

# What does the regulatory framework mean for you?

A guide to social housing standards

**TSA**

**TENANT  
SERVICES  
AUTHORITY**

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# Introduction

We are the regulator for social housing in England. Our new powers came into effect for all social housing providers from 1 April 2010. For the first time, every social housing tenant in England now benefits from a common set of standards that applies to all providers whether they are a local authority, a housing association or other form of provider.

Our standards and approach to regulation are fundamental to us and are aimed at:

- ensuring a fair deal for tenants – who cannot in most cases simply vote with their feet and move to another provider if services are poor
- protecting taxpayers and other funders of social housing – by continuing our work on sector governance and financial viability to safeguard and maximise the value from public investment and promote private investment in new and existing homes
- being a modern and effective regulator – a consumer-focused regulator that is efficient, accountable, proportionate and transparent in its approach

Achieving lasting service delivery improvement will involve providers working with their tenants and holding themselves open to scrutiny by them. We set out how we expect providers, at the local level, to develop their service offer in response to local priorities and to work with other partners in their neighbourhood to improve the quality of life for all residents.

In this guide we set out the six standards that apply to all social housing landlords. The standards describe the outcomes we want to see achieved and some specific expectations all providers must comply with. We have consciously given providers and their tenants the freedom to define what 'local' means to them. We expect providers to tailor their service offer and to set out clearly to their tenants how they will meet all of the TSA standards, whether they are locally tailored or not. Most importantly, we expect providers to involve their tenants in the design of their services and to deliver on their promises.

We know that where performance is poor or involvement is weak, this can have a significant negative effect on tenants' lives. Where this is the case, we will expect speedy self-improvement and where this is insufficient, we have a new graduated range of enforcement powers to ensure that tenants get a fair deal.

This summary booklet sets out our standards, the required outcomes and some of the things tenants can expect as their landlord works to meet them. It also explains the procedure tenants should follow if they wish to complain about service delivery by their landlord, as well as the respective roles of the landlord, the ombudsmen and the TSA.

**Peter Marsh**  
**Chief Executive**

# What is co-regulation?

Our approach to social housing regulation is built around what's called 'co-regulation'. By that, we mean that we set clear outcome-focused standards for providers and we expect robust self-regulation by the boards and councillors who govern the delivery of housing services in order to meet those standards. This must incorporate effective tenant involvement and scrutiny and be subject to a 'backbone' of regulation by the TSA.

Providers need to ensure for their tenants that they are meeting the obligations contained within our six standards. These have been shaped by our National Conversation that helped us establish tenants' priorities. They also have the support of providers and those that invest in social housing.

Our standards emphasise that providers need to involve their tenants in shaping how services are delivered. Only by doing this can their work meet local priorities. Our standards also involve tenants being able to scrutinise performance. Discussions about service delivery and improvement should be between providers and their tenants, rather than between the regulator and the provider, but we reserve the right to step in when these fail.

Responsibility for meeting these standards lies with the boards and councillors that govern providers' service delivery. And for co-regulation to work, landlords must assess their performance honestly, robustly and using evidence. They should use external validation, independent audit and peer review, where appropriate, and enable tenants to scrutinise this process.

By October each year, providers must report performance against all the standards to their tenants. This will help to strengthen their accountability, and tenants will be involved in developing and scrutinising this report.

Tenants should be able to monitor and scrutinise their landlord's performance against the standards. Providers should also support tenants to build their capacity to make co-regulation effective.

Tenants who are not happy with their provider's service or approach to co-regulation can make a complaint to the provider. Our standards require providers to have a clear and accessible complaints policy so tenants know how they can raise concerns and have them dealt with fairly and promptly. If a tenant remains dissatisfied after complaining to their provider, they have the right to raise their concern with the relevant housing ombudsman.

The TSA doesn't deal with complaints related to service failure (as this is the role of the provider and relevant ombudsman). But where tenants or the ombudsmen have grounds to suspect that a provider has problems rooted in their procedures which means they have difficulty complying with any of our regulatory standards, or they have other issues of regulatory concern, they can raise these with the TSA. We will then consider whether to pursue this with the provider.

