, such as health problems, poor mental health and reduced educational attainment by ensuring housing providers meet the required minimum standard.

### Equality

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires each public authority, when carrying

out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine categories of persons, namely

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to its obligations above, the public authority must also have regard to

the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

We believe revising the DHS will improve the living conditions for all social tenants irrelevant of their disability, religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, gender, sexual orientation and if the tenant has dependents.

An Equality Screening was conducted on the proposals. The policy is not expected to disadvantage any particular group, based on age, disability, gender, race or religion. The proposals do include reference to key components which may particularly be of use to people with a disability (for example, disability access and lifts). Other desirable components may be particularly relevant to persons with children, for example, gardens

and safety catches for windows. Because adverse impacts were not identified, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However, the Department will keep this under review and welcome feedback on this basis.

### **Rural Needs Impact Assessment**

The Department has assessed the proposed approach and considers there would be no differential impact in rural areas or on rural communities. A copy of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment can be viewed on the Department's consultation page along with the consultation document -

**[www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-revised-decent-homes-standard-department-communities](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-revised-decent-homes-standard-department-communities)**

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**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**

Unclassified

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**ITEM 5****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Environmental Health & Regulatory Services
Date of Report	11 February 2026
File Reference	CW99
Legislation	General Product Safety Regulations (EU) 2023/988 The Construction Products Regulations 2013
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Publication of the Single Construction Regulator Prospectus - Consultation Response
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Draft Response to Single Construction Regulator Prospectus Consultation Appendix 2 - The Single Construction Regulator Prospectus - Consultation Document

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, which resulted in the loss of 72 lives, the United Kingdom Government established the Grenfell Tower Inquiry to investigate the circumstances leading to the incident. The Inquiry's Phase 2 report set out a series of recommendations, including the need for fundamental reform of the regulatory framework governing construction and building safety. One of the key recommendations was the establishment of a single construction regulator to provide clearer oversight and accountability.

## Not Applicable

The published Prospectus (attached as Appendix 2) outlines the Government's proposed approach to regulatory reform and the creation of this new regulatory body. It also provides an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on the future roles of central government, the regulator, and the construction industry in ensuring improved safety outcomes for residents and building users.

The proposals have significant implications for local authorities, particularly in areas such as building control, enforcement responsibilities, and the competence of the local government workforce. While the Prospectus acknowledges the continuing importance of local authority functions, it also sets out proposals to clarify the division of responsibilities between national and local regulators. The consultation process provides an important opportunity to ensure that statutory functions are maintained, that responsibilities are not duplicated, and that the role of local authorities is properly recognised within the new regulatory landscape.

A draft consultation response (Appendix 1) has been prepared by the Environmental Health & Regulatory Services team to reflect the Council's position on the proposals set out within the Prospectus. This draft response addresses the potential impact on local authority functions, highlights areas where further clarity is required, and underscores the need to safeguard statutory responsibilities within any new regulatory framework. The draft is provided at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.

The closing date for responses is 20 March 2026.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council approves the draft consultation response.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Consultation on The Single Construction Regulator Prospectus.**

#### **Purpose of this consultation**

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry's first recommendation in its Phase 2 report was for government to create a single regulator that draws together functions relating to the construction industry. The prospectus seeks views on the vision and outcomes of the regulatory system for the built environment and the remit and functions of a future regulator.

#### **1. Where do each of the proposed outcomes for the system sit on a scale from very useful to not useful at all?**

Very useful

#### **2. What role would you and/or your organisation play in achieving these outcomes?**

Our current role as a market surveillance authority falls within outcome 3 (construction products are fit for their purpose and users are provided with accurate product information). As a market surveillance authority our role is to enforce the regulations at the point of supply within the constraints of available resource. A significant proportion of construction products falls outside the regulatory regime and are covered by GPSR.

#### **3. What will be the most important factors to achieving the proposed outcomes?**

Ards and North Down Borough Council are of the view that there should be one national regulator for construction products which has sole and complete responsibility for market surveillance and all related activities, including enforcement and provision of guidance and advice. This is the most effective way of regulating the construction products regime and ensuring consistency across the market. The current regime is fragmented with a lack of competency, capacity, resource, funding and support.

The current proposals in the Single Construction Regulator Prospectus Consultation Document, the proposed creation of a single oversight body is not sufficient to achieve what is required. This is detailed above, ie one national regulator for construction products which has sole and complete responsibility for market surveillance and all related activities, including enforcement and provision of guidance and advice.

#### **4. What are the most important barriers that could prevent the proposed outcomes from being met?**

As Northern Ireland-based regulators who must align with both EU & UK regulations, consistency of definition, approach etc is key to enforcement and the achievement of business compliance and avoids any potential divergence issues.

The existing enforcement bodies that regulate construction products have varying levels of market surveillance competencies for a very broad range of product types under numerous pieces of complex legislation, however these bodies are under-resourced, have competing priorities and lack support (financial, staffing, technical and training).

## 5. What data would be needed to demonstrate whether the outcomes are being achieved?

Question 23, Chapter 7 of the Construction Products Reform Green Paper, referenced the provision of a construction library which would provide data to assist in the demonstration of outcome 3. The following information to be accessible in this construction library would be useful:

- test history,
- compliance documentation,
- Approved Codes of Practice,
- harmonised/designated standards,
- digital passports,
- suitability of product use,
- technical guidance,
- advice for regulators
- Published details of recognised claims & the standards expected for the permitted use.

It would benefit:

- consumers,
- architects,
- builders,
- national regulators,
- businesses,
- test bodies
- engineers
- quantity surveyors

There needs to be oversight of the content of the information provided.

## 6. Have you experienced any challenges with providing information via government digital services when complying with current regulatory requirements across products, professions and buildings?

As regulators, we have limited experience with providing information via government digital services, such as the Product Safety Database. However, we recognise there may be challenges with security, reliance and connectivity; access to relevant back office support; system upgrades; consistency of information inputted and regular user training and development

## 7. How should the new regulator promote consistent digital standards and interoperability across the lifecycle of a building (including products, professions and buildings)?

Ards and North Down Borough Council are of the view that there should be one national regulator for construction products which has sole and complete responsibility for market

surveillance and all related activities, including enforcement and provision of guidance and advice. This is the most effective way of regulating the construction products regime and ensuring consistency across the market. The current regime is fragmented with a lack of competency, capacity, resource, funding and support.

This body could consist of a team of experts from the Building Safety Regulator, Local Authority Trading Standards/Environmental Health and building control along with other relevant bodies throughout the UK, including NI with full responsibility for all aspects of construction products including market surveillance and ensuring products used in construction are compliant with relevant requirements; are fit for purpose and are used correctly.

### **8. What digital tools and platforms do you find most effective for ensuring you meet regulatory compliance and why?**

Shared learning networks and peer support platforms such as PSD, IDB and KHub and libraries of information such as Regulators Companion.

These are effective as they are a source of advice and guidance from a range of regulators which promotes consistency of approach.

### **9. What are the opportunities and risks associated with automating regulatory compliance checking (e.g. AI-driven assessment), and how should oversight, accountability and human review be retained within automated systems?**

It offers opportunities in efficiency and accuracy but introduces risk regarding accountability and explainability. Effectively implementing these systems requires a balanced approach that integrates human oversight and review in line with relevant organisational governance policies, procedures and training. Clear review processes need to be in place to mitigate risk whilst maximising benefits.

### **10. Should the regulator play a role in setting behavioural standards and providing foundations for enforcement? If so, how should it do this e.g. via powers or duties?**

Ards and North Down Borough Council are of the view that there should be one national regulator for construction products which has sole and complete responsibility for market surveillance and all related activities, including enforcement and provision of guidance and advice. This is the most effective way of regulating the construction products regime and ensuring consistency across the market. The current regime is fragmented with a lack of competency, capacity, resource, funding and support.

### **11. How can the regulator protect residents, enabling them to effectively exercise their rights to seek redress to make their homes safe, without fear or confusion?**

As regulators engaging in market surveillance activities, we are unable to comment on how best to protect residents in this regard. However, we acknowledge the importance of this protection. Appropriate support from the regulator in any redress mechanism should be considered.

### **12. How can the regulator monitor the impact the regulatory system has on the safety of residents?**

Ards and North Down Borough Council are of the view that a portal should be established which would allow MSAs, residents, industry and other stakeholders to input data on, for

example, accidents, complaints and relevant industry intelligence along with proactive data such as market research and independent academic research.

Effective surveillance throughout the whole regulatory system is essential and hence the need for the creation of a single national regulator to oversee the collection, triage and analysis of this data.

### **13. What should the regulatory system do to better share information between regulatory bodies to inform and support the delivery of resident-based outcomes?**

It is apparent that the present system does not work, and the creation of a single national regulator would be a positive outcome for the resident in the form of a coherent, competent body that has full regulatory responsibility reducing the need to share information between regulatory bodies.

### **14. How can the regulatory system better support and advise residents?**

A coherent regulatory system, governed by one single national regulator will ensure residents are better supported and advised. This national regulator for construction products would have sole and complete responsibility for market surveillance and all related activities, including enforcement and provision of guidance and advice. This is the most effective way of regulating the construction products regime and ensuring consistency across the market and would be a positive outcome for residents. The current regime is fragmented with a lack of competency, capacity, resource, funding and support.

### **15. Do you agree with the principles set out in this chapter, and the proposed roles and responsibilities for government, regulatory bodies and industry?**

Ards and North Down Borough Council feels that the current regime is fragmented with a lack of competency, capacity, resource, funding and support and the proposals set out in this chapter do not correct this fragmentation in relation to enforcement. The existing enforcement bodies that regulate construction products have varying levels of market surveillance competencies for a very broad range of product types under numerous pieces of complex legislation, however these bodies are under-resourced, have competing priorities and lack support (financial, staffing, technical and training).

We are of the view that there should be one national regulator for construction products which has sole and complete responsibility for market surveillance and all related activities, including enforcement and provision of guidance and advice. This is the most effective way of regulating the construction products regime and ensuring consistency across the market.

The unique situation of NI having to be aligned to both EU & UK markets and requirements needs to be taken into consideration. The national regulator needs to have a physical presence in all parts of the UK (inclusive of Northern Ireland) with offices and officers based in Northern Ireland to carry out the work of the national regulator including market surveillance.

### **16. What are your views on how the new regulator can work with industry to support culture change, towards a quality and safety-led culture? What sort of incentives or sanctions do you feel would be effective in supporting this change?**

Ards and North Down Borough Council are of the view that the introduction of an appropriate mandatory scheme/body that supports the construction industry to achieve a minimum level of compliance should be encouraged. This could include minimum requirements for third-party certification which promotes consistency and a minimum level of safety of the product.

However, this can only be achieved when there is trust in such schemes or bodies, therefore independence and transparency is important. There also needs to be a sufficiently resourced governing body to ensure an appropriate oversight and approval of compliance of any third-party certification. Upfront approval from the national regulator should be required for third-party certification schemes which are to be part of a mandatory process.

Reduced enforcement for those who demonstrate membership and compliance within such a scheme is an incentive.

**17. What are your views on how industry can best drive the culture change and respond effectively to the changes proposed in this prospectus? In your view, how prepared are individuals and businesses for these changes? What would support industry to be more prepared?**

SMEs make up a large proportion of the construction sector, yet they often face disproportionate challenges during regulatory change, eg: limited capacity, fewer specialist staff and resource constraints. The reforms outlined in this prospectus emphasise competence, clear standards and accountability which SMEs will need support to meet.

We are of the view that small organisations benefit most when support is structured, practical and aligned with their daily operational demands. Such support could include clear simple guidance; product specific compliance toolkits; access to affordable training; financial and resource support and mentor partnerships.

The above measures should help SMEs to make and sustain the cultural shift towards safety, accountability and quality that the new regulatory system seeks to embed.



Government of the United Kingdom

# The Single Construction Regulator Prospectus

Consultation Document

Presented to Parliament by Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for  
Building Safety, Fire and Democracy by Command of His Majesty.

December 2025



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government  
Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
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## Foreword from the Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy

The Grenfell Tower fire was a national tragedy that led to the deaths of 72 innocent people. The subsequent Inquiry exposed a regulatory system that had broken down and failed its most basic purpose: namely, to keep people safe in their homes. The Inquiry's findings showed decades of fragmentation, weak accountability and a culture that put profit before people.

In February 2025, this Government accepted the findings of the Inquiry and is taking forward all its recommendations. This prospectus takes a decisive step towards implementing the first recommendation of the Inquiry: creating a single construction regulator; and seeks views on its future direction.

The single construction regulator will be a part of a wider programme of regulatory and institutional reform which this Government has championed and already begun to deliver. This includes the forthcoming reforms to the construction products regime, to be set out in a white paper by spring 2026, and the ambitious changes we have brought forward to improve the performance of the Building Safety Regulator.

Everyone in this country deserves a home that is safe and decent. We should all have confidence that the buildings where we live, work and spend time are built to the highest standards. Too many residents and building users have been let down and no longer have trust in the regulatory system to deliver these expectations.

Our vision for a better regulatory system is set out in this prospectus. Building safety is non-negotiable and will be the regulator's primary objective. The regulator will uphold standards to deliver safe buildings and make sure construction products are fit for purpose.

This reform is also about bringing coherence to a fragmented regulatory system, crucial to our mission for economic growth. Alongside the building professions, we want to create a new framework to underpin the competence, skills and conduct of those working in the industry. We will begin this important work with a call for evidence in 2026. We want to give businesses certainty and create a level playing field. We will create the right conditions for innovation while raising standards and restoring trust.

This is also the chance for industry to step up, and this prospectus asks how we can achieve collective accountability across the whole system. Government and industry both have important roles to play in improving standards and pushing for positive cultural change which is badly needed. Those who don't play by the rules must face real consequences. Those who prioritise safety and quality will thrive. Together, we will build a system that prioritises safety, restores trust and drives growth.

A tragedy like that at Grenfell Tower must never happen again. These reforms are how we will deliver on that commitment, and this prospectus is just the start. I welcome everyone's views on this consultation so we can shape the future direction of the regulator and the wider building system.

**Samantha Dixon MBE MP**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy

## Executive Summary

Following the terrible events at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017, which led to the loss of 72 innocent lives, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry was established to investigate the circumstances surrounding the tragedy. The Inquiry concluded the tragedy was a culmination of ‘decades of failure’ by central government and other bodies with positions of responsibility in the construction industry.<sup>1</sup> Many of the issues identified by the Inquiry persist in the built environment today.

The Inquiry’s Phase 2 report made specific recommendations for the government to reform the regulatory landscape, including establishing a single construction regulator. On 26 February 2025, the government accepted all the Inquiry’s findings and the problems that must be fixed, as highlighted by the recommendations.

The Inquiry’s first recommendation was to create a single construction regulator to reduce fragmentation in how the construction sector is regulated and drive cultural change within the industry. The government is committed to delivering this recommendation. Well-functioning regulation is fundamental to protecting residents and building users from harm and to achieving our mission to grow our economy and support businesses to thrive.

Government has taken urgent action since 2017 to reform the regulatory system. Building regulations in areas of greatest immediate risk to fire and building safety have been tightened and extensive work is underway to remediate unsafe cladding. These actions have been focussed on tackling the most immediate issues. There is more we must do to close remaining gaps, for example around the regulation of construction products.

This prospectus sets out government’s plans for regulatory reform and the development of a single construction regulator. It provides a strategic case for reforming the regulatory system for the built environment and sets out the potential role for the new regulator within it. This prospectus also provides proposals for future areas of focus for a reformed regulatory system.

### Our vision for a future regulatory system

The government intends to create a new regulator which will not only meet the Inquiry’s recommendation but will also create the right conditions for actors across the whole building ecosystem to play their role in achieving positive outcomes. This will give the market greater clarity and certainty, promote growth and avoid the need for costly interventions later down the line. The regulatory system needs to create incentives for all actors to behave responsibly and contribute to positive outcomes, through setting clear expectations of what is required. People and businesses who demonstrate they can be trusted should be able to benefit and those who fail to do the right thing and put people at risk should face consequences.

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<sup>1</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report Overview – Executive Summary](#), September 2024

We propose that a well-functioning building system should achieve the following outcomes:

1. Buildings and built environments are safe, high-performing and deliver a healthy, accessible, secure, and sustainable environment for occupants.
2. Companies and individuals are enabled to thrive when they operate in the interests of current and future building users.
3. Products for building are fit for their purpose and users are provided with accurate product information.
4. The building system is trusted; users have confidence the system will act to prioritise the safety and needs of occupants.

These outcomes will be used to set measurable objectives, duties and functions for the regulator. We propose a hierarchy of objectives to reflect the outcomes, with the regulator's primary objective being the safety of people and the standard of buildings and built environments, and secondary objectives relating to growth, products and industry and resident trust.

## Integrating the regulatory system

The Inquiry recommendation for a single construction regulator identified twelve functions relevant to the Inquiry's remit which should be brought into the scope of this reform. The Inquiry's recommended list of functions spans the regulation of **buildings, products and professionals**. The government accepted ten of those twelve recommended functions and is committed to wider reform which brings coherence and more effective regulation across these three areas of the system.

### Regulation of buildings

The regulation of buildings is an essential part of the regulatory system to protect residents and meet our proposed outcomes. Some progress has been made since the Grenfell Tower tragedy to strengthen fire and structural safety in new and existing buildings. The government remains committed to this work and intends to commission an independent review of the building safety regulatory regime by April 2027.

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) currently performs some of the functions named in the Inquiry's recommendations for the new regulator. The new regulator will take over these responsibilities as part of a carefully phased transition. The future regulator will also maintain the BSR's current regulatory responsibilities, including in relation to new and existing buildings, residential and non-residential buildings, and higher- and non-higher-risk buildings. Proposals for the future regulator will take account of any subsequent recommendations, including the work of the Building Control Independent Panel.

In June 2025, the government announced its intention to move the BSR out of the Health and Safety Executive into a new, dedicated body. Creating a body dedicated to building safety creates the foundation for an integrated regulator and the cultural and systemic change recommended by the Inquiry. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has also appointed new leadership and taken swift action to tackle delays in approval Gateways for higher-risk buildings.

### Regulation of construction products

The Inquiry set out clear evidence on the failings of the regulatory regime for construction products and the need for substantive reform. In 2021, the government established the National Regulator for Construction Products (NRCP), to prioritise safety and drive effective enforcement.

The Inquiry recommended that some functions relating to the regulation of construction products be carried out by the single construction regulator. MHCLG is working with the NRCP to establish how the regulation of construction products will be delivered through the new regulator. In February 2025, the government published the Construction Products Reform Green Paper, which recognised the scale of system-wide challenges and set out the need for further reform to address them. The government is committed to bringing forward a Construction Products Reform White Paper by spring 2026, setting out plans for this reform. Any new regulatory functions from this reform will ultimately sit within the regulator.

### Regulation of building professions

The Inquiry made detailed recommendations regarding regulation of certain high-risk professions to provide greater confidence in the competence, accountability and oversight of those performing safety-critical roles. The government remains committed to implementing these changes and will go further to deliver a comprehensive programme of reform.

We will work with key stakeholders, organisations and experts to introduce a new system of regulatory oversight and enforcement, which aligns with the proposals in this document to improve coherence and reduce fragmentation in how the sector is regulated. We are exploring options for the design, form and scope of this new framework as part of a new overarching strategy for building professions. In April 2025, the Fire Engineers Advisory Panel was established to provide advice to government on the fire engineering profession. The government will publish the panel's final statement and proposed next steps. The government will publish a call for evidence in spring 2026 to gather detailed insights on targeted proposals for reform. Following this, an overarching strategy for the built environment professions will be published in spring 2027.

### Digital, data and efficient regulatory delivery

Digitising services, data and insights will be crucial enablers of the three areas outlined in the prospectus. The government's ambition for the new regulator is a digital-first approach to improve how regulation is delivered across buildings, products, and professionals. We will focus on developing a more connected and coherent digital environment to support information sharing and enable more transparent oversight.

### Residents

We want to make protection of residents a priority for reform. The best way to deliver for residents is for the system to work first time, allowing trust to be rebuilt and residents to recognise a system that works *for* them. The regulator must protect residents by making sure the buildings they live in and use are safe. Options should also be available to support, inform and help residents seek redress when they need it.

Other public and private bodies in the wider building ecosystem must support the regulator to keep residents safe. The regulatory system should support residents to access the information they need to be informed consumers. The system should also feedback vital information on residents' experiences to the regulator to inform its view of the system. When these interventions work, residents will be and can feel safe in their homes and can trust the regulatory system to act in their interests.

## Roles and responsibilities in an integrated regulatory system

There must be clear roles and responsibilities for everyone working in the building ecosystem. We propose defined principles for how government, the regulator and industry operate in the future regulatory system.

