

About us

How we're raising the standard
of services for tenants

TSA

**TENANT
SERVICES
AUTHORITY**



We are the Tenant Services Authority, the new regulator for affordable housing. We launched on 1 December 2008, having taken over the regulatory powers of the Housing Corporation. We believe housing matters, and that access to good quality housing improves lives. Our goal, quite simply, is to raise the standard of services for tenants.

How are we making this happen?

First and foremost, we are a champion for tenants – standing up for their interests and aspirations, and putting their needs first. There are some 10 million people in England living in one form of social housing or another – and a further 5 million who can't afford to buy a home but who aren't considered needy enough to be allocated a home to rent.

We're here to work for them all. We want landlords to deepen and accelerate how they work with tenants – allowing the very people whose lives are affected by the quality of their landlord's services to have a say in the way their homes are managed.

We are challenging providers. This starts with challenging them to be financially viable and well governed. We're working with them to make sure that is a given. But we want more too. The gap between excellent and mediocre affordable housing services today is both inexplicable and unacceptable – so we're working with tenants and landlords to help providers raise their game.

And we will shape the sector. We're helping to create more choice – in the way housing is managed, in the choices offered to tenants, in the kinds of tenure available, in the landlords who provide it and in the way providers raise funds.

We are going to make much better use of the data collected from landlords and make that data readily accessible to providers, their boards and their tenants. We believe better access to information will help providers to improve constantly.

To achieve all of this, we have to act intelligently, decisively and confidently. Our focus is on performance, both of the landlords we work with and the people we employ. Only in this way will the Tenant Services Authority be a real catalyst for change, one that will transform the sector and improve the quality of life for millions of people. As a regulator we believe in proportionate regulation. That means where providers are strong and tenants are satisfied, there should be very little for us to do. Where standards are slipping, governance is weak, finances fragile and/or tenants are unhappy, we will intervene to get things done.

When is all this happening?

To understand what issues matter most to tenants, we need to listen to their views. So, from January to the end of March 2009, we're going to hold a nationwide conversation with tenants, going out to meet them face to face and find out from them what services they need and standards they expect.

Only then can we begin to develop a regulatory framework that puts tenants' priorities first.

Which means that in spring 2009, based on what we've heard, we'll consult further with both tenants and landlords to shape a system that will do just that. Then in the summer, we'll publish a formal consultation on the detail of our plans, and begin implementing the new regulatory framework in the autumn.

Whilst we develop our new ways of working we will continue to regulate using the older powers of the Housing Corporation, but with an unapologetic focus on financial viability during these difficult economic times.

Once we have completed the consultation on the new framework, we will turn on the extra powers

in the 2008 Housing and Regeneration Act that established the TSA. Those powers provide us with a much better 'toolkit' to intervene to get things sorted for the benefit of tenants.

In spring 2010, the TSA is likely to become responsible for all affordable housing, whether it's provided by local authorities, arm's-length management organisations or housing associations. Private landlords will be able to register as providers of social housing too.

All this adds up to one of the biggest shake ups in affordable housing in decades, and one that will allow social housing tenants – no matter who their landlord is – to receive the very highest standards of service.

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“We’re here to promote the interest of tenants in affordable housing. We’re shaping our standards based on what tenants are telling us are their priorities”

Peter Marsh, Chief Executive

Timeline

December 2008

TSA launched

January – March 2009

First phase of tenant consultation on key priorities

Spring 2009

Developing the new framework – and open consultation with tenants and landlords based on tenant priorities

Summer 2009

Formal consultation on detail of regulatory framework

Autumn 2009

Progressive implementation of new framework begins

Spring 2010

Target date for including local authorities in our regulatory system



“We’re a modern, effective regulator with the needs and aspirations of tenants at our heart. And we’re also keeping a close watch on providers’ financial viability”

Anthony Mayer, Chairman