Our approach to co-regulation extends to the development and review of regulatory policy and how we regulate in practice.

# What does this mean for local priorities?

## Providers set out their offer to their tenants and deliver it

There is a requirement in five of our standards (those relating to service delivery) for each provider to set out in an annual report for their tenants how their service offer meets their obligations for each of the TSA's standards and any improvements planned for tenants over the next year. Providers are expected to deliver on these commitments and be accountable for their compliance with all the standards in all areas where they operate. There is a requirement that tenants are involved in the preparation and scrutiny of their provider's annual report and that providers set out in their reports how this has been achieved.

## A clear timetable for making offers and reporting performance to tenants

An annual report for each year ending 31 March should be made available to tenants by no later than 1 October. We have established high-level expectations for the contents of these reports. For the first report in October 2010, we expect providers to set out their plans for developing local offers. We would be prepared to accept limited extensions to this date in the first year only, where the provider can demonstrate this is reasonable and has advised its tenants and us in advance.

Local offers for service delivery should be in place by 1 April 2011.

## Meaningful engagement with tenants

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard requires all providers to offer their tenants opportunities to agree how some services can be tailored to meet their local priorities. Where tenants want local tailoring and choices to reflect their priorities, the provider should consult meaningfully with their tenants and act reasonably to develop a local offer in response. Our expectation is that in most cases providers will reach agreement with their tenants on these local offers. Providers should take into account, and discuss with their tenants, their obligations to the other standards, including the Value for Money Standard.

The TSA cannot compel 'agreement' of local offers because we cannot regulate for the degree of acceptance by tenants. Where agreement cannot be reached, we encourage the providers and their tenants to seek independent mediation.

## Providers and tenants discuss appropriate arrangements, within a broad framework set by the TSA

The content of local offers is a matter for providers to agree in consultation with their tenants. We expect discussions to cover a number of areas related to the TSA standards: specifically those related to the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment, Home and Neighbourhood and Community Standards. There is a requirement in the

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard for providers, in offering opportunities for their tenants to agree local offers, to take into account:

- standards of performance offered to tenants
- how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants
- what happens if local offers, having been agreed with tenants, are not met, which may include redress for tenants
- the arrangements for reviewing local offers on a periodic basis

There is also a requirement within the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard for providers to say how they will provide support to build tenants' capacity so they are effectively engaged and involved.

### The definition of what is 'local' is for providers and their tenants

It is not for the TSA to define this, but we expect providers to consider their obligations under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard in relation to local area co-operation, which requires meaningful co-operation with Local Strategic Partnerships and the strategic housing function of local authorities. Providers should therefore consider whether services to the tenants could be

improved by participating in an area-based offer. In these cases it may be reasonable for a provider to define 'local' as the local authority area or a subset of it, such as a neighbourhood or estate. Providers are not under a regulatory obligation to agree local offers with local authorities. We recognise that some providers may want to tailor their services by factors other than geography, such as in relation to demographics (eg older tenants). Some providers may also, having properly involved and consulted their tenants, decide not to have a local offer where tenants expressly do not want one.

### What happens if there is a failure to deliver on commitments made in an agreed local offer?

We want co-regulation between providers and tenants to work to resolve the issue. In doing so, we expect the provider to comply with its own scrutiny and redress provisions that it has agreed with its tenants. We also expect providers to take ownership for their self-improvement in such circumstances. Only in exceptional cases (such as when the provider is not delivering services in line with the outcomes set out in the TSA standards and has failed to address this) and where it is reasonable and proportionate will the TSA consider more formal intervention.

# What standards must landlords meet?

There are six standards that landlords must meet. They are:

- tenant involvement and empowerment – this includes requirements relating to customer service, choice and complaints, involvement and empowerment, and understanding and responding to diverse needs of tenants
- home – this includes requirements relating to quality of accommodation and repairs and maintenance
- tenancy – this includes requirements relating to allocations, rents\* and tenure
- neighbourhood and community – this includes requirements relating to neighbourhood management, local area co-operation and anti-social behaviour
- value for money
- governance and financial viability\*

\* This standard or part of this standard does not apply to local authorities.