The government is the steward of the building ecosystem and will oversee the integrated regulatory system. MHCLG will shape the purpose and activity of the new regulator and act as its sponsor. The regulator, as a Non-Departmental Public Body, will have operational autonomy and carry out its own legal and regulatory functions, but will be strategically aligned to MHCLG and the direction and priorities set by MHCLG ministers. It will have specific roles in driving accountability across industry, enforcing against those who fail to do the right thing and taking expert, proportionate approaches to managing risks and upholding safety and standards across the building system.

Whilst it is the responsibility of government and the regulator to improve coherence and reduce fragmentation, it is the responsibility of all those in industry to raise standards from within the sector, to prevent dishonest actors, like those highlighted by the Inquiry, from avoiding accountability for their actions. Industry must take proactive action to transform how safety and quality are embedded throughout the lifecycle of buildings. Industry will need to work together to rebuild trust and ensure the sector takes appropriate accountability and responsibility for safety, standards and the protection of residents.

## Next steps

Responses to the consultation questions in this prospectus will be used to inform creation of the new regulator and wider regulatory reform.

# Introduction

## Addressing systemic failures

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 2 Report examined the causes of the tragedy on 14 June 2017 that took 72 lives. Its findings exposed a regulatory system in which trust and confidence had fundamentally broken down. The Inquiry's report concluded that the tragedy was the culmination of 'decades of failure' by central government and other bodies in positions of responsibility in the construction industry. The Inquiry exposed a fragmented regulatory system, with multiple gaps in standards and assurance across building regulations, products and professions. It found systematic dishonesty in those who manufactured and sold construction products used on Grenfell Tower, and serious failures in those responsible for refurbishing and maintaining the building. It identified conflicts of interest within regulatory bodies, making them vulnerable to manipulation, and a failure from central government to exempt matters of life safety from deregulation, which exacerbated this dysfunction and led to matters of life safety being ignored.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup>

The Inquiry's Phase 2 report made 58 recommendations directed at the government and other bodies and institutions. The Inquiry's Phase 2 report made specific recommendations for the government to reform the regulatory landscape, including establishing a single construction regulator. The government accepted all the Inquiry's findings and the problems that must be fixed, as highlighted by the recommendations. We remain committed to taking forward the work required to address the Inquiry's recommendations and going even further to deliver long-term reform to our building system.

As we set out in our response to the Inquiry's report, the failings that led to the tragedy were not unique to Grenfell Tower.<sup>4</sup> Over eight years later, many issues persist in the built environment which mean people across the country are denied the quality of housing and related services they deserve. Problems such as damp, mould and inadequate insulation are contributing to health conditions, heat-related deaths linked to housing quality are projected to increase, whilst dangerous cladding is creating unacceptable safety risks and causing intolerable stress and anxiety for affected residents. Socio-economic factors often determine the extent of the impact which issues in the system have on residents. Disabled residents, those with long-term ill health and the most vulnerable face a greater strain on their lives because of poor-quality housing. We must take decisive action to put this right. Reforming our regulatory landscape must be at the top of our agenda.

## Our commitment to change

Economic growth is this government's number one mission. Through this mission, we will deliver higher living standards in every part of the United Kingdom by the end of this Parliament. A key component of achieving this growth is improving the quality of our housing. We are committed to

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<sup>2</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report](#), Executive Summary, September 2024

<sup>3</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report](#), Volume 7, September 2024

<sup>4</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report: Government response](#), 26 February 2025

building 1.5 million secure and affordable homes over this Parliament and addressing unsafe cladding on residential buildings to ensure everyone has access to a safe and decent home.

A well-functioning regulatory system is fundamental to achieving our mission to grow our economy, support businesses to thrive, improve living standards and ensure everyone has access to a safe, high-quality home. The focus of this reform is improving the effectiveness, consistency and efficiency of the regulatory system, which will drive growth through providing clarity and certainty for industry and investors, and creating a fairer system that benefits those who prioritise safety and quality.

Safely planned, designed and constructed buildings not only provide better quality homes for us all, but facilitate timely completion of projects, reduce rework and promote better long-term outcomes. High-quality buildings also provide a sustainable and future-proofed building stock that residents and building users can benefit from for generations to come.

We know the costs and impact of regulatory failings and poor-quality building projects are huge. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) estimates that there are, c.5,900-9,000 residential buildings above 11 metres with life safety fire risks due to unsafe external wall systems. The estimated costs of fixing external wall system defects are c.£12.6 billion-£22.4 billion (central estimate £16.6 billion). These costs will fall to the taxpayer, social housing providers and industry. There are also deeply personal, human costs to residents whose lives have been upended by these risks, for example through rising insurance premiums, or an inability to move on with their lives as a result of mortgage availability.

Good regulation also promotes efficient use of capital and labour and improves competence and skills, improving productivity and supporting rewarding careers for those looking to develop the right expertise.

Reforming the regulatory system is an opportunity for government and industry to work together to transform our regulatory landscape, provide residents with the quality homes they need and deserve, raise the bar on living standards across the country and watch our economy reap the benefits.

## Changes made since 2017

Government has taken urgent action since 2017 to reform the regulatory system, with many changes made in direct response to the tragedy at Grenfell Tower. Building regulations in the areas of greatest immediate risk to fire and building safety have been tightened and building safety regulation is protected from deregulatory measures. Extensive work is underway to remediate unsafe cladding, and improvements have been made to the regulation of construction products. Measures have been put in place to control the design and construction of higher-risk buildings and monitor existing ones. The Building Safety Act 2022 also established the full powers of the National Regulator for Construction Products (NRCP) and gave powers to create the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), which was established within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 2023.

Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety identified the BSR as the body which would regulate the safe design, construction and occupation of higher-risk buildings in England, provide oversight for safety and standards of all buildings and promote

competence across the industry.<sup>5</sup> The creation of the BSR was a significant moment for the housing and construction sector, designed to put the protection of residents first and prevent any future tragedies. Since its establishment it has taken enforcement action to improve the safety and performance of buildings and ensured action is taken immediately to deal with the most serious risks. In October 2023 it became the Building Control Authority for all higher-risk buildings. The BSR's introduction has led to demonstrable improvements in the safety of the buildings it is responsible for. Since the NRCP's establishment, it has increased market surveillance of the construction products sector, including business inspections and product testing. Its interventions have resulted in non-compliant products being removed from the UK market, and businesses changing their behaviours and process to comply with the law. These actions were taken with the aim of improving outcomes for residents and building users, as well as increasing their confidence that the materials, methods and actors involved in building their homes and buildings can be trusted.

These reforms made since 2017 are significant steps towards more effective regulation and safer buildings. These steps have focused on tackling the most immediate issues, and key gaps which remain, for example on construction products. We are committed to going even further to deliver long-term, systemic reforms that will solve the deep fragmentation of our building system and benefit generations to come.

## Our wider commitments to institutional reform

In March 2025, the Prime Minister made clear that reform of the state is necessary to drive efficiency and reduce bureaucracy. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster wrote to government departments, asking them to justify every arm's length body, otherwise they will be closed, merged or have their powers brought back into the relevant department. As the Inquiry identified, institutional reform is an important part of reforming the regulatory system for the built environment to make it more coherent and effective at achieving better outcomes for both residents and industry.

## A 'Single Construction Regulator'

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry's first recommendation in its Phase 2 report was for the government to create a single regulator that draws together functions relating to the construction industry. The Inquiry report sets out that the recommendation intends to reduce fragmentation in how the sector is regulated and drive culture change in the industry.<sup>6</sup> The Inquiry's recommended functions for the new regulator span the regulation of buildings, professions, and products, including some of the current work of the BSR, NRCP and new functions not currently covered by any regulator. The full wording of the recommendation is set out in **Annex A**.

Government is committed to delivering this recommendation. Reform to reduce fragmentation and improve coherence is badly needed to promote proper accountability for wrongdoing and ensure high standards for safety and quality are met. This is vital to reduce the burden for residents, especially vulnerable residents who are disproportionately impacted by the system's current fragmentation. A clearer, simpler regulatory system will support those across industry, regulators and government committed to achieving positive outcomes for residents to work

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<sup>5</sup> [Building a Safer Future: Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety](#), May 2018

<sup>6</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report](#), Volume 7, September 2024

together more effectively, preventing the harm caused by bad faith actors who exploit loopholes or act and put profit ahead of public interest.

Implementation of this recommendation started immediately following our response to the Inquiry's final report in February 2025, including supporting the current regulatory regime as the foundation to moving towards greater consolidation, and publication of proposals for system-wide reform in our Construction Products Reform Green Paper. Guided by our commitment that reform must result in meaningful change, we have prioritised evidence and expert scrutiny in developing proposals for reform. In spring 2025 we established an expert Advisory Board with industry, regulators, resident and consumer advocates, and academics. The Board's advice has shaped government's proposals for reform. The purpose and membership of the Board are set out in **Annex B**.

The new regulator will consolidate regulatory functions currently held by multiple regulatory bodies, improving productivity and user experience by streamlining operational efficiencies alongside building a more holistic regulatory environment informed by insight and evidence. An integrated regulatory system will also support greater flexibility and resilience to adapt and respond to developments in innovation and digitisation, ongoing industry transformation and emerging risks. Our focus is on a resilient regulatory system which provides long-term certainty for the market, a more predictable environment for investment and innovation, and better outcomes for residents and other building and construction product users.

Alongside designing the future regulatory system, we are making practical changes to pave the way for establishment of the new regulator. In June 2025, MHCLG announced significant changes to the BSR that mark a new phase for the BSR, including operational improvements to address delays in the Gateway approval process, strengthened leadership and transferring the BSR from the HSE to a new standalone body.<sup>7</sup> These changes will deliver a dedicated focus for building safety and strengthen the BSR's accountability to ministers and Parliament. A Statutory Instrument to enable the transfer was laid before Parliament in November 2025.

Transferring the BSR from the HSE to a new standalone body is an important milestone towards establishing a new regulator, as the new body will act as the home for the new integrated regulator. Alongside these milestones, we must ensure we have a clear vision for a future regulatory system, the role of a new regulator within it and a plan to get there. This prospectus is an important step towards our goal.

## Our prospectus for an integrated regulatory system

This prospectus sets out government's plans for regulatory reform and development of an integrated regulator. It provides a strategic case for reforming the regulatory system for the built environment and proposes the role for an integrated regulator within it. It also proposes future areas of focus for a reformed regulatory system.

The proposals in this prospectus are rooted in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's recommendation for a single construction regulator. The government wholly accepts the findings of the Inquiry and remains committed to delivering this recommendation. We have put forward an approach we believe will be most effective at addressing the Inquiry's diagnosis of fragmentation and

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<sup>7</sup> [Press release: Reforms to Building Safety Regulator to accelerate housebuilding](#), 30 June 2025

unnecessary complexity in the regulatory system. As the Inquiry's scope was focused on the circumstances leading to the tragedy in 2017, our reforms will need to go further to bring coherence across the whole regulatory system, including changes made since 2017 and areas of regulation not mentioned by the Inquiry.<sup>8</sup> Any divergence from the detail of the Inquiry's recommendation will be clearly explained.

This prospectus seeks views on the vision and outcomes of the future regulatory system for the built environment and the remit and functions of a future regulator. Views we receive will inform the development of the regulator, particularly further development of our policy and the necessary legislation to implement this reform.

The consultation questions we are seeking views on are set out in chapters 1, 2 and 3. We welcome your responses via the Citizen Space portal. The link can be found here: <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/building-systems-and-insights/single-construction-regulator/>

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<sup>8</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Terms of Reference](#), August 2017

## Chapter 1: Our vision for a future regulatory system

The scope of this reform is very broad. The whole ‘building ecosystem’ spans residential, commercial and civic buildings at every stage of their lifecycle; construction products, used in buildings, infrastructure and wider built environment; and a huge number of professionals, tradespeople and organisations who design, build, fund and maintain our buildings. This ecosystem impacts every single person who lives in or uses buildings. Buildings which are safe, decent, secure and affordable can vastly improve our life chances. Physical and mental health, education and financial security are all impacted by building performance. The construction industry provides over 2 million jobs and contributes billions to our economy.<sup>9</sup>

### Regulating the built environment as a system

Regulation plays an important role in protecting people from harm and achieving positive outcomes, e.g. through ensuring standards for quality and safety are properly enforced. But safe, high-performing buildings are not created by regulators alone. They depend on a big network of actors – such as industry professionals, national and local government, public and regulatory bodies, and residents – each playing their part to share information, identify and mitigate against risks and respond quickly when issues arise to put things right. Evidence on effective regulation, informed by behavioural science, shows that it needs to work as a coherent ‘regulatory system’.

In implementing the Inquiry’s recommendation, government intends to recognise that to achieve real benefits for residents, we must not only introduce a new regulator but also create the right conditions for everyone to play their role. The regulatory system needs to create incentives for all actors to behave responsibly and contribute to positive outcomes through setting clear expectations of what is required, enabling people and businesses who can be trusted to benefit, and enforcing consequences for those who consistently or deliberately fail to do the right thing and put people at risk.

Government’s vision is to integrate different areas of the built environment – buildings, products and professionals – so that they work as a single, effective regulatory system. In practice, this should mean better outcomes for both residents and the sector.<sup>10</sup>

### Outcomes for the future system

We propose using this reform to introduce system-wide outcomes into the regulatory framework for the building system. These outcomes describe the real-world results of a well-functioning building system. As we integrate parts of this complex and expansive system, setting clear outcomes will help to build coherence and clarify accountability for all actors with a stake in the built environment. Our proposed outcomes have been developed with the support and challenge of our expert Advisory Board. An explanation is included alongside each one.

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<sup>9</sup> Office for National Statistics, [Construction statistics, Great Britain: 2023](#), 22 November 2024

<sup>10</sup> Hodges, Christopher, *Outcome-Based Cooperation: in Communities, Organisations, Regulation and Dispute Resolution* (Hart, 2022)

We propose that a well-functioning building system should achieve the following outcomes:

**1. Buildings and built environments are safe and high-performing and deliver a healthy, accessible, secure and sustainable environment for occupants.**

*Safe* includes safety from both rare catastrophic events and widespread chronic harms. These include, but are not limited to, fire, structural failure, thermal underperformance leading to summer overheating and excess winter mortality, poor indoor air quality and design that compromises accessibility or health.

*High-performing* means achieving high standards across the many social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts which buildings and built environments have – both for their immediate occupants, users, owners, and clients, and for the general public and future generations. This outcome includes the whole lifespan of buildings and built environments, including end of life, disposal and reuse.

**2. Companies and individuals are enabled to thrive when they operate in the interests of current and future building users.**

*This outcome is intended to maximise the sector's contribution to sustainable economic growth, through a fairer system that benefits those who prioritise safety and quality and provides clarity and certainty for industry and investors. Our intention is that the many firms and individuals that are skilled, competent and actively demonstrate commitment to a high-quality built environment benefit, while those that decide wilfully not to, or do not have the necessary competence, should not benefit and face proportionate sanctions. This outcome includes those directly involved in construction, product manufacturing and use, and building management in related sectors such as insurance and funding.*

**3. Construction products are fit for their purpose and users are provided with accurate product information.**

*This outcome recognises that materials and components must perform throughout their intended life, which may be longer or shorter than the building or structure they are part of. They should be designed both for their initial purpose and for removal, reuse, recycling or safe disposal. This full lifecycle approach includes a duty to provide future generations with the information on design, material composition, testing protocols and production processes necessary for removal, reuse, recycling or safe disposal.*

**4. The building system is trusted; users have confidence the system will act to prioritise the safety and needs of occupants.**

*This outcome includes trust by residents, building owners, clients, users and the general public. It also means that bad or incompetent actors know that wrongdoing will be identified and they will face consequences. We recognise that a trusted system includes being accessible, visible and navigable by all, and one that must identify and respond to issues that come to light swiftly and effectively.*

## How these outcomes will be used in a future system

The new regulator will play an important role in steering the system towards these outcomes, but these outcomes cannot be achieved or measured without input from everyone in their respective roles. The aim of reform is to introduce a shared point of focus and start bringing the system together so everyone can play their role. These outcomes will support regulatory bodies, government, industry professionals, residents, other building users, and other actors to address:

- how each outcome will be achieved;
- what metrics will demonstrate whether each outcome (or relevant milestone) is being achieved, and if the system is performing well;
- the system for delivering regulation and the outcomes: who needs to perform what actions and functions, what gaps need to be filled;
- what data is needed to monitor performance and outcomes, and to identify problems, who needs to produce such data and who needs to hold it;
- how the regulator can effectively leverage digital tools, standards and interoperability to promote consistent regulatory compliance and workflow automation across the sector, while balancing automation with human oversight, considering current industry capabilities and associated opportunities and risks; and
- whether everyone agrees to perform their actions or functions so that the entire system works, whether everyone is trusted, and how all actors show that they can be trusted.

## Setting objectives for an integrated regulator

The outcomes will be used to set measurable objectives, duties and functions for the regulator. Government's intention is to equip a new, integrated regulator to recognise the full range of outcomes for the built environment, alongside the power to prioritise based on its assessment of risk. The future regulator will build upon the current objectives and duties of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) and National Regulator for Construction Products (NRCP) – including the plans in place to expand the regulator's role in regulating construction products.

Further development of the regulator's statutory objectives and duties will take place ahead of the introduction of legislation. We propose giving the regulator a **hierarchy of objectives**, recognising that safety must always be its primary focus. Illustrative objectives are as follows:

**Primary objective:** The regulator must exercise its functions in the manner best calculated to securing the safety of people in buildings and improving the standard (and/or performance) of buildings and built environments.

**Secondary objectives:** We intend to recognise that in exercising its functions, the regulator should aim to advance the full range of outcomes named above. Its secondary objectives, principles and duties may therefore include securing the following outcomes, where this does not undermine the primary objective:

- Sustainable economic growth is maximised.
- Companies and individuals are enabled to thrive when they operate in the interests of current and future building users.

- Construction products are fit for their purpose and users are provided with accurate information.
- The building system is trusted; users have confidence the system will act to prioritise the safety and needs of residents and other building users.

Further detail on the regulator's relationship with the department is set out in Chapter 3. The Secretary of State for MHCLG may periodically publish a statement setting out strategic priorities and objectives for the regulator in carrying out its functions.

## Consultation questions

We are consulting on the outcomes for the regulatory system and objectives for the regulator outlined in this chapter. In considering responses, we will take account of linked reforms, such as those set out in the Construction Products Reform Green Paper and the commitment to a White Paper before spring 2026. These questions are:

- Where do each of the proposed outcomes for the system sit on a scale from very useful to not useful at all?
- What role would you and/or your organisation play in achieving these outcomes?
- What will be the most important factors to achieving the proposed outcomes?
- What are the most important barriers that could prevent the proposed outcomes from being met?
- What data would be needed to demonstrate whether the outcomes are being achieved?

## Chapter 2: Integrating the regulatory system

Chapter 1 sets out the real-world impacts of a well-functioning ‘building ecosystem’. This chapter turns to the most important areas of regulation in scope of this reform and our priorities for bringing them together into a single integrated system, capable of supporting the positive outcomes set out in Chapter 1.

Evidence on effective regulatory systems suggests that they have a consistent set of functions and must be able to:

- **establish clear outcomes and rules** for the system;
- **establish a system and culture** which can achieve the outcomes and build trust – e.g. through setting regulations and standards, licensing, accreditation and professional standards;
- **identify problems and their root causes** using intelligence from stakeholders and users of the system;
- **take action to stop and prevent harm and reduce risk** – e.g. through enforcement of regulations, standards, licensing and accreditation, amending regulations and standards, training or upskilling;
- **repair damage** – e.g. through remediation, retrofit, maintenance, redress to people affected or restrictions to product use; and
- **monitor** to decide if further change is needed.

These functions require **data to flow continuously around the system** and between actors.<sup>11</sup>

Not all these functions will be done by one regulator; they are shared between a network of different public, private and regulatory bodies. This reform is an opportunity to look at each area of the ecosystem to make sure that these functions are working effectively, protecting residents and building users and supporting industry.

### Areas of the system covered in this chapter

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry’s recommendation for a single construction regulator identified twelve functions relevant to the Inquiry’s remit which should be brought into the scope of this reform. The Inquiry’s recommended list of functions spans the regulation of three key areas: **buildings**, **products** and **professionals**. The government is committed to reform which brings coherence across these three areas of the system to meet the Inquiry’s recommendation. The government is developing these areas of regulation in parallel to reforming the institutional landscape needed to support them.

A regulator with oversight across the whole system will be better equipped to spot where there are gaps and inconsistencies in the regulation of the built environment, where risks or issues are emerging and where a multi-faceted response is needed. **Digitising services, data and insights** will be crucial enablers of the three areas outlined above.

Finally, we want to make **protection of residents** a priority for reform. The Grenfell Tower tragedy is the starkest example that the processes and professionals tasked with ensuring safety

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<sup>11</sup> Hodges, Christopher, *Outcome-Based Cooperation: in Communities, Organisations, Regulation and Dispute Resolution* (Hart, 2022)

systemically failed, and trust in our building system had fundamentally eroded, particularly from vulnerable residents who are underrepresented in the system. This lack of trust manifests in many ways beyond fire safety, where housing quality is often a determinant of health, impacting all residents but especially disabled residents and those with ill health. Restoring trust will require a sustained, multi-pronged effort. We believe the regulator has an important role to play in making the system work for residents.

This chapter explains how the government will honour both the Inquiry's recommendation and intends to go further for each of these areas. This chapter also contains consultation questions. Responses to them will be used to inform plans for regulatory reform and a new regulator.

### Note on scope of this reform

This reform builds on the existing regulatory framework, including that set by the Building Safety Act 2022. The future regulator will maintain the Building Safety Regulator's (BSR) current regulatory responsibilities, including in relation to both new and existing buildings, residential and non-residential buildings and higher- and non-higher-risk buildings. These were not named by the Inquiry recommendation, given its focus on the regulatory system in and before 2017.

The new integrated system will recognise that construction products are used in a range of structures beyond buildings, such as transport and energy infrastructure, as well as in infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and prisons. The regulator will enforce regulations for all construction products, regardless of end use. Current institutional arrangements for the design or delivery of these buildings and structures will remain in place.

Where this reform applies to wider social infrastructure, we will have due regard to specific sectoral needs to ensure processes are designed to be proportionate and adaptable for complex environments such as hospitals, so that the unique risks and demands of the public estate and its diverse users (whether patients, staff, pupils, or visitors) are explicitly considered in design. In doing so, we will build upon learning from previous reform to ensure sectors have clarity on transitional arrangements and structures and roles across the future regulatory ecosystem. We will ensure that public sector-specific technical standards, professional roles, and potential impacts on existing public sector procurement frameworks are properly considered and work to ensure reform does not unduly disrupt or delay the delivery of vital public sector infrastructure projects and objectives.

Local authorities and fire and rescue authorities will need to continue to work closely with the BSR and the future regulator when established, including to enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Housing Act 2004. We will build on existing responsibilities and relationships between regulators and future institutions, such as the College of Fire and Rescue, to make sure that their respective responsibilities are understood and that we enable them to work together effectively by creating a coherent regulatory environment. We will explore potential opportunities to better align fire safety regulation and the work of the new regulator. For example, we will examine what role it can play in the production of guidance to support those responsible for fire safety in their premises. We will work closely with relevant partners as we consider future operation of the regulator.

This reform reflects the territorial extent and application of current regulation. The government's ambition is for an effective, four nations approach to regulatory reform. We will continue to work

together with the Devolved Administrations to make sure that reform is aligned across the four nations.

Reforms to the building regulatory system proposed in this prospectus will apply on an England-only basis. The Building Regulations regime in Wales, with minor exceptions such as excepted energy buildings, is a devolved matter set out in The Welsh Ministers (Transfer of Functions) (No. 2) Order 2009. This prospectus does not propose changes to the devolution status of reserved matters. Construction products is a reserved matter so reforms will apply UK-wide. The current system of professional regulation is complex and fragmented. Only two professions are currently regulated in statute, of which architecture is reserved UK-wide and building control is devolved, with changes applying to England (and some to Wales, which is devolved but shares a legal framework and where Registered Building Inspectors are also regulated by the BSR). Many regulatory bodies operating under a Royal Charter also operate globally.

## 2.1 Regulation of buildings

The regulation of buildings is an essential part of the regulatory system to protect residents and meet the outcomes in Chapter 1. Building regulations set standards for many aspects of construction, including structural integrity, fire safety, energy efficiency, and accessibility. Regulations ensure buildings are safe, fit for purpose and comply with legal and ethical standards throughout their lifespan, reducing long-term costs and maximising capital and labour productivity.

### Recent reforms to the building safety regime

The government remains committed to the significant progress made since the Grenfell Tower tragedy to strengthen fire and structural safety in new and existing buildings. These reforms include:

- **Combustible Materials Ban:** Since 2018, combustible materials have been banned from external walls of new residential buildings, hospitals, and student accommodation (in England) over 18 metres. In December 2022, the ban was extended to include hotels, hostels and boarding houses of the same height.
- **Sprinklers:** In 2019, the threshold for sprinklers in new blocks of flats was lowered from over 30 metres to over 11 metres. From March 2025, legislation requires all new care homes to fit sprinklers, regardless of height.
- **Second Staircases:** From September 2026, statutory guidance makes provision for new residential buildings over 18 metres to have a second staircase to support safe evacuation.
- **Modernised Standards:** Approved Document B (fire safety) has been updated to reflect a phased transition from British Standards (BS 476) to European fire safety standards (BS EN 13501), improving consistency and clarity. Approved Document B has also been placed under continuous review.
- **The Building Safety Act 2022:** created the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), the new building control process for the design and construction of higher-risk buildings and more prescriptive requirements to support compliance and effective enforcement of responsible persons' duties in all buildings.
- **Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (RPEEPs):** The Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025 mandate RPEEPs in all high-rise residential buildings and certain medium-rise buildings from April 2026, along with a requirement for building-level evacuation plans.
- **Part 2A Building Regulations 2010:** Since 2023, building regulations have included requirements for all design and building work in England to be planned, managed and monitored and for everyone carrying out that work to have the right competence. Amendments introduced the Principal Designer and Principal Contractor roles to give clear lines of responsibility for compliance and placed duties on clients to manage and resource projects properly.

### Independent Review of the building safety regime

In line with Section 162 of the Building Safety Act 2022, the government intends to commission an independent review of the building safety regulatory regime. The review will assess the effectiveness of the building safety regime, the regulation of construction products and other

elements of the regime and will be conducted in accordance with the independence criteria set out in the Act. The Act requires the Secretary of State of Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to appoint an independent person to carry out this review no later than April 2027, with findings to be published thereafter. We will commission this review ahead of the statutory deadline, working with the BSR and National Regulator for Construction Products (NRCP) to ensure its insights inform the operations of the future regulator. Further details, including the timings of the review and Terms of Reference, will be confirmed in due course.

## The Building Safety Regulator (BSR)

Many functions necessary for the regulation of buildings are carried out by the BSR. The BSR was created to lead a culture shift across the sector, placing safety at the centre of decision-making and restoring confidence in the safety and standard of buildings. The introduction of the BSR has led to demonstrable improvements in the safety of the buildings it is responsible for.

The BSR's duties include: overseeing the safety and performance of all buildings in England; facilitating building safety for higher-risk buildings (residential buildings, hospitals and care homes, buildings of 7 storeys or over 18 metres) through acting as the building control authority for higher-risk buildings (HRBs); and regulating those responsible for the management of building safety risks in occupied HRBs<sup>12</sup>. The BSR also has a duty to facilitate improved competence of those working in the built environment and professionals delivering building control functions. It oversees and monitors performance of all Building Control Bodies in England.

Several of the BSR's current functions were named in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's recommendation for the new regulator. The new regulator will take over these responsibilities as part of a carefully phased transition, as well as the BSR's broader regulatory responsibilities, as noted in Chapter 1. The specific functions named by the Inquiry were:

- **Regulation and oversight of building control.** This is an existing function of the BSR.
- **Monitoring the operation of the Building Regulations and the statutory guidance.** This sits within the BSR's duty to 'keep under review the safety and standards of buildings.'
- **Carrying out research on matters affecting fire safety.** This sits within the BSR's existing duty to 'keep under review the safety and standards of all buildings'.
- **Collecting information on fire safety.** The BSR represents UK on the Inter-jurisdictional Regulatory Collaboration Committee and engages internationally in line with duty to keep under review the safety and standards of buildings.
- **Exchanging information with fire and rescue services.** The BSR works with other regulators, including fire and rescue services and local authorities, through the Building Advisory Committee and its sub-groups, which it is required to establish and maintain.
- **Development of suitable methods for testing the reaction to fire of materials and products intended for use in construction.** Under the Building Safety Act, the BSR can engage with other stakeholders such as the UK national standards regime vested in the British Standards Institution (BSI), Standards sub-committees and Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS); commission its own research; and present evidence and new data to bodies responsible for developing British Standards and product testing for use by the construction industry. The regulator can then ensure that appropriate

<sup>12</sup> [Building Safety Act 2022](#), Part 2

standards are reflected in Approved Documents and recommended to the Secretary of State for MHCLG when guidance is published or updated.

The government is committed to ensuring the future regulator has the mechanisms to assure the quality of testing methodology, so testing is robust and only those materials that meet rigorous criteria can be used in construction. The Construction Products Reform Green Paper, published in February 2025, sought views on the future relationship between the BSI, government and the regulator to ensure future priorities, including testing and standards, are aligned.

## Recent reforms to the Building Safety Regulator (BSR)

In June 2025, MHCLG announced significant changes to the BSR that mark a new phase of its operations.

The BSR has been clear about the challenges of implementing a significant shift in the way building safety is regulated in HRBs. MHCLG and leadership in BSR accept that the delays experienced by many applicants are unacceptable and recognise the impact of Gateway delays on the pipeline of high-rise construction projects. This government has taken swift action to address the current challenges, which is having a positive impact on the system.

A new interim leadership team, with invaluable experience of institutional reform, is now in place, including Andy Roe as Chair and Charlie Pugsley as Chief Executive. A shadow board has begun meeting monthly to oversee and drive operational improvements, with monthly publication of operational data to improve transparency.

In June 2025, the government announced its intention to move the BSR out of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into a new, dedicated body. Creating a body dedicated to building safety creates the foundation for an integrated regulator and the cultural and systemic change recommended by the Inquiry. The new body will facilitate dedicated leadership and governance arrangements to ensure a sharper focus on oversight of higher-risk buildings, clearer lines of accountability to government ministers and Parliament and operational flexibility that comes from independence.

The new body will report directly to MHCLG, aligning it more closely with the department responsible for building safety, oversight of fire and rescue services and the government's mission to deliver 1.5 million new homes. A Statutory Instrument to enable the transfer was laid before Parliament in November 2025. The subsequent transfer of staff and functions will be carefully managed to avoid disruption to ongoing operations and to maintain continuity of operations, minimising impact for duty holders and building users.

## Transition to an integrated regulator

Transferring the BSR from the HSE to a new standalone body is an important milestone towards establishing a new, integrated regulator, as the new body will act as a foundation for the new regulator. The future regulator will take on the regulatory responsibilities of the BSR as part of a carefully phased transition. We will use the period before the new regulator is fully operational to test and refine the future regulator's core services, to ensure it is ready to deliver essential functions from the first day of operation.

## Note on the regulation and oversight of building control

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry highlighted concerns with the overall system of building control leading up to 2017. This included specific issues around commercial interests and potential conflicts with building inspectors' public interest duties, as well as the professionalism and consistency of local authority building control. The Inquiry recommended that the government appoint an independent panel to consider the dual questions of (i) whether it is in the public interest for building control functions to be performed by those with a commercial interest in the process, and (ii) whether all building control functions should be performed by a national authority.

The Building Control Independent Panel (BCIP) was established in April 2025, chaired by Dame Judith Hackitt. The panel is made up of an additional four members, supported by a secretariat: the Rt Hon Nick Raynsford, Dr David Snowball, Elaine Bailey and Ken Rivers. In line with the published Terms of Reference, the BCIP has met regularly since June 2025 and has<sup>13</sup>:

- published a problem statement in July 2025, setting out an initial assessment of the problems raised by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Report and proposed next steps<sup>14</sup>;
- launched a public call for evidence over the summer, inviting stakeholders to share views<sup>15</sup>; and
- convened a series of stakeholder engagement sessions with building control representatives across England to gather more detailed evidence to support the call for evidence.

The BCIP will report to MHCLG this year, setting out preliminary recommendations for government on future changes to the overall system of building control.

The Inquiry also stated that the regulation and oversight of building control should be conducted by the single construction regulator. The regulation and oversight of building control is currently a function of the BSR, which also acts as the building control authority for higher-risk buildings. We expect the panel's findings will have an impact on our proposals for the future regulator as part of the transition to the new regulatory system. We will publish the BCIP's final report alongside the government's response in early 2026 and will ensure future proposals for the regulator are properly aligned with the BCIP's recommendations.

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<sup>13</sup> [Building Control Independent Panel \(BCIP\) – Terms of Reference](#), 13 June 2025

<sup>14</sup> [Problem statement for the Building Control Independent Panel](#), 15 July 2025

<sup>15</sup> [Building Control Independent Panel - informing recommendations to government](#), 29 July 2025

## 2.2 Regulation of Construction Products

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry set out clear evidence on the failings of the regulatory regime for construction products and the need for substantive reform. The report confirmed the findings of two previous independent reviews in this area (the Hackitt Review<sup>1</sup> and the Morrell-Day Review<sup>2</sup>) which uncovered systemic institutional, enforcement and regulatory issues. Some of the issues they identified, which are systemic across the construction products regime, were:

- the regulatory regime is limited and prioritises trade over safety;
- a lack of capacity, rigour and innovation by key institutions;
- poor product information and misleading marketing; and
- enforcement has been almost non-existent.

These issues created the culture that enabled manufacturers to sell and contractors to buy products that were not suitable or safe for the planned use, leading to maintenance issues and, at worst, catastrophic failings. The government has made important reforms since these findings, which are detailed below. The Inquiry's report made a number of recommendations in relation to construction products, one of which was that regulation should be undertaken by a single construction regulator. Since the publication of the report we have consulted on proposals to strengthen the regulatory regime.

### Progress on Construction Products reform

In response, as a first step, the previous government established the NRCP in 2021. The NRCP, set up by the OPSS (which sits within the Department for Business and Trade) has focused on fostering the culture change that is needed within the construction product industry, through enforcing compliance, educating industry and influencing their decision-making. The NRCP has increased national-level market surveillance across the sector and taken enforcement action to remove non-compliant construction products from the UK market, required corrective actions from businesses and shifted business behaviours and manufacturing processes to comply with the law.

The NRCP's interventions have included preventing the supply of non-compliant insulation products manufactured by Kingspan Insulation Ltd and Unilin Insulation UK Ltd, and its inspection programmes have tackled widespread non-compliance across sectors including external fire doorsets and heat-soaked toughened glass. The NRCP supports local regulators to assess and handle local-led construction products allegations, and works jointly with regulatory agencies including the BSR, building control and fire and rescue services, to coordinate responses to building safety concerns.

The NRCP's early impact is positive. However, this government has recognised the need for further, much more substantive, system reform of construction product regulation and has taken swift action, publishing the Construction Products Reform Green Paper in February 2025. As set out in the Green Paper, further system-wide reform is needed if we are to address the challenges identified. The market for construction products is highly complex, operating as multiple sub-sectors for specific products, with a high number of small and micro businesses, but also large multinational businesses who dominate some sub-sectors. Historically, there was no

enforcement of regulations, and many manufacturers, importers and distributors of products remain unaware of regulatory requirements and are unconcerned with regulator activity. A stronger regulator with wider oversight functions and additional powers will be required to deliver a culture of compliance in the sector.

## Functions recommended by the Inquiry

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report recommended that some functions in relation to the regulation of construction products be carried out by the single construction regulator. These are:

- **Regulation of construction products.** This has been the NRCP's responsibility since 2021.
- **Maintaining a publicly available library of test data.** This will be addressed through the upcoming Construction Products Reform White Paper.

Bringing accountability for delivering the regulation of construction products into the new regulator will build upon the work of the NRCP. The effective regulation of products used in construction underpins regulation across the construction sector. Bringing accountability for these responsibilities into one organisation, alongside the regulation of buildings, will bring consistency and coherence to the regulatory regime and will support our wider reforms to the regulation of construction products.

MHCLG is working closely with the NRCP on the organisational design and operating model for the regulation of construction products by the new regulator. In considering these changes, we are committed to ensuring the effective regulation of construction products and the broader product regulation regime. Further detail on the future operating model and the relationship between the new regulator and the NRCP will follow. However, we expect that the new regulator will be accountable for the following as they relate to the regulation of construction products:

- operational strategy and policy;
- data and information;
- compliance and assurance, including of the testing and certification of construction products by other bodies; and
- enforcement, including work with other agencies.

The regulator will take on direct oversight of testing and certification across all construction products. This will be complemented by developing public sector testing capacity to allow for products raising particular safety considerations to address the Inquiry findings. This is substantive reform that recognises the need for an approach that addresses all construction products.

In the government's response to the Inquiry, we noted the need for reform to prevent conflicts of interest in the regime for testing and certification of construction products. More detail on our approach will follow in the Construction Products Reform White Paper, which the government committed to publish before spring 2026.

## Next steps for construction product regulation

Despite the reforms initiated in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the government is clear that critical gaps persist in the construction products regulatory framework. Construction products are integral to building safety, significant to the economy and key to housing delivery, but substantive system-wide reform is needed.

Recognising the Inquiry recommendations and findings from the independent reviews, the Construction Products Reform Green Paper consulted on much more ambitious system-wide reforms to improve regulation of and ensure effective enforcement of the whole regime.

These included:

- consistency with the reformed European regime to support safe products whilst also facilitating trade and growth;
- expanding the scope of regulation to cover all construction products;
- measures to ensure accountability for how products are selected and used, particularly in relation to products critical for safe construction;
- new roles for the national regulator in overseeing the certification and testing sector, including licensing of conformity assessment bodies (CABs);
- taking forward work to establish new public sector testing capacity;
- improving the transparency and availability of test results;
- improving the quality of product information and users' access to it, including consideration of the role a construction library can play;
- support for digital infrastructure and capability; and
- stronger powers for the regulator to enforce the new regime.

These system-wide reforms consider responsibilities across the lifecycle of a product, from those of manufacturers and testing houses, to specifiers and designers, to contractors, users, and ultimately, to reuse and disposal of products. This has implications across the end-to-end chain of regulatory oversight, from product regulation and testing and certification through to building regulation and control.

The government is committed to bringing forward a Construction Products Reform White Paper before spring 2026. This will set out the plans to take forward this ambitious system-wide reform of the construction product regulations with the immediate delivery of any new functions, subject to a transitional approach before ultimately becoming the responsibility of the regulator.

## 2.3 Regulation of Building Professions

The competence, capacity and conduct of those working in the built environment – from initial planning and design, construction and fit-out, through to ongoing maintenance, retrofit and demolition – is a critical determinant of building safety, quality and performance. We need a highly skilled, highly motivated and highly productive workforce across the building professions, trades and occupations, supported by a robust system of training, oversight and enforcement, to deliver sufficient, safe and quality buildings for people to live and work.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry placed a renewed focus on the central importance of individuals and professions in designing, constructing and maintaining safe buildings and environments. This included a series of detailed recommendations to strengthen regulation and accountability of specific roles responsible for safety-critical functions within the built environment: building control, fire engineers, fire risk assessors, principal contractors and principal designers.

The government remains committed to implementing the specific reforms set out in the Inquiry's report, and work is underway to progress each of these. However, we believe that we need also to go further than purely the areas highlighted by the Inquiry, to take a holistic view of regulation, competence and culture across all those operating in the built environment sector. We will publish a new long-term strategy for the building professions, including wider trades and occupations, which sets out a clear, unified plan for regulatory and non-regulatory reform at a government, industry and individual level. This will sit alongside parallel reforms to building regulations and construction products to provide long-term benefits for building safety, quality and productivity, as well as supporting greater capacity, skills and investment in the workforce.

### A new regulatory framework

While many of those in the sector are already working to high standards, the current system of regulation and oversight is too complex and fragmented to provide public confidence that this is always the case. No single body has a full view of competence, capacity, regulation and enforcement across the building professions. While some areas are regulated in statute, most are self-regulated or not regulated at all. Where professional bodies provide oversight, these can vary in terms of legal status, governance and public interest functions. There is also no consistent definition or enforcement of competence, or standards for public accountability. This is despite significant endeavours from many in the industry to drive skills and competence. As a result, there is generally insufficient recognition and benefit for those who do the right thing and limited consequences for those who do not, with wider implications for skills, development and overall productivity.

As part of the professions strategy, we will work with key stakeholders, organisations and experts to rationalise and strengthen the system of regulatory oversight and enforcement for the building professions. This will simplify the current patchwork of professional regulation and establish a central oversight function that focuses on a clear and coherent set of standards, expectations and outcomes, in order to enable people who do the right thing to thrive and enforce consequences for those who put people at risk by failing to do the right thing. This represents a generational opportunity to enable better, clearer regulation that enables quality, safety and productivity by building on and streamlining existing structures, rather than layering additional requirements on top of an incoherent and fragmented system.

We are exploring a range of options for the precise design, form and scope of this new framework that brings together the recommendations of the Inquiry, established good practice from other areas (including aviation, energy and healthcare) and sector engagement, as well as considering wider work across government and industry to address wider challenges regarding skills and capacity. This includes specific consideration of the relationship between a new professional oversight function and, for example, existing regulators and professional bodies, as well as the links between regulation of people, products and buildings. In particular, we are considering questions around:

- how we can work with existing bodies and systems to ensure people are equipped, accountable and incentivised to deliver more, safe and high-quality buildings;
- whether more professions should be subject to mandatory registration and licensing requirements to better support competence, skills development and capacity, as well as enforcement;
- how a strengthened system of regulation and oversight could support greater accountability across the whole system; and
- what enforcement powers and structures are required to support effective regulation by ensuring clear consequences for misconduct and positive recognition of good practice; and
- the appropriate institutional arrangements to ensure organisational capability and capacity, manage potential conflicts of interest between different types of regulation and ensure effective regulatory outcomes.

## The Inquiry's recommendations for the professions

The final report of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry made detailed recommendations around regulation of identified high-risk professions to provide greater confidence in the competence, accountability and oversight of those performing safety-critical roles. This included recommendations to:

- Introduce new statutory regulation for the fire engineering profession, supported by an independent body responsible for regulation, registration and standards;
- Establish a system of mandatory accreditation to certify the competence of fire risk assessors; and
- Introduce a licensing system for principal contractors wishing to undertake work on higher-risk buildings.

The government accepted these recommendations in full, and work is underway to design and deliver each of these reforms. All of these individual improvements will contribute to design of the overall framework of regulation for the building professions as part of our overarching strategy.

The Fire Engineers Advisory Panel (FEAP) was established in April 2025 to provide advice to government on the fire engineering profession, and is made up of academics and industry experts. The panel has met regularly, including convening a series of stakeholder outreach sessions to canvass views from the wider sector and to inform development of an authoritative statement of the knowledge and skills expected of a competent fire engineer. The panel is also providing support and advice on the implementation of the Inquiry's wider recommendations for

fire engineers, to inform government's next steps for the profession. The government will publish the final statement and proposed next steps.

In response to the Inquiry's concerns about the competence of some of those offering their services as fire risk assessors and the absence of any government scheme of regulation, government will publish a public consultation on proposals for the future of the fire risk assessor profession. This will seek views on the definition of the fire risk assessor role, options to develop competency frameworks, standards and career pathways, and potential regulatory powers.

The role of the principal contractor is defined under the dutyholder regime, established as part of the Building Safety Act 2022. The government is carrying out a series of stakeholder roundtables in conjunction with sector bodies, to explore how we can introduce and operationalise a licensing scheme for principal contractors. These sit alongside a broader review of the dutyholder regime and how it is functioning, due to report in autumn 2026.

Where there are potential discrepancies between individual recommendations, we will address these to ensure our reforms fit together as a coherent whole and avoid replicating the current piecemeal approach of different systems for different professions. Design of the new framework will also be informed by wider activity across government and industry. This includes progress made so far by the BSR in relation to its duties to facilitate improved competence, the Industry Competence Committee and its working groups set up under Section 10 of Building Safety Act, the Construction Leadership Council and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to improve competence on energy efficiency and retrofit.

## Next steps

We will initiate a rolling process of continuous engagement with stakeholders and organisations across the sector to design a comprehensive programme of reform, based on the principle of mutual responsibility and the need for joint action between government and industry.

Government will publish a call for evidence in spring 2026 to seek detailed views on targeted proposals for reform, building on the findings of earlier consultations on building control and architects. We will then publish an overarching strategy for the built environment professions in spring 2027. This will include detailed design of a new framework for regulation, oversight and enforcement, alongside consideration of other, non-regulatory levers, including options to support skills, sustainable business growth and consumer advice.

## 2.4 Digital, Data and Efficient Regulatory Delivery

The government's ambition for the new regulator is a digital-first approach to improve how regulation is connected and delivered across buildings, products and professionals. Our approach will focus on developing a more connected and coherent digital environment that supports better information sharing, reducing duplication and fragmentation, and enabling more transparent oversight. By gradually aligning and integrating existing services, the single construction regulator aims to build a flexible foundation for more responsive, data-informed regulation that ultimately improves safety outcomes for residents and building users.

Central to the new regulator being digital-first is designing information management systems to unify and integrate the regulation of buildings, professions and products. The underpinning services will provide the regulator with information from users, bringing together fragmented regulations into an interoperable and transparent process.

This would require the consolidation and streamlining of existing digital services and regulation into a new common information architecture, linking information such as building control records, professional accreditations and product information. Through this digital-first approach, the new regulator could reduce the administrative burden on industry, deliver faster, data-informed decisions and better address systemic failures. Delivering this approach will require incremental development, starting with core data and services, and expanding to cover comprehensive regulatory functions.

We are seeking your views on the impact of this proposal on industry to ensure the new regulator creates a safer, smarter and more accountable construction industry through world-class use of data and digital technology.

### Consultation Questions

- Have you experienced any challenges with providing information via government digital services when complying with current regulatory requirements across products, professions and buildings?
- How should the new regulator promote consistent digital standards and interoperability across the lifecycle of a building (including products, professions and buildings)?
- What digital tools and platforms do you find most effective for ensuring you meet regulatory compliance and why?
- What are the opportunities and risks associated with automating regulatory compliance checking (e.g. AI-driven assessment), and how should oversight, accountability and human review be retained within automated systems?

## 2.5 Residents

The current regulatory system places too great a burden on residents to navigate complexity and take on the responsibility to fix things, when they have been neglected by regulatory or industry bodies or professionals. With such a difficult route to accessing justice, residents are often left unsure of their rights or unable to affirm them, leaving them powerless in the face of their housing providers. This particularly affects vulnerable residents, who often need further support.

The regulatory system should do more to prevent these issues occurring for residents. The system should work *for* residents, and we believe there is a position for the regulator to drive this change. The best way to support residents is for the system to work first time, allowing trust to be rebuilt with residents who recognise a system that works for them. Additionally, the regulator and wider system should give residents the ability to exercise their rights effectively, allowing them to make informed decisions. Residents should also be supported by effective enforcement and accountability throughout the system, especially in circumstances where things go wrong.

In our response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's final report, we said "it is clear that the residents of Grenfell Tower were not treated with the respect and dignity that they deserved, their homes were not safe and they were not listened to or given the right information when they raised concerns. Residents across the country must be able to trust the system to deliver safe homes".<sup>16</sup> The HSE conducted research when the BSR was first established to understand the general lifestyle and relationship residents have with their homes in high-rise residential buildings. They also explored what safety meant to residents, with a focus on BSR related issues around fire and structural risks.

We have undertaken further research to better understand how these areas are reflected in the wider resident typology and residents' experiences, needs and mental models around building safety, quality and its regulation, beyond just fire and structural safety.<sup>17</sup> We found:

- Residents' perceptions of the safety and quality of their homes are broad, covering everything from security and personal experience to materials used. These are not always aspects residents prioritise or feel confident assessing when choosing a home.
- Experiences raising issues vary based on housing type and resident profile. There are common challenges, especially in finding the responsible entity for addressing an issue in a satisfactory manner.
- Trust in those who operate in the system, from government to contractors, is low. This is largely due to poor experiences and past failings. Rebuilding trust will involve being motivated to do the right thing for residents and then delivering those things.
- Residents often do not challenge poor or unsafe housing due to barriers in capability, opportunity and motivation. This is particularly the case for vulnerable residents, those in precarious housing situations and those for whom English is a second language.
- Residents highlight the importance of individual interactions with those closest to them in the system, but the expectation is that regulators should be playing a greater role in holding others to account.

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<sup>16</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report: Government response](#), 26 February 2025

<sup>17</sup> [Understanding residents' experiences of housing safety and quality – MHCLG Digital](#), 10 December 2025

Alongside our research, we have worked with the expert Advisory Board to identify what the regulatory system should address to improve its outcomes for residents. The Board was clear that the core role of the regulator should be to keep residents safe. Beyond this, the regulatory system should be monitored against the lived experiences of residents; protect the interests of residents; rebuild resident trust; help residents make informed decisions; and empower residents through advice and advocacy. The regulator should have a role to play in some of these areas, but the rest of the system also needs to improve to drive the necessary change in outcomes.

## Protecting residents

The best way for the regulator to protect residents is by regulating effectively to make sure the buildings residents live in are safe. The regulator must continue the work the BSR currently does to regulate higher-risk buildings and raise safety standards of all buildings. There is also potential scope for the regulator to go further. For example, it could play a role in setting clear behavioural standards and providing uniform foundations for enforcement. This would help to embed resident outcomes at the heart of regulatory practice, deepening the regulator's role in ensuring resident safety.

The complexity of the system and the ability to evade responsibility within it has developed from incremental changes, ad hoc fixes, government interventions and under-investment in competency and enforcement across many decades. Gradually layered policies, which have been introduced over time, have almost always left the onus on the resident to seek redress. These routes are often difficult to access and understand. As a result, residents face multiple systemic barriers to understanding, raising and challenging the issues they experience.

It is unlikely that most residents will seek redress when something has gone wrong, due to the barriers they face in doing so. In our research, we observed few residents escalating issues or feeling able to exercise their consumer power, which reflects wider studies showing only 29% of social housing tenants, 25% of private renters<sup>18</sup> and 22% of leaseholders<sup>19</sup> had even considered raising a complaint. Many residents, but particularly the most vulnerable, are prevented from attempting to seek redress because of the perceived risks involved. These risks can include the fear of eviction and fear of consequences of legal action.<sup>20</sup>

Our research found that residents are unlikely to seek redress because they believe achieving a positive resolution to their issue is unrealistic. Residents' comments reflected that they often feel that the system is working against them, with no consideration of them or their experience and that the regulatory system does not provide residents with the support they need to navigate the complexities that exist and seek redress to the issues they face.

If residents do go on to seek redress, or feel able to pursue an issue, they face even more challenges. In this fragmented system, it is often the case that multiple agencies, schemes and ombudsmen deal with one resident seeking redress. The ownership of responsibilities and where powers lie is confusing, meaning residents can end up being passed back and forth, lost in the system, not knowing where to start or quickly being overwhelmed. In most cases, the onus

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<sup>18</sup> [English Housing Survey 2022 to 2023: satisfaction and complaints](#), last updated February 2025

<sup>19</sup> [English Housing Survey 2023 to 2024: leasehold experience fact sheet](#), July 2025

<sup>20</sup> [Understanding residents' experiences of housing safety and quality – MHCLG Digital](#), 10 December 2025. "But what she's scared of is they would, you know, the landlord would say because she went to court she would need to leave the house." (Private Renter),

remains on the resident to drive action, despite them being the least informed party, meaning many withdraw from the process after initial attempts. The result of residents being unable to seek redress is that they instead suffer, living in homes which are not safe and do not meet their needs. The regulatory system should take action to prevent residents facing issues and barriers which stop them from seeking redress.

The regulator should also monitor how the system is improving the lived experience of residents and whether their homes are safe, to help deliver our proposed system-wide outcome that buildings and built environments are safe and high-performing and deliver a healthy, accessible, secure and sustainable environment for occupants.

The regulator should build on the statutory residents panel that already exists in the BSR and develop mechanisms to take and demonstrate action that comes from the engagement with residents.<sup>21</sup> Whilst the regulator's exact levels of engagement with residents will be informed by the responses to this consultation, we are clear that the regulator must directly understand some of the impact the regulatory system is having on residents' lives and alter the system accordingly. This qualitative feedback, alongside the possibility of the regulator setting indicators on the lived experience, such as health statistics, employment rates (healthy populations are more likely to be working populations) and life expectancy, will help the regulator understand if the system is delivering *for* residents and establish whether residents are safe and feel safe in their homes. A benefit of these outcomes is their non-prescriptive nature, allowing the system to be flexible in how it goes about achieving them and leaving the door open for future changes.

## The regulatory system

The regulator cannot deliver its objectives alone. It needs the support of other bodies in the wider building ecosystem to protect residents and keep them safe. The regulatory system can do this in two ways: by making residents informed consumers and by actively sharing information across regulatory bodies to improve the regulator's insight into trends that help it to deliver targeted change and ultimately, better outcomes for residents.

### Informed consumers

We know that to feel confident making decisions about their homes, residents must be informed and aware of the impact of decisions on their safety. Part of the reason why resident engagement in the regulatory system is low comes from residents not being treated as informed consumers. Our research has reaffirmed this position – residents were not confident of their rights or how to use them. They also expressed a need for support at moments where their relationship to and responsibilities within their homes change. Escalating a housing issue is not a habitual practice and is only done in moments of acute stress, when taking time to find routes for support is difficult.

The regulatory system should create ways for residents to access what they need to know, when they need to know it – making clear to the resident the impacts of their decisions on the safety of them and their homes. Some of this can be handled by the regulator, for instance, developing on the work of the BSR's 'Your Home, Your Safety' campaign<sup>22</sup> and designing similar campaigns for

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<sup>21</sup> Building Safety Regulator: [Resident Panel Member Recruitment and Resident Panel Technical Sub-Committee Member Recruitment](#), February 2025

<sup>22</sup> Building Safety Regulator: [Your Home, Your Safety campaign](#), March 2024

other resident types. However, the rest of the system also needs to improve, to make sure residents are informed consumers at the point where they need to make a decision which impacts their safety and their home, no matter where that decision lies within the regulatory system.

#### Information-sharing across the regulatory system

Across the regulatory system, there should be effective routes to share information between regulatory bodies. Some bodies, such as ombudsmen, have direct information relating to residents' experiences within the system. This can provide essential insights on trends, data and resident feedback that could be fed back into the system to ensure widespread understanding of how well resident-based outcomes are being achieved and to drive improvements.

### Rebuilding residents' trust

Alongside ensuring residents are materially safe, the regulator should also play an important role in making residents *feel* safe in their homes, to rebuild resident trust in the regulatory system. Residents' trust in the system is currently low, due to past failings, negative experiences and the poor levels of accountability across the system. By taking the actions we have identified in this chapter, supported by the wider regulatory system, the regulator can play an active role in helping residents feel safe in their homes and consequently rebuild resident trust in the built environment.

Consumer trust in other systems, such as food supply, is high because consumers see visible evidence that the system has regulated standards every time they make a purchase. The Trust In Food research project established consumers typically invest little time consciously thinking about trusting the food they eat and therefore have 'weak ties' to producers and sellers of food. This highlights the food system is a faceless dynamic, where consumers do not know who the actors are behind the production, but trust the system to provide *for* them.<sup>23</sup>

This relationship between the consumer and the producer is similar in the built environment – we don't see or engage with those who built our homes. Rebuilding trust will include the regulator doing what it says it will (cognitive trust) and the regulator having the interests of residents as its motivation for regulating (social trust). The built environment should aim to hold trust in the system in the same way food supply does, where consumers know they are safe.

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<sup>23</sup> FSA, Understanding Consumer Trust in the FSA and Food System, June 2025 - <https://science.food.gov.uk/article/137910-understanding-consumer-trust-in-the-fsa-and-food-system>

## Consultation questions

- Should the regulator play a role in setting behavioural standards and providing foundations for enforcement? If so, how should it do this e.g. via powers or duties?
- How can the regulator protect residents, enabling them to effectively exercise their rights to seek redress to make their homes safe, without fear or confusion?
- How can the regulator monitor the impact the regulatory system has on the safety of residents?
- What should the regulatory system do to better share information between regulatory bodies to inform and support the delivery of resident-based outcomes?
- How can the regulatory system better support and advise residents?

## Chapter 3: Roles and responsibilities in an integrated regulatory system

For an integrated regulatory system to function successfully, there must be clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for everyone working in the building ecosystem. Building a culture of transparency and shared responsibility is fundamental to instilling trust and confidence in the sector.

Establishing a new regulator is an opportunity for everyone to consider the roles which government, the regulator and industry need to play to achieve positive outcomes for residents and building users. It is also a chance to make sure the right frameworks, leadership and partnerships are in place to coordinate, monitor and steward the ecosystem as a whole and enable everyone to execute these roles effectively. We propose defined principles for how government, the regulator and industry operate in a new regulatory system.

### The role of government

The government has an important role as steward of the building ecosystem. It is responsible for ensuring safe and high-quality homes and buildings are built and maintained for everyone across the country. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) ministers are responsible for building safety and housing policy and are accountable to Parliament. As steward, the government will oversee the future integrated regulatory system, including the new regulator, with MHCLG acting as its sponsor. MHCLG will ensure the regulator is properly resourced to deliver its activities, through appropriate funding and cost-recovery models alongside robust oversight to ensure it meets its objectives. MHCLG will also provide support and healthy challenge to the regulator, to ensure it delivers the outcomes it has committed to and that the government expects.

While government oversight is essential to support the future regulatory system and new regulator, it is important that the regulator has a clear mandate to meet its building safety mission. Appropriate statutory frameworks will therefore be implemented to allow the regulator to make its decisions fairly, impartially and independently.

The government must play a leading role in shaping the purpose and activity of the regulator. This should include MHCLG providing strategic policy information to the regulator setting out government priorities to inform its activity. MHCLG should also seek expert advice from the regulator to inform government policy on building safety.

The government will be responsible for non-executive appointments to the regulator's governing board, including the Chair, in accordance with the Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) model. While the regulator's governing board will be responsible for the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer, MHCLG ministers will be consulted. The government has an important responsibility to ensure the appointments process is designed in accordance with best practice to enable the recruitment of the best leaders possible.

## The role of the new regulator

The regulator, as an NDPB, will have operational autonomy to carry out its legal and regulatory functions independently, but will be strategically aligned to MHCLG and to the direction and priorities set by government ministers.

As set out in Chapter 1, the Secretary of State for MHCLG may periodically publish a statement setting out strategic priorities and objectives for the regulator in carrying out its functions, which the regulator will need to perform in accordance with the legal framework. Further development of the regulator's statutory objectives and duties will take place ahead of legislation when parliamentary time allows.

It is important that the regulator upholds principles of clear accountability, effective enforcement, proportionate risk management and constructive engagement and collaboration. It must also remain open to scrutiny and challenge.

The regulator's focus will be on the centralised and nationalised elements of the regulatory system, reflecting the territorial extent and application of these reforms set out above. Local regulators will maintain their existing important role within the system. The regulator will develop and maintain close relationships with local regulators to share information and respond to issues.

### Accountability

The regulator will play an integral role to foster effective accountability and shared responsibility across the sector. It must role model and champion best practice in how it holds itself and others to account, instilling a strong culture of improvement. The regulator will be accountable to ministers in MHCLG and will promote transparency by seeking feedback and sharing best practice across the sector, other regulatory bodies, local government, fire and rescue services and ombudsmen.

### Enforcement

Enforcement of safe and proper practice will be an essential cornerstone of the regulator. Dame Judith Hackitt's 2018 report states that "the effectiveness of regulatory frameworks appears to be largely dependent on how individuals working within the framework interact with it".<sup>24</sup> The regulator will be a regulatory leader that incentivises individuals and businesses to interact with the regulatory framework effectively. This should create a fairer regulatory system, where businesses that consistently demonstrate trustworthiness and prioritise safety and high quality are supported to thrive. This is essential for the livelihoods of those working in the industry day to day, but also to continuing to grow the success of the sector and our wider economy.

Those who do the right thing must not be undercut by those who do not. The regulator must also take decisive action and effective enforcement against those who do not meet the expected regulatory standards. It should do this by having detailed oversight of the risks, challenges and interdependencies across the construction and building safety regimes and by setting clear, non-negotiable standards.

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<sup>24</sup> [Building a Safer Future: Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety](#), May 2018

### Risk management

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) already has a statutory duty to keep the safety and standard of all buildings under review (not just those above 18 metres). This is being operationalised through a continuous intelligence assessment, horizon scanning and risk management function. Establishing the new regulator will simplify the identification of risks and improve governance across the whole built environment system, enabling the regulator to proactively target its regulatory activities to have the greatest impact. This will be a particularly important part of building a resilient and flexible regulatory system which can respond to emerging risks alongside adapting to innovation in building methods or new technology.

The new regulator must also take an expert and proportionate approach to managing risks to safety and standards across the buildings system. For example, proposals for a risk-based 'general safety requirement' for construction products were consulted on in the Construction Products Reform Green Paper. A risk-based general safety requirement would require an economic operator to understand and take proportionate action to eliminate or control any safety risk connected to the intended use and the normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions of use of their construction product before it is supplied or placed on the market. The upcoming Construction Products Reform White Paper will consult on detailed proposals to be set out in regulations.

### Relationships across the building ecosystem

To effectively lead and shape the regulatory landscape and meet the outcomes we set out in Chapter 1, it is essential that the new regulator maintains strong relationships with government and industry.

To build trust with residents and industry, the regulator must listen to and act upon concerns raised and clearly, and regularly, communicate how its activities are contributing to the outcomes we are working towards. Evidence shows that public institutions with effective engagement channels that take people's view into careful consideration are more highly trusted.<sup>25</sup> With this in mind, the regulator will have a responsibility to engage with the sector, including by educating and supporting the industry it regulates to improve. It will proactively seek feedback to monitor its performance and impact, making improvements where required. This should involve learning from and building on the channels existing regulators have, such as the BSR's Building Advisory Committee and Industry Competence Committee and going further through bespoke engagement with residents and different parts of industry. The regulator should prioritise this with small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as larger firms.

The regulator must also work effectively with other regulatory bodies. As a sector leader, it should have an overarching view of the building safety system and proactively seek regular feedback from other bodies and institutions. It should also play an integral role in consolidating regulatory activity across the sector and convening regulatory bodies within the system to maintain a strong understanding of their work, identify and act upon duplication and minimise inefficiencies. Through this role, the regulator should proactively improve and share learning across the

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<sup>25</sup> [OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook 2025](#), 9 April 2025

regulatory system to raise standards across the building ecosystem and deepen resident trust. This responsibility should be considered at both a national and local level.

## The role of industry

As set out above, this reform is intended to create a fairer regulatory system, benefitting the many individuals and businesses who act responsibly and in the interests of residents and everyone who uses buildings.

For reform to result in meaningful benefit to residents, it requires industry to seize the opportunity to lead a positive transformation in how safety and quality are embedded throughout the lifecycle of buildings. While many have sought to do the right thing, multiple reports dating back to at least the 1990s and most recently the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, have demonstrated that more progress is needed to improve both culture and practice to change from a 'race to the bottom' culture to one which consistently prioritises quality and safety.

The Inquiry was clear that industry played its part in the failures that led to the Grenfell tragedy; bad actors exploited ambiguity and fragmentation in the regulatory system and put profit before safety. Reforming the regulatory system includes expectations for industry to step up and lead sector-wide change. Bad-faith actors who exploit loopholes, act dishonestly, or fail to behave in the public interest, must not be rewarded and allowed to undercut responsible actors who are investing in safety and quality. This requires those working across industry to act as equal partners in system-wide reform. We know that for this to be successful, industry will make a significant contribution to the establishment and support of the new regulator. Success also relies on industry ensuring that they have a competent workforce and setting the standards for the behaviour and culture necessary to drive change. By working closely with government and the new regulator, industry can support changes and assist in achieving the desired outcomes made in the Inquiry recommendation.

Since 2017, there have been individuals, businesses, and industry groups who have come together to drive positive change. This includes those who have taken steps to ensure the 'golden thread' is implemented, led the development of building safety plans for their organisations or areas of industry, and given their time and resource to pushing for higher standards in the sector through dedicated working groups. This industry-led work is a solid foundation on which to build momentum for further change. To fully realise the potential impact of this work, greater consistency is required from across the sector and throughout the supply chain. The influence and expertise of trusted leadership from within industry will be crucial to steering improved competence and conduct, and ultimately build confidence and trust in the system. This reform is an opportunity for individuals, businesses and leaders across industry to work together to build on this progress and consider how to use the tools in their power to achieve the outcomes in Chapter 1.

This means an expectation to go beyond regulatory compliance to ensure that buildings and products are safe for occupants throughout their lifespan, including construction, refurbishment and deconstruction, and works while buildings are in occupation. This should include tackling longstanding structural issues such as outdated procurement models, and fragmented responsibilities where there are opportunities for different approaches. It should also mean rethinking contracting practices, promoting early-stage design collaboration, and ensuring that

all parts of the supply chain – including smaller firms and investors – are aligned behind safety expectations and positive outcomes for residents and building users. Industry leaders must exemplify accountability, foster collaboration across the sector and transparently demonstrate progress. Strong partnerships with regulatory bodies and transparent communication are essential to building trust and driving meaningful change.

Learning from successful culture change initiatives in other sectors, such as petrochemicals, can help accelerate progress. The construction industry may also look inwards. The sector has previously demonstrated its capacity for cultural change transformation, moving beyond ‘tick-box’ compliance towards a more risk-led, accountable approach to health and safety reform. While the transformation took time, industry ultimately embraced a safety culture rooted in outcomes and responsibility, showing that sustained change is achievable when the focus shifts from minimum standards to risk-informed responsibility. By embracing this approach again, the construction industry can lead the way in delivering safer, higher-quality buildings and better outcomes for residents.

### Consultation questions

We would welcome your views on the roles of actors within the ecosystem.

- Do you agree with the principles set out in this chapter, and the proposed roles and responsibilities for government, regulatory bodies and industry?
- What are your views on how the new regulator can work with industry to support culture change, towards a quality and safety-led culture? What sort of incentives or sanctions do you feel would be effective in supporting this change?
- What are your views on how industry can best drive the culture change and respond effectively to the changes proposed in this prospectus? In your view, how prepared are individuals and businesses for these changes? What would support industry to be more prepared?

## Chapter 4: Next steps and timeline

This prospectus sets out our commitment to honouring the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's recommendation to create a single construction regulator and our broader commitment to regulatory reform. We have published this alongside the latest quarterly update on progress with the wider Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations. An annual report on progress to deliver the Inquiry's recommendations will be published and laid in Parliament in February 2026.

The consultation questions posed in this prospectus are part of an engagement process which we will continue as we develop our plans for the regulator. The consultation on Citizen Space is open until 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026 and we welcome formal responses.

We will use insights from answers to this consultation to develop our reforms and will publish the government response to the consultation in summer 2026. In support of the consultation, we anticipate arranging specific consultation events in addition to making use of other opportunities to provide further information and enable a broad range of stakeholders to participate.

MHCLG is committed to close cross-government working and engagement on the strategic direction and priorities for the regulator to ensure that the regulatory framework takes account of other government reforms.

We also intend to publish the Construction Products White Paper by spring 2026, as well as a call for evidence on the strategy for regulation of Built Environment Professions.

Primary legislation will be required to implement several of the proposals in this document, for example to establish the new regulatory framework, outcomes and duties and transfer existing functions to the new regulator as well as to create new regulatory functions proposed by the Inquiry. We will bring forward the necessary legislation as soon as parliamentary time allows.

## Annex A – Full Inquiry recommendation and list of Inquiry-recommended functions

### The Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report, Volume 7, Part 14 <sup>26</sup>

113.4 *We think that over the course of time the arrangements under which the construction industry was regulated had become too complex and fragmented. At the time of the fire the Department for Communities and Local Government ... was responsible for the Building Regulations and the statutory guidance, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ... was responsible for regulating products and the Home Office was responsible for the fire and rescue services. Building control was partly in the hands of local authorities and partly in the hands of approved inspectors operating as commercial organisations, enforcement of the law relating to the sale of construction products was carried out by Trading Standards and commercial organisations provided testing and certification services to manufacturers of products. UKAS accredited organisations operating as conformity assessment bodies. In our view, this degree of fragmentation was a recipe for inefficiency and an obstacle to effective regulation.*

113.5 *In our view all the functions to which we have referred... should be exercised by a single independent body headed by a person whom, for the sake of convenience, we shall call a construction regulator, reporting to a single Secretary of State. The establishment of such a regulator would bring a number of benefits, not least a focal point in driving a much-needed change in the culture of the construction industry. It would enable information to be shared effectively between those responsible for different aspects of the industry and promote the exchange of ideas. Information on developments in the industry, both in this country and abroad, could be shared more easily between all those interested in it. We envisage that such a construction regulator would have sufficient resources to take on the following functions, most of which are currently discharged by one or other of a variety of bodies:*

- a) *the regulation of construction products;*
- b) *the development of suitable methods for testing the reaction to fire of materials and products intended for use in construction;*
- c) *the testing and certification of such products;*
- d) *the issue of certificates of compliance of construction products with the requirements of legislation, statutory guidance and industry standards;*
- e) *the regulation and oversight of building control;*
- f) *the licensing of contractors to work on higher-risk buildings;*
- g) *monitoring the operation of the Building Regulations and the statutory guidance and advising the Secretary of State on the need for change;*
- h) *carrying out research on matters affecting fire safety in the built environment;*
- i) *collecting information, both in this country and abroad, on matters affecting fire safety;*
- j) *exchanging information with the fire and rescue services on matters affecting fire safety;*
- k) *accrediting fire risk assessors;*
- l) *maintaining a publicly available library of test data and publications.*

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<sup>26</sup> [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report](#), Volume 7, September 2024

113.6 *We are aware that in the period since the Grenfell Tower fire Parliament has passed the Building Safety Act 2022 to regulate work on higher-risk buildings, to impose particular duties on those involved in the construction and refurbishment of such buildings and to establish a Building Safety Regulator responsible for building control and for overseeing standards of competence. However, responsibility for the range of functions identified above remains dispersed. We therefore recommend that the government draw together under a single regulator all the functions relating to the construction industry to which we have referred.*

### Current regulatory responsibilities

In line with the government’s response to the Inquiry in February 2025, the following functions remain in scope of this reform.

Functions recommended by the Inquiry	Which regulatory body does this now?
Regulation of construction products	Enforcing construction product regulations is an existing function of the NRCP (within OPSS); additional, new regulatory functions also planned following reform of the construction products regime.
Development of suitable methods for testing the reaction to fire of materials and products intended for use in construction	Existing function of BSR
Regulation and oversight of building control;	Existing function of BSR (BSR also delivers building control for higher-risk buildings)
Licensing contractors to work on higher-risk buildings;	New function
Monitoring operation of Building Regulations and the statutory guidance and advising the Secretary of State on the need for change;	Existing function of BSR
Carrying out research on matters affecting fire safety in the built environment;	Existing function of BSR
Collecting information, both in this country and abroad, on matters affecting fire safety;	Existing function of BSR
Exchanging information with the fire and rescue services on matters affecting fire safety;	Existing function of BSR
Accreditation to certify the competence of fire risk assessors;	Mandating competency requirements for fire risk assessors is a new regulatory function.
Maintaining a publicly available library of test data, reports on serious fires and academic papers.	New function

*In the Government’s response to the Inquiry, we noted we do not believe it is appropriate for a single body to both regulate construction products and undertake testing and certification of construction products or issue certificates of compliance, as this would create a new conflict of interest within the regulator. The regulator will take on a wider oversight role in these functions as part of its responsibility for regulation of construction products.*

Testing and certification of such products;	Function of Conformity Assessment Bodies
Issuing certificates of compliance of construction products with the requirements of legislation, statutory guidance and industry standards;	

## Annex B – Definitions

### Definitions of terms used in this document

<b>‘Your Home, Your Safety’ Campaign</b>	Campaign launched in 2024 by the Building Safety Regulator to inform residents of high-rise buildings in England about their new rights.
<b>Approved Documents (ADs)</b>	Government-approved guidance, detailing advice on how to meet the legal requirements of the building regulations for some common situations.
<b>British Standards Institution (BSI)</b>	The national standards body of the United Kingdom. BSI produces technical standards on a wide range of products and services and supplies certification and standards-related services to businesses.
<b>Building Control</b>	Legal requirement that must be obtained before carrying out work that involves the erection, extension or alteration of a building.
<b>Building Control Independent Panel (BCIP)</b>	Independent expert advisory panel providing analysis and advice to government on questions in the Grenfell Inquiry final report relevant to the future of the building control system in England.
<b>Building Regulations</b>	Regulations that apply to most new buildings and many alterations of existing buildings in England and Wales, whether for domestic, commercial or industrial use. Compliance is a legal requirement.
<b>Building Safety Act 2022</b>	2022 legislation enacted to reform building safety regulations, giving residents more rights and making homes safer.
<b>Building Safety Regulator (BSR)</b>	Established under the Building Safety Act 2022 to regulate higher-risk buildings, raise safety standards of all buildings, help professionals in design, construction and building control, to improve their competence.
<b>Building Safety Regulator's Building Advisory Committee (BAC)</b>	Statutory committee established by the Building Safety Act 2022 to advise the regulator on building-related matters.
<b>Building system / building ecosystem</b>	<p>These terms are used interchangeably in this document to refer to range of people, public and private and bodies involved in residential, commercial and civic buildings at every stage of their lifecycle.</p> <p>This includes construction products, used in buildings, infrastructure and wider built environment; the range of professionals and tradespeople who design, build, fund and maintain our buildings; and residents and users of</p>

	every type and tenure of building. Each of these actors has a different level and type of impact on our buildings.
<b>Chief Construction Adviser (CCA)</b>	This role was created to implement one of the recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry's Phase 2 report. The CCA provides independent advice to ministers on building safety and regulatory reform. They are appointed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
<b>Competence</b>	The skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours necessary to perform a role safely and in compliance with regulations.
<b>Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs)</b>	Comprises testing and calibration laboratories, certification bodies as well as inspection bodies that provide conformity assessment services.
<b>Construction products</b>	All products (whether manufactured or in raw forms like sand and aggregates, including kits) that are likely to be used for construction purposes (including maintenance, refurbishment, or retrofit, in buildings and infrastructure) regardless of whether they are also likely to be used for other purposes.
	The definition of a construction product is set out in the Construction Product regulations 2011. <sup>27</sup>
<b>Devolved Administration</b>	The transfer of power by central government to local or regional administrations.
<b>Dutyholder regime</b>	Legal framework introduced in England on October 1, 2023, by the Building Safety Act 2022, which places legal responsibility on those involved in the design and construction of buildings to ensure compliance with building regulations.
<b>Economic operator</b>	This includes the manufacturer, the authorised representative, the importer, the distributor, the fulfilment service provider or any other natural or legal person who is subject to this Regulation in relation to the manufacturing or remanufacturing of products, including products to be reused, or to making those products available on the market, in accordance with this Regulation. This definition of 'economic operators' does not include online marketplaces.

<sup>27</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#)

<b>Fire Risk Assessor (FRA)</b>	A professional who may be employed by a Responsible Person to assist them in making or reviewing a fire risk assessment. This role is not presently defined in law.
<b>Fire Safety Order</b>	Main piece of legislation governing fire safety in buildings in England and Wales.
<b>Grenfell Tower Inquiry</b>	Public Inquiry created to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on the night of 14 June 2017.
<b>Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report</b>	The Inquiry's Phase 2 report was published on September 4, 2024, examining the underlying causes of the tragedy and making 58 recommendations.
<b>Hackitt Report / Independent Review</b>	'Building a Safer Future' was an independent review by Dame Judith Hackitt into building and fire safety regulations and related compliance and enforcement, with a focus on high rise residential buildings. Its final report, published in 2018, set out over 50 recommendations for government on how to deliver a more robust regulatory system for the future.
<b>Health and Safety Executive (HSE)</b>	The UK's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It prevents work-related death, injury and ill health. HSE is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions.
<b>Higher Risk Buildings (HRBs)</b>	Buildings deemed to be higher risk, subject to the requirements of the higher-risk regime directly overseen by the Building Safety Regulator.
<b>Industry</b>	The umbrella term for the number of professional and tradespeople who design, build, fund and maintain our buildings and are involved in the manufacture, sale and use of construction products.
<b>Industry Competence Committee (ICC)</b>	Statutory committee formed under the Building Safety Act 2022 to provide strategic leadership, assistance and encouragement to facilitate the improvement of competence in the built environment industry. It advises both the Building Safety Regulator and industry on matters of competence.
<b>Inter-jurisdictional Regulatory Collaboration Committee (IRCC)</b>	International forum of building regulation and code authoring bodies with the purpose of promoting effective international collaboration concerning 'best current practice' building regulatory systems, in particular those that are functional, objective or performance based.

<b>Interoperability</b>	The ability of different computer systems, software, and devices to communicate, share, exchange, and use data with each other.
<b>Lived experience</b>	Lived experience refers to knowledge acquired through direct, first-hand and personal experience.
<b>Local Authority Building Control (LABC)</b>	Local authority building control teams in England and Wales help people comply with the building regulations by giving feedback on plans and providing site inspections. The local authority has a general duty to see that building work complies with the Building Regulations, unless it is under the control of an approved inspector. Only local authorities have the power to enforce standards if things go wrong.
<b>Morrell-Day Review</b>	An independent review of the Construction Products Testing Regime, published in 2023, co-chaired by Paul Morell OBE and Anneliese Day KC.
<b>National Regulator for Construction Products (NRCP)</b>	Sits within the Office for Product Safety and Standards and leads and co-ordinates market surveillance and enforcement.
<b>Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS)</b>	The national regulator for all consumer products, except for vehicles, medicines and food. The National Regulator for Construction Products sits within the OPSS (since April 2021).
<b>Principal contractor</b>	A principal contractor is appointed by the client to control the construction phase of any project involving more than one contractor.
<b>Proportionate</b>	In relation to the regulatory regime, requirements that are commensurate to the risk and in proportion to achieving the objectives.
<b>Registered Building Inspector (RBI)</b>	Registered building inspectors carry out regulated building control activities. RBIs work for building control bodies (the BSR, local authorities and registered building control approvers), either as employees or contractors.
<b>Regulator</b>	In this document, refers primarily to the single construction regulator recommended by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry to be responsible for regulating buildings, construction products and professionals.
<b>Regulatory system</b>	A framework of public and private institutions, actors, rules and processes designed to achieve positive outcomes and protect people from harm.

<b>Responsible person</b>	The person responsible for fire safety on premises under the Fire Safety Order. An employer who has some control over the workplace is a responsible person. For other types of premises, a responsible person can be anyone who has control over a premises in connection with carrying out a trade, business or other undertaking, for example, a landlord, manager or occupier; or the owner where this is not applicable. A responsible person ensures fire safety throughout the area of the premises which are under their control, including a requirement to complete a fire risk assessment.
<b>Reserved matter</b>	Decisions that are still taken by the UK Parliament at Westminster even though they have effect in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland or the regions of England.
<b>Royal Charter</b>	Instrument of incorporation, granted by The King, which confers independent legal personality on an organisation and defines its objectives, constitution and powers to govern its own affairs. The terms of each Charter are different, depending on the individual requirements of the type of organisation that is being incorporated.
<b>Single Construction Regulator</b>	The first recommendation of the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 was to 'draw together under a single regulator' a number of regulatory functions relating to the construction industry referred to in the Phase 2 report.
<b>Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME)</b>	A business with fewer than 250 employees.
<b>Test data</b>	Individual raw values which would be produced as part of a test e.g. on a construction product or system. This can include both quantitative and qualitative information.
<b>Test results</b>	Refers to the presentation of collected information and findings that demonstrate the outcomes of the test e.g. on a construction product or system. This can include both quantitative and qualitative information.

## Annex C – Single Regulator Advisory Board

The Single Construction Regulator Advisory Board was established in spring 2025 as an advisory body on the design and implementation of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry’s recommendation for a ‘single construction regulator’. The Board brings together representatives across government, regulators, industry, academia and resident and consumer advocacy, to reflect the range of interests in the regulatory systems which govern the construction industry and wider built environment. The Board’s advice has shaped government’s proposals for design and implementation of regulatory reform.

### Membership

<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Role and Organisation</b>
<b>Chair: Catherine Adams</b>	Director of Building Systems and Insights, MHCLG
<b>Thouria Istephan</b>	Interim Chief Construction Adviser
<b>Charlie Pugsley</b>	Interim Chief Executive Officer, Building Safety Regulator
<b>Graham Russell MBE</b>	CEO, Office for Product Safety and Standards
<b>Hugh Simpson</b>	CEO, Architects Registration Board
<b>Dame Judith Hackitt</b>	Adviser, Building Safety
<b>Mark Reynolds</b>	Co-Chair, Construction Leadership Council
<b>Peter Caplehorn</b>	CEO, Construction Products Association
<b>Graham Watts OBE</b>	CEO, Construction Industry Council
<b>Richard Moriarty</b>	CEO, Financial Reporting Council
<b>Professor Alan Penn</b>	Professor of Architecture, UCL
<b>Professor Christopher Hodges OBE</b>	Emeritus Professor of Justice Systems, University of Oxford
<b>Gillian Cooper</b>	Director of Energy, Citizens Advice
<b>Fayann Simpson OBE</b>	Resident Panel Representative, Building Safety Regulator

## Annex D – About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and UK data protection legislation. In certain circumstances this may therefore include personal data when required by law.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the information access regimes and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will at all times process your personal data in accordance with UK data protection legislation and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included below.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#).

## Annex E – Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under UK data protection legislation.

Note that this section only refers to personal data (your name, contact details and any other information that relates to you or another identified or identifiable individual personally) not the content otherwise of your response to the consultation.

### 1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [dataprotection@communities.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@communities.gov.uk) or by writing to the following address: Data Protection Officer, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF.

### 2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

We will collect your IP address if you complete a consultation online. We may use this to ensure that each person only completes a survey once. We will not use this data for any other purpose.

#### Sensitive types of personal data

Please do not share [special category](#) personal data or criminal offence data if we have not asked for this unless absolutely necessary for the purposes of your consultation response. By ‘special category personal data’, we mean information about a living individual’s:

- race
- ethnic origin
- political opinions
- religious or philosophical beliefs
- trade union membership
- genetics
- biometrics
- health (including disability-related information)
- sex life; or
- sexual orientation.

By ‘criminal offence data’, we mean information relating to a living individual’s criminal convictions or offences or related security measures.

### **3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data**

[The collection of your personal data is lawful under article 6(1)(e) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation as it is necessary for the performance by MHCLG of a task in the public interest/in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. Section 8(d) of the Data Protection Act 2018 states that this will include processing of personal data that is necessary for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department i.e. in this case a consultation.

Where necessary for the purposes of this consultation, our lawful basis for the processing of any special category personal data or ‘criminal offence’ data (terms explained under ‘Sensitive Types of Data’) which you submit in response to this consultation is as follows. The relevant lawful basis for the processing of special category personal data is Article 9(2)(g) UK GDPR (‘substantial public interest’), and Schedule 1 paragraph 6 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (‘statutory etc and government purposes’). The relevant lawful basis in relation to personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences data is likewise provided by Schedule 1 paragraph 6 of the Data Protection Act 2018.]

### **4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data**

MHCLG will appoint the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology as a ‘data processor’, acting on behalf of the Department and under our instruction, to help analyse the responses to this consultation. Where we do we will ensure that the processing of your personal data remains in strict accordance with the requirements of the data protection legislation.

MHCLG will take reasonable and proportionate steps to prevent personal data from the consultation responses being sent to an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool called Consult AI. The AI tool processes data securely and does not copy or share data. The data will only be accessed and used by those authorised to do so.

The AI tool identifies themes present in the responses. The draft themes are reviewed and agreed by a policy team before the tool then maps responses to the themes to be used by policy teams to analyse the consultation. MHCLG will take steps to check for accuracy and identify and reduce bias. Your data will not be used to train the AI models.

### **5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.**

Your personal data will be held for [two years] from the closure of the consultation, unless we identify that its continued retention is unnecessary before that point.

### **6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, restriction, objection**

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have your data corrected if it is incorrect or incomplete
- d. to object to our use of your personal data in certain circumstances

e. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/>, or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Please contact us at the following address if you wish to exercise the rights listed above, except the right to lodge a complaint with the ICO: [dataprotection@communities.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@communities.gov.uk) or Knowledge and Information Access Team, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF.

**7. Your personal data may be processed in the EU. The EU is covered by UK adequacy regulations.**

**8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.**

**9. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system.**

We use a third-party system, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based server. Your personal data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible, and it will be stored there for two years before it is deleted.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 6****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Environmental Health and Regulatory Services
Date of Report	26 January 2026
File Reference	EHPD23
Legislation	Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Notice to Quit Periods – Consultation Response
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Draft Response to Notice to Quit Periods Consultation

Members are reminded that Environmental Health and Regulatory Services is responsible for enforcing private tenancy legislation in Northern Ireland, including the Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and the Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, which regulate matters such as rents, tenancy deposits, property standards, tenant information and eviction procedures.

The statutory notice periods required for landlords and tenants to lawfully terminate a private tenancy in Northern Ireland were originally set in the Housing (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, introducing the following graduated notice periods:

Not Applicable

<b>Length of Tenancy</b>	<b>Minimum Notice to Quit Period</b>
Up to 5 years	4 weeks
Between 5 years and 10 years	8 weeks
Longer than 10 years	12 weeks

Following a 2017 review of Northern Ireland's Private Rental Sector (PRS), Department for Communities (DfC) committed to increasing the minimum notice period that landlords must give to tenants to eight weeks. This reflected feedback from tenants and stakeholders that four weeks' notice was insufficient to secure alternative accommodation. These changes came into effect after the conclusion of Coronavirus Regulations in May 2022.

The current notice to quit requirements for landlords are set out in the table below;

<b>Length of Tenancy</b>	<b>Minimum Notice to Quit Period</b>
1 year or less	4 weeks
1-10 years	8 weeks
10 years or more	12 weeks

DfC has launched a 12-week public consultation commencing on 5 January 2026. It is proposed that Council will submit a response, a copy of which is attached as Appendix 1. The consultation is available at the following link:

[Consultation on Notice to Quit Periods - NI Direct - Citizen Space](#)

The draft Private Tenancies (Notice to Quit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 propose the following:

#### **Introduction of longer Notice to Quit periods for "Standard Cases"**

The draft Regulations propose that the Notice to Quit requirements are increased for standard cases as set out below;

<b>Length of Tenancy</b>	<b>Minimum Notice to Quit Period</b>
1 year or less	8 weeks
1-3 years	4 months
3-8 years	6 months
8 years or more	7 months

#### **Introduction of shorter notice periods for "special cases"**

The "special case" circumstances which would allow a Landlord to issue a shorter notice to quit periods are:

1. The tenant is in substantial arrears of rent.

## Not Applicable

2. The tenant, or a member of the tenant's household, has engaged in serious Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in, or in the locality of, the dwelling-house.
3. The tenant, or a member of the tenant's household, is convicted of a relevant criminal offence.
4. Possession of the property is sought for occupation by either the landlord, or landlord's immediate family.

The "special case" associated notice periods are set out below:

<b>Notice to Quit Circumstance</b>	<b>Special Case Notice Period</b>
Substantial arrears of rent	1 month
Engaged in Serious Anti-Social Behaviour	2 weeks
Convicted of a Relevant Criminal Offence	2 weeks
Possession for occupation by the landlord or landlords' immediate family	3 months

Tenants who received a special case Notice to Quit, but do not agree that the special case circumstance is correct, can challenge the Notice to Quit in Civil Court. It will then be up to the landlord to prove the validity of the particular circumstance which is being relied upon.

The draft consultation response has been prepared in collaboration with Environmental Health teams in all councils in Northern Ireland, and highlights the following main points:

- Council considers that the special case notice period for possession due to occupation by the landlord or their family should be removed, with the notice period in such cases reverting to the standard length, determined by the duration of the tenancy.
- In cases of rent arrears, the Council believes landlords should be required to provide evidence that they have attempted to engage the tenant in a repayment plan.
- The Council would welcome clarification from DfC that there is no obligation to prove a "nuisance" to demonstrate antisocial behaviour and that evidence of repeated annoyance or disturbance would suffice and the Guidance document should have the word "Nuisance" replaced with "Disturbance" to reflect this, as "Nuisance" could be misinterpreted to include "Statutory Nuisance" which would involve the input of the Environmental Health & Regulatory Services.

Not Applicable

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- Greater clarity on data sharing and information protocols is needed for instances where evidence is requested from Environmental Health regarding antisocial behaviour.
- The Council would also welcome guidance on how a landlord can provide evidence of a relevant tenant conviction in the High Court.

### **Summary**

The Department for Communities has consulted on draft regulations to give effect to extended notice to quit periods within the private rented sector, alongside supporting guidance. The proposed regulations are required to implement provisions contained within the Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and to clarify the circumstances in which shorter notice periods may apply.

The consultation seeks to balance increased security of tenure for tenants and incorporates appropriate safeguards for vulnerable tenants, whilst recognising that landlords may have to respond in a shorter time period, to the actions of their tenant in order to protect their property and the property and occupants of neighbours by defining “special case” circumstances. Environmental Health and Regulatory Services has reviewed the proposals and in collaboration with other councils, prepared a draft response that broadly supports the intent of the regulations while highlighting practical and enforcement considerations.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council approves the draft consultation response, attached as Appendix 1.

**ANDBC**

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**Draft Response to Consultation on Notice to Quit periods Jan 2026****Introduction**

**Please confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation:**

(Required)

I am responding as an individual

I am submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation

**Responding as an individual**

If you are responding as an individual, which of the following best describes your interest in the consultation? (please tick one)

Private sector tenant

Private sector landlord

Other (please specify below)

**Responding on behalf of an organisation**

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, which of the following best describes your organisation? (please tick one option)

Please select only one item.

Private Landlord

Social Landlord

Letting agent

Local Government/Council

A housing sector representative body

Charity dealing with housing issues

Other (please specify in space below)

### Consultation Questions

**Please answer the following questions regarding the regulations:**

The first 3 circumstances (substantial arrears of rent, serious ASB and relevant criminal offence) were already legislated for within the Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022. The research report recommends a fourth circumstance of possession for occupation by a landlord or landlord’s immediate family, with a minimum notice period of three months. The Department considers that this proposal balances the right of the landlord to retake possession, as provided by Article 1 Protocol 1 of the ECHR, with the rights of the tenant including under Article 8 of the ECHR and Schedule 1, Part 1, of the Human Rights Act 1998.

**Q1.** Do you understand why these circumstances and shorter notice periods are being introduced?

Yes

No

**Q2.** Do you agree with the four circumstances where longer notice to quit periods would not apply? Please select yes/no for each of the circumstances below.

Circumstance	Do you Agree?	If no, provide your reasons
Substantial arrears of rent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Serious Anti-social Behaviour	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Relevant Criminal Offence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Possession for occupation by the landlord or landlords’ immediate family	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	We believe that the provision for this circumstance is adequately covered by existing notice to quit legislation and processes

The CIH report proposed the definition for 'substantial arrears of rent' should be where two months' rent is unpaid. The report did not consider any other frequency of rental payment, and so the Department has added to the definition to cover alternative frequencies of rental payments. The notice period for this circumstance is one month.

To help safeguard tenants, the regulations will include the stipulation that if a tenant pays the outstanding arrears in full before the end of the notice period contained in the notice to quit, the notice will become invalid, and the tenancy sustained.

Two week notice periods are confined to serious anti-social behaviour (ASB) and relevant criminal offences. The Department believes that these notice periods are warranted in these circumstances because they will help ensure that the landlord can promptly take action to minimise the impact of such behaviours and activities on neighbours and the wider community and protect their property from potential damage or disruption.

The CIH report also proposes a 3 month notice period for possession for occupation by the landlord or landlords' immediate family. The Department agrees that this notice period balances the right of landlords and tenants.

**Q3.** Do you agree with each of the four shorter notice periods as set out in the Regulations?

Notice Period	Circumstance	Yes/No	If no, please give a reason
1 month	Substantial arrears of rent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2 weeks	Serious Anti-social Behaviour	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2 weeks	Relevant Criminal Offence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3 months	Possession for occupation by the landlord or landlords' immediate family	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

If no, please provide reasons for your answer.

We are aware some landlords face challenges when seeking to promptly regain possession of their properties due to their own personal financial difficulties, but we feel that this is already provided for in existing legislation and processes.

The proposed three-month notice period will have the greatest impact on medium to long-term tenancies (i.e. those residing in a property for over three years).

Under the existing arrangements, such tenants would otherwise have been afforded at least six or seven months' notice to secure alternative accommodation. Long-term tenants are more likely to have established significant ties to the property and surrounding area, including eg childcare arrangements, school placements, and access to local health services. It is not clear from the equality impact assessment whether any particular groups are disproportionately represented among long-term tenancies and therefore more likely to experience adverse impacts arising from this shorter notice period.

**Q4.** Did you find the guidance notes which explain your responsibilities as a tenant/landlord, under the Regulations easy to follow?

Yes

No

If no, please provide reasons for your answer.

Whilst agree the guidance for tenant/landlords is easy to follow, we also provide following commentary and recommendations:

#### Notice to Quit process

The introduction of prescribed notice-to-quit forms is welcomed, as this will assist both landlords and enforcement officers in assessing the validity of notices served and ensuring that due legal process has been followed.

We recommend the guidance also clearly outlines the lawful notice to quit process, as this remains a frequent area of enquiry for enforcement officers, and include examples of scenarios that may constitute offences under the Private Tenancies Order for which councils have enforcement powers. The guidance should further provide explicit clarification of the respective roles of councils and the civil courts, particularly in relation to the landlord statement of evidence and the resolution of disputes arising from notices issued by landlords.

#### Landlord statement of evidence

We recommend the development of a prescribed landlord's statement-of-evidence form to further promote clarity and consistency.

#### Substantial rent arrears

In cases involving substantial rent arrears, the landlord should be statutorily obliged to provide evidence of engagement with the tenant to resolve the issue and the solutions explored eg repayment options offered to the tenant, and whether these were either declined or unsuccessful.

It is questionable whether a period of two months' unpaid rent should constitute 'substantial' rent arrears. A longer minimum period would, in principle, may be more appropriate for the purposes of this ground. In determining whether arrears are substantial, regard should also be had to whether the tenant has refused a reasonable repayment arrangement offered by the landlord and whether is a first instance of arrears or a recurring pattern. Whilst a longer qualifying period may be preferable, it is acknowledged that the additional one-month notice-to-quit requirement will, in effect, result in a total period of approximately three months' unpaid rent prior to the landlord being able to commence possession proceedings.

We welcome the provision allowing the tenant to pay their arrears and invalidate the NTQ, which supports tenancy sustainment.

### Anti-social behaviour

We have concerns about the evidential requirements for proving serious antisocial behaviour. Obtaining police reports can be difficult due to resource pressures. In practice, evidence may also be limited by delays in police responses, neighbours being unwilling to provide statements, incidents not meeting the police threshold for formal actions etc.

Additionally, property damage may be caused by a vulnerable tenant, and it is our view repair costs would need to exceed the tenancy deposit (if one was taken) before this could reasonably be relied upon as evidence.

A list of scenarios that do not constitute antisocial behaviour should be included within the guidance to prevent misuse of this shorter notice-to-quit provision.

We also recommend that the term 'nuisance' be replaced with 'disturbance' to avoid confusion between statutory environmental health nuisance. In this context, the Council would welcome clarification from DfC that there is no requirement to demonstrate a 'statutory nuisance' in order to evidence antisocial behaviour, and if repeated annoyance or disturbance would be sufficient to meet the evidential threshold of validity of the shorter notice to quit period.

Councils would not routinely share noise or ASB reports with landlords, as such information constitutes the tenant's personal data. Any information sharing must be undertaken in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and only where the appropriate protocols and lawful bases are in place.

### Convicted of relevant Criminal Offence

In relation to the criminal-offence ground for issuing a notice to quit, the guidance should clearly state that the offence must relate specifically to conduct occurring at the rented property or during the current tenancy of the individual to whom the NTQ is issued. This clarification is necessary to prevent misuse of this provision, such as issuing a shorter NTQ on the basis of historic convictions or offences unconnected to the property or the present tenancy.

Guidance should clarify what constitutes acceptable evidence of a relevant conviction determined in the Crown Court. For example, it should be made explicit whether informal sources such as newspaper reports or social-media posts would not be sufficient, and that formal documentation—such as an official court extract, conviction certificate, or other verified record—would be required.

Council encourage the Department to introduce additional proposals in respect of grounds for eviction which other jurisdictions have in place in order to reduce the incidence of retaliatory evictions.

The Department agrees with the commonsense types of evidence listed in the CIH report for the first 3 circumstances (substantial arrears of rent, serious ASB and relevant criminal offence) and decided not to list this in legislation as it is more practical for the courts to follow standard practise. The Department has provided examples of types of evidence in guidance.

With regards to the fourth circumstance of the landlord seeking possession of the property for themselves or family members, providing evidence for this is much more limited and the CIH report proposed it should be accompanied with a legal assurance. Given the evidence that this circumstance is more open to abuse in eviction cases and as a safeguard for vulnerable tenants, we have decided to include the requirement for a detailed affidavit in our legislation.

**Q5.** In each circumstance, what types of evidence do you suggest could be required in order to validate a shorter notice to quit?

Circumstance	Examples of evidence
Substantial arrears of rent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of repayment plans offered to tenant.</li> </ul> <p>We believe that landlords should be required to demonstrate that reasonable attempts were made to address the arrears collaboratively before progressing to notice to quit. This will encourage early engagement and reduce avoidable homelessness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenancy Information Notice/Variation Notices</li> <li>• Cash receipts</li> </ul>
Serious Anti-social Behaviour	
Relevant Criminal Offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspaper or social media report</li> <li>• Official court extract/judgement</li> </ul>
Possession for occupation by the landlord or landlords' immediate family	

**Please answer the following questions regarding the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA):**

**Q6.** We have presented a draft EQIA consultation report on the circumstances where longer notices to quit will not be issued.

Do you agree with how we have carried out the EQIA?

Yes

No

Is there any other information that you feel should be included within the EQIA?

Tenants who have rented a property for more than 3 years will most likely have developed strong 'ties' to property/area. eg childcare, schools, health services. It is not clear from the equality impact research if any particular group/s are more likely to be in a long term tenancy and therefore likely to be adversely impacted. We recommend this is explored further in the EQIA.

**Q7.** Within the EQIA we have outlined some adverse impacts that the circumstances where longer notices to quit will not be issued could have.

Do you agree with the adverse impacts that we have identified?

Yes

No

Are there any other adverse impacts that you feel we should include?

**Q8.** We have outlined some possible mitigation measures to address these potential adverse impacts.

Do you agree with the mitigating actions we have outlined?

Yes

No

Do you have any other suggestions for mitigating measures or alternative policies that could be put in place?

Unclassified

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**ITEM 7****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	13 January 2026
File Reference	GREL433
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Good Relations Additional Funding 2025-2026
Attachments	

Council will be aware the Executive Office offered ANDBC Good Relations an additional £30,000 in August 2025. Funding was approved for use to support racial and social cohesion. Further funding of £12,700 has now been offered to Council to be spent by the end of March 2026.

Members will be aware that the Shared Education programme in the Good Relations plan, originally included a cross-community schools trip to for young people from two schools to France and Belgium. The reduction in recent budgets from The Executive Office has resulted in the trip being removed from the programme.

The continued aim of the programme is to develop increased knowledge and understanding of key anniversaries and develop an appreciation of their social, political and cultural significance for NI and the UK and Ireland then and now. This incorporates knowledge and awareness of the national and European context of this period can help to change participants perspectives of our shared history.

Not Applicable

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The amended cross community programme continues to deliver to young people to educate them on the joined effort of all community backgrounds who took part in WWI and to communicate the message of how local people fought and died during this period. The removal of the trip has made it more difficult to build lasting friendships between the young people over a much shorter timeframe.

The amended programme was offered to all primary schools in the Borough and 8 schools were accepted to take part. The schools are:

- Bangor Central Integrated Primary School and Loughries integrated Primary School
- Millisle Primary School and Kircubbin Integrated Primary School
- Comber Primary School and Ballyvester Primary School
- Castle Gardens Primary School and St. Finian's Primary School

Activities are delivered in the Borough and makes use of our historic and cultural past. Trips included for the young people are to Clandeboyne Estate and the Somme Centre, Newtownards. Further joint sessions will be held in each of the schools participating to assist with building cross community friendships. The programme will bring history alive for the participants.

It is suggested that the additional funding be used to increase the budget of the Children and Young People programme to enable additional sessions to be offered to the eight schools listed above. The funding will go towards transport costs which has increased dramatically but is necessary to enable the children to meet over the duration of the programme.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council accepts the additional £12,700 funding from the Executive Office for use under Children and Young People theme in the Good Relations Action Plan 2025/2026.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 8****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	23 December 2025
File Reference	
Legislation	Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Proposal for Dispersal Funding 2025/2026
Attachments	Appendix 1 - ANDBC Proposal for dispersal funding for 2025-2026

In December 2021 Ards and North Down Borough Council became aware that a number of asylum seekers were to be housed in a hotel in Bangor.

Following their arrival, the Home Office awarded funding to Councils, administered via The Executive Office (TEO). Funding was to help with integration, assist with language barriers and resettlement into safe areas.

Funding was managed by the Councils Good Relations Team and officers joined the local Refugee and Asylum Forum which had been established. The Forum included members from local churches, community networks and groups and statutory agencies including representation from PSNI, Health, Education and Mears Housing, who are directly responsible for managing the hotel accommodation.

Further funding of £27,040 was ringfenced, subject to receipt of a completed proposal from Council. This has been allocated using a baseline funding amount of

Not Applicable

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£15,000 per Council area plus £12,040, based on the percentage of people seeking asylum in the Council area.

It is proposed that the Council utilise this funding to continue supporting the Refugee and Asylum Forum, which plays a central role in assisting asylum seekers, refugees, minority ethnic communities and other newcomers to integrate and access essential services in the Borough (further details are included in Appendix 1).

The funding will enable the continuation of key support activities including ESOL classes, visa support, orientation programmes, pastoral support and engagement for asylum seekers together with information sessions in relation to the laws and cultures of Northern Ireland.

As the closing date for applications was 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026 a draft proposal has been submitted indicating that Council approval was still required prior to any Letter of Offer being accepted.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council approves the proposal for Dispersal funding.

**APPENDIX 1**

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**Ards and North Down Borough Council****Proposal for Dispersal Funding 2025/2026****Introduction**

In December 2021 Ards and North Down Borough Council became aware that a number of asylum seekers were to be placed in a local hotel the next day and that a local B & B had been housing asylum seekers for a number of months, without the knowledge of anyone from Council.

This became a rapidly moving situation with concerns being raised by a number of councillors and extreme concerns raised from the community in terms of why the hotel was being used and where the asylum seekers were coming from. Further concerns were raised by the community and voluntary sector and in relation to the needs of those being placed in the hotel and what practical help could be offered to them.

A local Asylum Seekers Forum was established to allay concerns and support the needs of those placed in the hotel.

**Local wraparound service**

In March 2022 Council started to receive queries in relation to what help and support it was offering to those refugees beginning to arrive in the area from Ukraine. Based on the needs and issues raised at the Asylum Seekers Forum, Council were able to develop the framework to establish a local assistance centre in Bangor Town Centre, to support newcomers to the Borough.

Discussions with officials from DFC and TEO suggested that 5 Council areas should begin to prepare to set up formal Ukraine assistance centres to help those arriving together with their hosts.

Although DFC/TEO decided there was no requirement for an assistance centre in Ards and North Down due to its proximity to the centre based in Belfast, Council was keen to respond to the increasing demand for help and support from asylum seekers and refugees. In March 2022 Council contracted the services of North Down YMCA to provide a local wraparound service for all new arrivals the Borough.

The Refugee and Asylum Seekers forum (RAF), managed by North Down YMCA, continues to meet and offer support for refugees and also those who have been successful in gaining their refugee status.

Members of the RAF include key partner services including but not limited to: Council, PSNI, HSCT, Mears, Local churches and Community organisations.

**APPENDIX 1**

North Down YMCA and the RAF offer:

- Support
- Signposting
- Orientation
- Immigration Advice up to Level 1
- Befriending
- ESOL
- Volunteering Roles
- Safe meeting space
- Support for employment when eligible.

Support is also offered to other resettlement schemes including Syrians and their families, Ukrainian families scheme and their sponsors and those fleeing Afghanistan. Support is also offered to immigrants who arrived much further back including Polish, Lithuanian and Russian.

The objectives of the YMCA and RAF are to ensure that refugees arriving in NI under any scheme are:

- treated with respect and dignity;
- provided with essential services in an efficient, effective and sensitive manner; and
- assisted to settle into their new lives in NI and successfully integrate into NI society.

It is proposed the dispersal funding will continue to support the YMCA and the RAF to ensure that the needs of those who need it most are met.

ANDBC Council will continue to support the North Down YMCA and RAF through programme planning, translation, wellbeing and orientation visits and essential services.

<b>Proposed Expenditure Details - from 01.01.26 – 31.03.26</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
YMCA (as detailed above)	£15,000
Refugee and Asylum Forum (RAF) (as detailed above)	£5,000
ANDBC Council (as detailed above)	£7,040
<b>Total</b>	<b>£27,040</b>

Unclassified

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**ITEM 9****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Council Meeting
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Acting Head of Community Services
Date of Report	27 January 2026
File Reference	CW70
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Community Centres and Halls Pricing Review 2026-2027
Attachments	None

**Background**

Ards and North Down Borough Council own and manage 21 Community Centres and Halls located throughout the Borough. These Centres and Halls facilitate a vast range of activities for customers, charities, Health Trusts, and Council departments. These activities are crucial in providing customers and residents of the Borough with opportunities to improve and maintain their health and wellbeing and can be directly aligned to several Council aims and objectives. For example, the Centres and Halls provide facilities that all users can “Improve wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequalities”, one of three Council priorities illustrated in the Corporate Plan 2024 - 2028.

Usage at the Centres and Halls has continued to increase, evidenced by positive 2025/26 KPI figures. For example, the Total Hours Booked for Q1 and Q2 was 16,886, significantly higher than target and significantly greater than the same period 2024/25 which was 14,697. The footfall figure across all Centres and Halls over the same period is 96,328, compared to 79,177 in 2024/25.

Not Applicable

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The 2024/25 financial year performance is summarised below –

- Total income was £373,387 (£126,787 above income target).
- Actual net expenditure was £761,444 (£116,256 below budget).

The 2025/26 financial year is summarised below-

- Income target = £266,300 (an increase of £18,700 from 2024/25).
- Year to Date (YTD) Actual Income =£280,789) annual target already exceeded as of December 2025)
- Net expenditure budget (excluding utility and maintenance costs) = £842,400.

### **Charges 2026 – 2027**

Council had agreed an inflationary rise of 3.8% to charging policies. However, it is proposed to increase costs for 2026/ 20207 by 50p per hour per small room booking and £1.00 per hour for larger rooms bookings. This is an average increase of 6.37% and a rounded number is required due to limitations imposed by the electronic charging system used.

The increase of 50p hour would mean small rooms currently costing £7.50 per hour would increase to £8.00 per hour and those currently costing £14.00 per hour would increase to £15.00 per hour.

The increased costs were included in the budget panel meetings and used by the Head of Finance as part of the rate setting process.

The potential options on income for 2026/27 budget are summarised below -

- Income target 2026/27 with 3.8% increase = £276,419  
(increase of £10,119 from 2025/26 budget)
- Income target 2026/27 with 6.37% (average) = £283,263  
(increase of £16,963 from 2025/26 budget)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended Council approves an increase of 50p per hour for small booking rooms and £1.00 per hour for larger room hire which equates to approximately 6.37% for 2026/27 financial year.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 10****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	03 February 2026
File Reference	PCSP1
Legislation	Northern Ireland Justice Act (2011)
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls - invite to Shared Island Event
Attachments	

NILGA and the Association for Irish Local Government (AILG) have been successful in a bid to the Shared Island Civic Society Fund to hold a cross-border event on developing the leadership and influence of councillors in relation to Ending Violence Against Women & Girls (EVAWG). The event will be held on 24-25 March 2026 in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Co. Cavan.

NILGA has been working with the Executive Office to develop the leadership role of councillors in EVAWG and would like to bring councillors with experience of tackling this issue together to discuss challenges and opportunities with their counterparts in AILG.

Given council's role in supporting EVAWG action locally, NIGLA has offered free spaces for two members at the event. Overnight accommodation can be booked directly with the hotel at a cost of €130pp.

Not Applicable

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The outline agenda is as follows:

Tuesday 25 March

- 3.30 Registration & networking
- 4.00 Welcome
- 4.10 The Strategic Context
- 4.40 Violence against female politicians – the impact
- 5.15 Allyship for councillors workshop
- 6.45 Feedback & close
- 8.00 Dinner

Wednesday 25 March

- 9.30 Registration & networking
- 10.00 Opening remarks & reflections
- 10.10 Local EVAWG initiatives
- 10.40 The role of the media & responsible reporting
- 11.30 Scenarios & Solutions workshop
- 12.40 Feedback from roundtables
- 13.00 Next steps & lunch

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council nominates two Members with experience of tackling Ending Violence Against Women and Girls to attend the event on 24-26 March 2026 in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 11****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Leisure
Date of Report	27 January 2026
File Reference	LEI29
Legislation	Recreation and Youth Services Order 1986
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Portaferry Town FC High Street Pitch
Attachments	

**Background**

Members may be aware of a deputation by Portaferry Town Football Club (PTFC) to the Environment Committee on the 8 October 2025. It was proposed and agreed that officers bring back a report with options to explore the current situation at PTFC and outline options for the future.

As a result of the Organisational Redesign within the Council this item is now being progressed by Leisure through the Active and Healthy Communities Committee, rather than through the Environment Committee.

The 3G pitch located on High Street Portaferry is situated on land currently leased to PTFC by the Council. The existing lease term is 21 years and is due to expire in August 2026. As the end of the existing lease term approaches, considerations need to be given regarding the future of the pitch including any potential maintenance and/or future lease arrangements of the pitch.

Not Applicable

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The pitch is an established community asset supporting local football, training activity, and wider community sport. The current surface is now beyond the average lifecycle of a 3G pitch and PTFC have raised concerns regarding its condition and suitability for continued use.

To enable an informed decision regarding the future of the pitch, a technical assessment completed by a qualified contractor specialising in artificial sports surfaces is needed, at an approximate cost of £1,000. The scope of the assessment should seek to:

- Establish what maintenance work has been completed by PTFC on the pitch surface
- Assess the current condition of the surface including the fibre wear, infill levels and compaction
- Assess the shock pad of the pitch, including performance testing (ball rolling and shock absorption for example), to measure compliance with relevant standards
- Inspect the sub-base, drainage, and any other potential structural issues

These findings will assist in determining:

- If the surface can be maintained or rejuvenated
- If partial repairs are feasible; or
- If a full replacement of the surface (and/or) shock pad is required
- Costings for the various options

The possibility of a temporary extension to the existing lease arrangements is being explored to potentially enable the time required for the assessment and next steps to be considered by the Council.

Members may be aware that this pitch is not part of the Artificial Pitch Replacement Schedule or leisure or capital budget. Officers will however engage with the club and relevant funding partners to explore if any potential funding may be available towards the pitch.

### **RECCOMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council notes the report.

Unclassified

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## ITEM 12

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Finance
Date of Report	23 January 2026
File Reference	FIN23
Legislation	Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below: N/A
Subject	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Budgetary Control Report - December 2025
Attachments	

The Active and Healthy Community's Budgetary Control Report covers the 9-month period 1 April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. The net cost of the Directorate is showing an underspend of £ 598k (11.3%)– box A on page 3.

**Explanation of Variance**

The Active and Healthy Communities' budget performance is further analysed on page 3 into 3 key areas:

Report	Type	Variance	Page
<b>Report 2</b>	Payroll Expenditure	£385k favourable	<b>3</b>
<b>Report 3</b>	Goods & Services Expenditure	£4k adverse	<b>3</b>
<b>Report 4</b>	Income	£217k favourable	<b>3</b>

Not Applicable

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The Directorate's overall variance can be summarised by the following table (variances over £25k): -

Type	Variance £'000	Comment
<b>Payroll</b>	(385)	Mainly due to vacant posts during the first 9 months. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Health &amp; Regulatory Services (£233k)</li> <li>• Community Development (£57k)</li> <li>• Leisure (£103k)</li> </ul>
<b>Goods &amp; Services</b>		
Environmental Health & Regulatory Service	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly due to the Council's share of the Animal Welfare Service (£43k) and CCTV over spend (£15k)</li> </ul>
Leisure	(58)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of underspends and delays to leisure projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Income</b>		
Leisure	(181)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing &amp; Leisure Complex – (£154k)</li> <li>• Comber Leisure Centre – (£19)</li> </ul>

Not Applicable

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<b>REPORT 1 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT</b>					
<b>Period 9 - December 2025</b>					
	<b>Year to Date Actual</b>	<b>Year to Date Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Active &amp; Healthy Communities</b>					
3100 Active Health & Communities HQ	182,690	168,400	14,290	222,800	8.5
3200 Environmental Health & Regulatory Ser	2,604,349	2,780,100	(175,751)	3,761,700	(6.3)
3300 Community Development	1,863,582	1,958,400	(94,818)	2,718,800	(4.8)
3400 Leisure	44,600	386,200	(341,600)	925,400	(88.5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,695,221</b>	<b>5,293,100</b>	<b>A (597,879)</b>	<b>7,628,700</b>	<b>(11.3)</b>
<b>REPORT 2 PAYROLL REPORT</b>					
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Active &amp; Healthy Communities - Payroll</b>					
3100 Active Health & Communities HQ	143,932	135,300	8,632	180,600	6.4
3200 Environmental Health & Regulatory Ser	2,851,013	3,084,500	(233,487)	4,111,900	(7.6)
3300 Community Development	1,706,851	1,764,000	(57,149)	2,310,400	(3.2)
3400 Leisure	2,787,305	2,890,200	(102,895)	3,891,200	(3.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,489,101</b>	<b>7,874,000</b>	<b>(384,899)</b>	<b>10,494,100</b>	<b>(4.9)</b>
<b>REPORT 3 GOODS &amp; SERVICES REPORT</b>					
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Active &amp; Healthy Communities - Goods and Services</b>					
3100 Active Health & Communities HQ	38,757	33,100	5,657	42,200	17.1
3200 Environmental Health & Regulatory Ser	348,244	268,300	79,944	509,800	29.8
3300 Community Development	1,027,194	1,051,400	(24,206)	1,776,100	(2.3)
3400 Leisure	393,468	451,300	(57,832)	993,100	(12.8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,807,664</b>	<b>1,804,100</b>	<b>3,564</b>	<b>3,321,200</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>REPORT 4 INCOME REPORT</b>					
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Community &amp; Wellbeing - Income</b>					
3100 Active Health & Communities HQ	-	-	-	-	
3200 Environmental Health & Regulatory Ser	(594,908)	(572,700)	(22,208)	(860,000)	(3.9)
3300 Community Development	(870,463)	(857,000)	(13,463)	(1,367,700)	(1.6)
3400 Leisure	(3,136,173)	(2,955,300)	(180,873)	(3,958,900)	(6.1)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>(4,601,544)</b>	<b>(4,385,000)</b>	<b>(216,544)</b>	<b>(6,186,600)</b>	<b>(4.9)</b>

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 13****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Leisure
Date of Report	23 January 2026
File Reference	CW 74
Legislation	Recreation and Youth Services Order (1986)
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Bi-Monthly Report for Portaferry Sports Centre
Attachments	

At the most recent update to this Committee in November 2025 members were informed of issues that Council was facing in relation to service delivery at PSC due to a broken-down boiler. These issues have now been resolved with the installation of the new boiler in the early part of January 2026.

Members will be aware of the ongoing issues with the Sports Hall floor in Portaferry Sports Centre. The most recent update to Council in November 2025 was at a standstill and to date the status of the hall remains in a partly usable state. However, following on from the successful engagement with the department in relation to the boiler, dialogue has been ongoing between various Council departments, the Education Authority, and the Department of Education towards reaching an agreement on hall floor.

Council officers and representatives from the Department of Education met on the 16 January and held a positive meeting during which the next steps were agreed.

Not Applicable

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1. To understand the extent of the issue and therefore inform the remedial works that are required destructive explorative work is required.
2. Council are awaiting written confirmation to formalise the verbal agreement by the Department of Education that the expense for the explorative works and any remedial capital works required should this be evidenced by the subsequent Consultant's report will be covered by the Department.
3. Colleagues from Assets and Properties will attempt to co-ordinate an onsite meeting with the appointed Contractor, Consultant, Structural Engineer, Leisure officer, and Department of Education representative during the Easter holidays.
4. The Principal of the School has confirmed that the school is content for the explorative work to be completed during the Easter holiday period (2<sup>nd</sup> April – 12<sup>th</sup> April inclusive) if it is agreed between the Department and the Council.

It should be noted that the entire Sports Hall will be unusable once the destructive explorative works begin. This will lead to disruption to Leisure's, and the School's, users of the Sports Hall. Officers will consider potential steps to mitigate these negative impacts as much as possible for Leisure's users, for example by potentially facilitating fitness classes elsewhere. Communication will be ongoing between the Council, Department of Education, the School, and any other stakeholders impacted by this process.

5. The management agreement between the Department and the Council for PSC was also discussed and officers will seek to progress this in the spring of this year.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 14****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	11 February 2026
File Reference	CDV63
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Smartphone Free Childhood
Attachments	

At the Council meeting held in September 2025 it was agreed that:

*“Officers bring back a report based on the matters raised in the deputation by Rosalind McClean, Smartphone Free Childhood NI in terms of how this Council can support Smartphone Free Childhood for the safety and wellbeing of all our children”.*

**Introduction**

The debate around whether children should grow up with or without smartphones has intensified over the past decade. As digital devices become nearly universal, parents, educators, and policymakers are questioning how early exposure affects children’s development, wellbeing, and social skills. A smartphone-free childhood does not mean rejecting technology entirely, rather, it emphasises delaying personal smartphone ownership to protect healthy development during the most formative years.

Not Applicable

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## Developmental Considerations

### Cognitive Growth

- Young children learn best through hands-on exploration, imaginative play, and real-world interaction.
- Excessive screen time can displace activities that build executive function, attention span, and problem-solving skills.
- Studies consistently show that early and frequent smartphone use correlates with reduced sustained attention and lower quality sleep, both essential for learning.

### Emotional and Social Development

- Childhood is when empathy, emotional regulation, and social confidence take shape.
- Face-to-face interaction teaches children to read body language, tone, and social cues; skills that can be weakened by digital communication.
- Smartphone-free environments encourage deeper friendships, more physical play, and fewer social comparisons.

### Risks of Early Smartphone Use

#### Exposure to Inappropriate Content

Even with filters, children can encounter harmful material, misinformation, or advertising designed to manipulate attention.

#### Mental Health Concerns

- Early access to social media increases risks of anxiety, loneliness, and body-image issues.
- Constant notifications and infinite scrolling can create addictive patterns that are difficult for even adults to manage.

### Cyberbullying and Online Safety

Children often lack the maturity to navigate online conflict, privacy risks, or peer pressure amplified through digital platforms

### Benefits of a Smartphone-Free Childhood

#### Stronger Family Relationships

Without the distraction of devices, families tend to have more meaningful conversations, shared activities, and consistent routines.

#### Healthier Habits

- More outdoor play
- Better sleep
- Improved focus in school
- Reduced sedentary behaviour.

#### Creativity and Independence

Children who are not reliant on smartphones often develop stronger problem-solving skills, imagination, and resilience. They learn to entertain themselves without constant digital stimulation.

Not Applicable

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### **Educational Implications**

Schools that limit or ban smartphones often report:

- Higher academic engagement
- Fewer behavioural issues
- More social interaction during breaks
- Reduced classroom distractions.

Some countries have implemented nationwide school bans, reflecting growing recognition of the educational benefits of limiting devices. A change in how schools deal with smartphones is not within the remit of local government in Northern Ireland, however some councillors have roles on Board of Governors of local schools and would be able to promote the campaign via that avenue.

### **Strategies for Supporting a Smartphone-Free Childhood**

- Delay personal smartphone ownership until late childhood or early adolescence.
- Use shared family devices for supervised learning or entertainment.
- Create tech-free zones at home, such as bedrooms and dining areas.
- Model healthy digital habits as adults.
- Encourage offline hobbies including sports, reading, art, music, outdoor exploration.

### **Councils Play Strategy 2021 – 2032**

Council has a Play Strategy which is a strategic framework to guide decision making relating to play provision within the Borough and enable the development of a costed Capital Investment Plan for delivery over the next 5 years.

The Play Strategy also considers provision beyond the sole factor of play value and the ability to deliver on wider Council strategic goals such as the delivery of:

- community development programmes using outdoor play spaces as a tool for community, capacity building, neighbourhood renewal, urban and rural regeneration and the promotion of good relations
- outdoor related tourism and recreation development initiatives
- outdoor related community health and wellbeing initiatives
- outdoor related regeneration initiatives
- special projects and the potential to attract children and young people targeted events etc to the area

The Play Strategy:

- ensures rate payers and visitors can avail of and contribute to a wide range of high quality, inclusive, affordable and accessible play spaces and services
- maximises the available resources and potential of the current play provision within the Council area

Not Applicable

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- maximises opportunities to deliver on wider local, regional and national strategies and implementation of the new Community Plan for the Borough; The Big Plan for Ards and North Down.

### **Conclusion**

A smartphone-free childhood is not about rejecting technology but about protecting the developmental space children need to grow into healthy, confident, and socially capable individuals. By delaying smartphone access, families can foster deeper connections, stronger cognitive skills, and a more grounded sense of self in a world increasingly shaped by digital influence.

It is recommended that Council supports the Smartphone Free Childhood NI campaign with the following actions which are within the remit of Council:

- Signposting parents and grandparents to Smartphone Free Childhood and the concept of delaying smartphones via Council social media,
- Encouraging sharing of the social media campaign,
- Providing and distributing posters / leaflets in public areas including community hubs and community centres, leisure centres and sports facilities,
- Sharing the campaign via Council parenting education programmes and family initiatives – parent and toddler groups, summer schemes and play clubs.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council notes the report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 15****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	23 January 2026
File Reference	PEACV-I
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	PEACEPLUS Capital Projects - Update
Attachments	

Members will be aware that the PEACEPLUS Partnership co designed a PEACEPLUS Plan for the Borough under the following three themes:

- Theme 1 - Local Community Regeneration and Transformation
- Theme 2 - Thriving and Peaceful Communities
- Theme 3 - Building Respect for Cultural Identities

**Theme 1**

The 3 Capital Projects to be delivered are:

- Portaferry Castle Park
- Donaghadee Pump Track
- Bangor Cycle Park

Not Applicable

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### **Portaferry Castle Park - £186,507**

The Project endeavours to breathe new life into the site of the former shop / toilet block.

The project for the old toilet block will be executed in two phases, with Phase 1 concentrating on technical design and securing planning consent, followed by Phase 2, which involves construction works.

The initial application for funding included:

- Shared Community Meeting Spaces
- Biodiversity Area
- Art Installations
- Amenity Block Refurbishment
- Motorhome/ Touring Pitches
- Culture, Peace, and Heritage Programmes

Following the confirmation of the budget available a concept design has been prepared and a cross departmental working group is considering the costings to determine what can be delivered within the PEACEPLUS budget to meet the funding requirements and allow for animation of the site.

### **Donaghadee Pump Track - £219,351**

Plans have been prepared to transform an area of the Commons into shared pump track with a focus on the needs of older young people with the aim of addressing anti-social behaviour and the creation of a greater sense of community ownership of this shared space for all of the community.

The animation activities will include local competitions/demonstrations, a programme of activity whereby expert facilitators will deliver group lessons, a cross-community primary school engagement programme, through selected schools from various communities to participate in a shared educational programme and an opening event inviting the public to attend and participate in taster sessions, watch live demonstrations, and engage in complimentary activities that promote peace and inclusion.

A certificate of lawful use has been applied for to the Councils Planning department but no response has yet been received. It is anticipated that work will be able to start in April 2026.

Certificates of Lawfulness for Proposed Use or Development ("CLOPUDs") are processes which assess the precise works against the relevant planning legislation and enable Planning Service to issue Certificates confirming that the proposed works would fall within the Council's permitted development rights.

### **Bangor Cycle Park - £1,149,347**

Bangor Cycle Park's objective is to create pathways for increased levels of cross community interaction via five separate cycling facilities (pump-track, BMX racing track, Inclusive-Cycling-Area, Accessible Learn-To-Ride area, and cross-country

Not Applicable

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(XC) trails). Each appealing to a different community demographic, with all users coming together in the sixth element: a community café/workshop.

The concept of this scheme is to transform an underused space into a place that provides cycling opportunities for everyone, regardless of age or ability.

Animation activities include: cycling activity days, engaging local schools from all communities; Level 2 coaching programmes on the learn to ride area; BMX coaching programmes on the BMX track; Intro to cycling coaching programmes on the XC trail; Women's intro to cycling coaching programme; cycling programmes for those with disabilities; bike maintenance workshops and cross-border BMX races.

Staff from the Councils Estates section have been in regular contact with the Planning Service team to determine which elements of the project would require Planning Permission and which could be considered Permitted Development.

As the design progressed in detail over recent months, officers continued consultation with Planning Service to clarify and ensure which elements of the project would require Planning Permission and which could be considered Permitted Development. Planning Service advised that due to the amount of imported material required for the BMX Track and jump park, that it would require an application, along with the application for the change of use for the spectator stand. Officers commissioned the relevant expert reports to support the application and given the level of detail provided, are confident it should allow the planning service to streamline the application process. Most statutory consultees have already responded positively, with the remaining in dialogue with Officers to address any concerns raised.

In order to provide certainty, Planning have recommended that the Council, submit applications for Certificates of Lawfulness for Proposed Use or Development ("CLOPUDs") (which assess the precise works against the relevant planning legislation and enable Planning Service to issue Certificates confirming that the proposed works would fall within the Council's PD rights).

Applications for Certificate of Lawfulness (CLOPUDs) were submitted on 21 November 2025 and are in the latter stages of being processed. The applications are for the Mountain Bike Trail, the Learn to Ride track and the Pump Track.

Further discussions are required to determine a way forward in relation to site management and running of the Café and workshops. Discussions will be held with SERCO in the first instance, as current operator of the site.

Due to the participant numbers and hours required by the funder - SEUPB, the PEACEPLUS team have worked closely with the Councils Procurement team to develop a Pre Market Engagement tender (PME). The tender will assist in the development of a tender(s) in relation to the animation of the Sportsplex programme.

Monthly meetings of the cross departmental working group are ongoing. The group is being supported by the Councils Transformation team.

**Themes 2 and 3**

Not Applicable

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Twenty tenders have been advertised in relation to themes two and three of the Plan. Tenders were advertised on EtendersNI website, Council social media and in the Belfast Telegraph. Following closure, the tenders were evaluated by relevant officers with support from the Council's Procurement section.

Eighteen of the 20 tenders advertised have been successfully awarded and detailed in the table below. The remaining two tenders have been readvertised.

Theme 2 TPC	Tender	Successful Applicant	Available award	Awarded
TPC1a	Women's Resilience, Inclusion & Empowerment	Kilcooley Women's Centre	£100,339	£100,332
TPC1b	Community Resilience, Inclusion & Empowerment	ND YMCA	£100,339	£100,219
TPC2	Engagement and Leadership through Sports & Arts	Healthy Kidz CIC	£160,384	£157,612
TPC3	Education Shared Trips	Eventwise NI	£125,775	£123,375
TPC4a	Tour, Talk, Taste and Living History	Eventwise NI	£92,823	£92,300
TPC4b	Bringing Life to our Historical Heritage	The Nerve Centre	£112,585	£112,550
TPC4c	Cross Community Musical Traditions Programme	Blu Zebra	£106,997	£106,920
TPC5a	Urban Sports Programme	<b>No tenders received</b>	£152,369	
TPC5b	Disability Sports Programme	NI Active Youth	£47,790	£43,260
TPC6	Education Programme for older and younger people	Kilcooley Women's Centre	£111,816	£111,732
TPC7	Your Place, Reimagining Our Space, Allotments/Men's Sheds	Council Parks Department	£172,575	£172,575

Not Applicable

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Not Applicable

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Theme 3 CCD	Tender	Successful Applicants	Available award	Award
CCD1	Church, Faith & Belief Initiative	Link Family Centre	£67,042	£58,812.87
CCD2a	Genealogy - Who do you think you are?	Gifted Trust	£62,707	£62,500
CCD2b	Exploring the Role of Women through the years in Peace Building	Kilcooley Women's Centre	£47,063	£47,062.13
CCD2c	Ulster Scots & Irish Language	Kilcooley Women's Centre	£117,624	£117,452
CCD2d	History Tours & Stories of the Borough	Gifted Trust	£77,738	£77,202
CCD3a	Cultural Drama Production	Terra Nova	£165,564	£165,563.50
CCD3b	Cultural Celebrations/Mini Mela	ND YMCA	£87,320	£87,313
CCD4a	Welcome Place	ND YMCA	£113,651	£113,189.30
CCD4b	Chit, Chat AND Connect	<b>No tenders received</b>	£49,048	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£2,071,549</b>	<b>£1,677,394</b>

Further updates will follow in due course via the PEACEPLUS Partnership minutes.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes the report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 16****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	26 January 2026
File Reference	CD 23
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Response to Notice of Motion 599 - Grant Funding Review
Attachments	

In January 2024 the Council agreed to the following Notice of Motion:

That this Council recognises the invaluable work undertaken by community/voluntary groups and organisations in this Borough in identifying and tackling the needs of communities and residents. The Council, therefore, commits to undertaking a root and branch review of community development funding, arts and heritage, sports development and all other funding streams to ensure that it provides the most efficient, effective and responsive service to our community, thus maximising impact, accessibility and equitable allocation of resources. The review should examine the following 4 categories:

**Accessibility**

- Simplify application forms, review all funding applications to ensure that they are simple, clear and don't unnecessarily over burden applicants with information required.

## Not Applicable

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- Digitisation of community grants, tenders and reporting to allow those that wish the option for simple and more efficient submissions.
- Building capacity in the community, creating a scheme to help the community to write and deliver more successful applications and bring in more external funding to this Borough.

**Communication Enhancement**

- Single grants list or 'open grants' page on council website with uniform advertisement of grants so that everyone receives the same information on available funding with a clear grants timetable, with scoring criteria clearly outlined including ranking and amount available across borough etc.
- A single point of contact to direct community and voluntary groups to support and assistance across different Council departments.
- Showcase & celebrate the great and valuable activities that the dedicated volunteers are delivering on this section of website.

**Equity**

Make funding available proportional to size of communities/activities being delivered and the type of needs being addressed, community groups represent different sizes of population and area (areas of deprivation etc) and are doing different work ('essential needs' and 'non-essential') yet often funding is allocated 'per group' rather than area/numbers targeted or type of work being delivered.

- Funding available to reflect the continued rise in costs., e.g., ensure funding available for community events is adequate to actually host events & activities. Funding is offered dependent upon the terms and conditions set by the funder, which may not be Council.
- Up front funding is uniform, that groups get the same up front funding percentage (e.g.,80%) across all Council funding to help with delivery.
- Equality of opportunity, ensuring that groups are not pigeonholed into a certain category of funding pots and can apply for all they are eligible for.
- Removal of 'first come first serve' funding to ensure level playing field.

**Efficiency**

- Creation of reserve lists of funding to ensure Council can allocate underspend and slippage quickly, easily and equitably to ensure no funds are returned to Departments.
- 'Trusted Supplier Scheme' to allow emergency and time limited funding to be provided quicker.
- Logistical planning, ensuring that all grants are delivered in a timely manner to ensure impact on the ground.

Following the notice of motion a Grants Management Working Group, an internal working group consisting of relevant heads of service, service unit managers and officers that have responsibility for managing grant schemes, was established to support a detailed internal review and evaluation of grants that are offered and administered across Council.

Not Applicable

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The Grants Policy was updated and agreed by Council in September 2024. At that time the Policy was deemed to be a Corporate Policy and therefore further updates on Notice of Motion and the work of the Grants Management Working Group was referred to the Councils Corporate Committee for reporting.

#### **Elected Member Community Development Grants Working Group**

The elected member working group is continuing to consider options in relation to how best to make use of the limited funding Council has available for community development grant schemes. A workshop will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 and all members will be invited to attend to discuss all options fully, prior to any recommendations being brought to a future meeting of the Active and Healthy Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 17****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Interim Head of Community Development
Date of Report	28 January 2026
File Reference	CDV64
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Reponse to Notice of Motion 676 - Love Ballyholme
Attachments	

At the Council meeting held in September 2025 it was agreed:

*“That this Council recognises the success of Love Ballyholme and thanks all involved for their hard work and commitment; further recognises the importance of community led initiatives to improve community cohesion, while supporting local businesses, and asks officers to bring back a report, which includes a plan and funding opportunities to support the replication of this community led model in the Rathmore area of Bangor”.*

**Introduction**

Love Ballyholme:

- Is a local community organisation run by volunteers in the Ballyholme area of Bangor.
- Its purpose is to strengthen community life by connecting people across the neighbourhood.
- It collaborates with residents, churches, schools, and local businesses to create inclusive events.

Not Applicable

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Love Ballyholme is known for organising a range of community events, including:

#### Family and Seasonal Events

- Sandcastle building competitions on Ballyholme Beach,
- Christmas lights switch-on events in Ballyholme village,
- Easter family fun days in the local church grounds.

#### Community Engagement

- Volunteer evenings where locals can share ideas and get involved in shaping community activities. These are typically held at local cafes.

#### **Purpose and Values**

Love Ballyholme focuses on:

- Building community spirit
- Encouraging volunteering
- Supporting local businesses
- Creating safe, fun, family-friendly events
- Strengthening connections between different parts of the community (schools, churches, residents).

#### **Councils Community Development section**

The Community Development Team delivers a high-quality range of direct provision clubs to communities within the Ards and North Down Area. The Team assist in the enablement and empowerment of community organisations and groups in the form of support and guidance with funding, governance, volunteer support, building relationships and connections within the groups and the community networks.

The Community Development Team provides communities with opportunities to connect and engage, to enhance skills base, to participate in training relevant to the needs of the group, to avail of funding opportunities, to create and develop new groups, to enable strong sustainable communities, providing support and much needed services within the heart of the community.

#### **Community Development Strategic Priorities**

Outcome 1: Partnership Solutions – Through the development of a collaborative process or through the development of collaborative processes our communities can work with us, and each other, to identify solutions that address local needs.

Outcome 2: Start-up/Sustainable Support - Local groups are sustainable and able to meet their own needs due to an empowering start-up and support process.

Outcome 3: Volunteering - Communities are happy and healthy due to the opportunities available for people to maximise their skills and talents.

Outcome 4: Training and Development - Our communities are skilled, engaged and empowered through training and development opportunities.

Outcome 5: Clubs and Community Summer Schemes - Needs are addressed through the delivery of quality programmes with relevant partners in shared spaces.

Not Applicable

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Outcome 6: Grants - Our communities have capacity to avail of Council funds to address locally identified needs.

### Funding

Council funding which may apply to a community group includes:

- Community Festivals fund - the aim of the Fund is to offer small grants to eligible groups/organisations to support the delivery of neighbourhood tourism initiatives within their community which can attract visitors or add to the existing tourism offering, thereby increasing dwell time and spend in their city, town or village whilst supporting local volunteers and increasing civic pride and a sense of belonging.
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls - The EVAWG Change Fund will help to mobilise grassroots action, support innovative delivery, and maximise the impact of community-led initiatives that contribute to the prevention outcomes of the EVAWG Strategic Framework.
- PCSP Small grant scheme - The PCSP Small Grants Scheme is an opportunity for local community and voluntary groups to develop community-led projects that address local safety concerns, including hate crime, cybercrime, road safety, anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol issues, and other relevant community safety concerns.
- Community development grants - for help with running costs for a constituted community or voluntary groups.
- Arts Grants - Available to arts, community and special interest groups throughout the Ards and North Down Borough area who wish to enhance existing, and undertake new community arts activities.
- In Bloom grant funding - Applications are invited from groups (eg schools, community associations, village groups etc) for funding to enable the purchase of bedding plants, shrub and tree material for planting within our city, towns and villages. Projects should help to instil local pride, create awareness of the environment and biodiversity, encourages cross community participation and involvement for those of all ages and abilities.
- Neighbourhood Tourism fund - Constituted Community and Voluntary groups can only apply for funding through **one** application, for **one** festival. A festival is defined as a one-off festival, or a series of related events that must take place over a maximum of a 12-week period and have a distinctive theme. A theme is defined as topic or subject that runs through the festival such as maritime, music or a specific commemoration.

This list is not a full list of all Council funding available. Further details are available at [Grants - Ards and North Down Borough Council](#)

All Council funding requires applicants to be part of a constituted group, have suitable insurance in place and a dedicated bank account.

Not Applicable

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The Community Development team compiles and circulates a weekly e-mail update with all relevant external funding available to a large wide ranging database and can assist and advise with applications for external funding.

### **Conclusion**

Love Ballyholme is a group of local volunteers which works by making people feel connected, welcome and proud of where they live.

Community Development officers are available to assist a group to start up in the Rathmore area of Bangor and in any area across the whole Borough who wish to develop the community they live in.

However, should council officers try to initiate or force a group to grow then it could be classed as a council initiative which would undermine the whole ethos of the Love Ballyholme model which was a group growing organically from local residents, proud of where they live.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council notes the report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 18****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Acting Head of Community Services
Date of Report	27 January 2026
File Reference	CDV65
Legislation	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Response to Notice of Motion 695 - Community Centre Openings
Attachments	None

**Background**

Council owns and manages 21 Community Centres and Halls located throughout the Borough. These Centres and Halls facilitate a vast range of activities for customers, charities, Health Trusts, and Council directorates.

**Christmas 2025**

A notice of motion was agreed at Council in December 2025 as follows:

“In light of the recent difficulty of West Winds Community Church in accessing Council facilities to provide their Christmas Day service of worship, we agree that the Borough community facilities will be made available on Christmas Day, only on the strict proviso that the relevant individual staff choose to work on Christmas Day and cannot be mandated to do so. A review of this provision would then be included in the current and ongoing policy review relating to council community facilities”.

Not Applicable

On Christmas day 2024 the west winds community centre was opened in error, contrary to the policy and without the knowledge of senior Council management. In December 2025 informal engagement with the three Trade Unions on the Council’s Joint Forum indicated that Unions would not be supportive of any staff being asked to work on Christmas Day. There was a further request for the issue to be added to the agenda of the March Joint Forum meeting for further discussion. On Christmas Day 2025 it was not possible to source the relevant employees, as outlined, who were willing to work.

**2026/2027**

Council designates 12 Bank and Public closure days per year. In order to ensure the consistent running of Council services alternative dates are agreed by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), when required. The following dates have been agreed by CLT for 2026/27.

Bank / Public Holidays 2026-2027 – Leisure & Community Centres\*

Easter	Sunday 5 April 2026 Monday 6 April 2026 <b>*Tuesday 7 April 2026 (Community Centres taking Tuesday 7 April instead of Sunday 5 April 2026)</b>
May Bank Holidays	Monday 4 May 2026 Monday 25 May 2026
July Holiday	Sunday 12 July 2026 Monday 13 July 2026 <b>*Tuesday 14 July 2026 (Community Centres taking Tuesday 14 instead of Sunday 12 July 2026)</b>
August Bank Holiday	Monday 31 August 2026
Christmas Holiday	Thursday 24 December 2026 Friday 25 December 2026 Saturday 26 December 2026
New Year’s Holiday	Friday 1 January 2027
St. Patrick’s Holiday	Wednesday 17 March 2027

Members will be aware that a review of community halls and centres is ongoing and that part of this involves assessing the current operating model for all 21 facilities, including the hours and days of use.

In assessing the operating model, S3 consultants, who are carrying out the full review, will consider current usage, including hours and days of use and all comments received from stakeholders during the engagement process on when they would wish to have each of the centres available to book, including public and bank

Not Applicable

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holidays. A positive update on the work undertaken to date was discussed with Elected Members at a Workshop on Thursday 22 January 2026. The final report will be brought to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee.

### **Legacy bookings on public / bank holidays in 2026**

As a legacy arrangement, prior to 2015 and every year since then, an annual booking has been made for the Queens Hall, Newtownards that includes Easter Monday and Tuesday.

Similarly, the Marquis Hall and Hamilton Hub have been booked on 12 July prior to the 2015 and annually since the merger, for use for Orange Lodge breakfast events. Members will be aware that parades will be held on 13 July 2026 instead of 12 July in 2026.

Staff have been willing to work on these dates to accommodate the bookings.

Outside of these arrangements, no further bookings will be accepted for public or bank holidays when Community Centres and Halls are closed until the outcome of the review is reported to Council through this Committee.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council notes the report.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 19****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Active and Healthy Communities Committee
Date of Meeting	11 February 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Leisure
Date of Report	29 January 2026
File Reference	LS/LA20
Legislation	Recreation and Youth Services Order (1986)
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below: N/A
Subject	Response to Notice of Motion 636 - Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex Celebration
Attachments	

**Background**

In March 2024, Council agreed in response to Notice of Motion 636:

*“That officers bring back a detailed report surrounding options to celebrate the huge success of the Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex. Options would include a Civic Reception to celebrate 6 years of the huge success of the facility in 2025”.*

A report was subsequently provided by officers in April 2025 that detailed the following 3 potential options for a celebration event.

1. An event in January 2026 to mark seven years since the facilities were open with an invited dignitary who would be booked for the event.
2. An event scheduled to coincide with a visit by Royalty/ Dignitary at some time in 2025 or 2026.
3. An event in January 2029 to mark ten years since the facilities were open.

Not Applicable

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The officers recommendation was as follows: “It is recommended that Council approve the development of Option 1 above and commit a budget of approx. £30,000 from leisure / C&W underspends throughout the 2025/26 year towards the event to be delivered in 2026 to mark seven years of success at the ABMWLC facility”. At Committee the item FELL.

This report seeks to propose an alternative response to the NoM that will celebrate the huge success of the facility without requiring a significant budget spend. However, it should be noted that the Civic Reception element of the NoM is therefore not feasible.

### **Recent Success of ABMWLC**

Members may be aware that the success, profile, and staff of ABMWLC have been celebrated and recognised through recent media coverage.

For example, the recent Freedom of the Borough Celebration event for Rhys McClenaghan MBE at ABMWLC attracted hundreds of visitors and simultaneously highlighted the positive impact ABMWLC and Origin Gymnastics has had on the sport from a recreational and elite level.

ABMWLC and the staff have facilitated several large scale sporting and leisure. Some of the sporting events in 2025/26 include:

- Age Friendly Roadshow
- Help for Heros Event
- Ards and North Down Job Fair
- NI Schools netball competitions
- NI Schools Trampoline competitions
- Pickleball Competitions
- Swimming Galas

Members will also recall that ABMWLC and it’s staff have supported the Borough’s residents during emergency responses, for example during the Covid-19 pandemic ABMWLC was used as a distribution centre for care packages to those most in need and more recently ABMWLC was a relief centre during the World War 2 evacuation.

ABMWLC has also recently been recognised in the 2025 Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Performance Awards. The national recognition is awarded upon APSE receiving verified data for the 2024–25 financial year evaluating excellence in service quality, community engagement, customer satisfaction, and value for money. ABMWLC was a named Finalist of the Awards selected from over 300 participating UK Councils. Of the recognition, the Mayor of Ards and North Down, Cllr Gillian McCollum, said: “Being named a finalist at the APSE Awards is a fantastic achievement and a reflection of the dedication, professionalism and passion of our staff. Two staff from the centre travelled to England to attend the awards ceremony.

Not Applicable

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### **Upcoming Events**

Events are due to take place in the next number of months such as the Launch of the Borough's first Leisure Strategy to be held in ABMWLC and the upcoming Sports Awards will showcase the huge success and significant social value of ABMWLC, the Strategy Launch will include a tour of the facility for the several attendees from various leisure organisations.

### **Chief Executive Roadshow**

The Annual Chief Executive Roadshow event provides an opportunity for CLT to engage with staff from each Directorate and many of the Services within them. This year's Roadshow events will be held in March and one of these events is already planned to be held in ABMWLC to update leisure staff on corporate matters, and to celebrate the success of Council achievements as well as ABMWLC achievements.

The event does not require a closure of the facility and therefore ensure continuity of service to customers; however, consideration will be given to the scheduling of the event to enable as many staff to attend as possible. Officers will work collaboratively with colleagues in Corporate Communications and CLT to ensure the event suitably highlights the success of the facility and recognises the achievements of the staff.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council notes the report.