These standards are central to our regulatory framework. They describe the outcomes we want to see delivered and some specific expectations we expect social housing landlords to meet in delivering these outcomes. Please refer to our full document, The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2010, which is available on our website, for details of the specific expectations.

# Tenant involvement and empowerment standard

## Required outcomes

### Customer service, choice and complaints

Registered providers shall:

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

### Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers shall support co-regulation with their tenants by:

- offering all tenants a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the management of their housing, including the ability to influence strategic priorities, the formulation of housing-related policies and the delivery of housing-related services
- consulting with their tenants and acting reasonably in providing them with opportunities to agree local offers for service delivery
- providing tenants with a range of opportunities to influence how providers meet all the TSA's standards, and to scrutinise their performance against all standards and in the development of the annual report
- providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved

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

Registered providers shall:

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

Registered providers shall set out in an annual report for tenants how they are meeting these obligations and how they intend to meet them in the future. The provider shall then meet the commitments it has made to its tenants. Registered providers shall take the obligations of the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard into account in setting out how they are meeting and intend to meet all the other TSA standards.

## What can tenants expect?

### Customer service, choice and complaints

While most tenants can't simply shop around for another landlord, they should still be able to make choices about their services and know that their views are important.

Tenants need clear information about the choices on offer, the quality of service to expect, the landlord's track record and how to get involved.

Landlords who take the time to listen to tenants' views, ideas and problems will be much more in tune with what they want. They will need to talk to tenants in ways that suit them best. It will be for landlords and tenants to decide how this happens, but it could include newsletters, one-to-one and group meetings, surveys or focus groups.

Complaints from tenants can be helpful in finding weak spots that need sorting out. For tenants, it should be easy to make a complaint and they should be told about any service changes made as a result. Landlords must publish full facts and figures about complaints every year.

### Involvement and empowerment

Co-regulation brings landlords and tenants together to set local standards, or 'offers', to suit their area. Services in, say, Surrey could differ from those in Salford.

These local offers will link to the TSA standards that matter most to tenants – tenant involvement and empowerment, home, tenancy and neighbourhood

and community. Landlords must help tenants take on this new co-regulation role by:

- giving every tenant the chance to be involved in decisions about their homes and services and their landlord's plans for the future
- offering tenants a choice of ways to check how their landlord matches up to local offers
- helping tenants to learn more about housing matters – the more expert they are, the more influence they will have

When important changes are on the table – such as new management arrangements – tenants should be asked for their views. We would expect that tenants should also be asked, at least every three years, how they want to be involved in making decisions on the housing service.

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

Landlords must treat all tenants fairly. They may need to adjust services for tenants who need extra help due to their age, disability, race or ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or care and support needs.

### Annual report to tenants

Landlords must show how they measure up to all the TSA standards and their own local offers in an annual report to tenants. This should give useful facts and figures about services and plans for the future so that tenants can see what's running well and where their landlord needs to do better. The report should help tenants to make choices about future services and they must be involved in developing and scrutinising the report.

# Home standard

## Required outcomes

### Quality of accommodation

Registered providers shall:

- ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section 5 of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance by 31 December 2010 and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard after this date
- meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard
- in agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section 6 of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance

### Repairs and maintenance

Registered providers shall:

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

Registered providers shall set out in an annual report for tenants how they are meeting these obligations and how they intend to meet them in the future. The provider shall then meet the commitments it has made to its tenants.

### Repairing tenant satisfaction

Tenants of Family Housing Association have been helping their landlord improve its repairs service. Satisfaction rates with the service have gone from 53% to 63% in a year. This followed an inspection we had carried out. Family took the findings seriously and acted promptly. In conjunction with its tenant panel, it developed an action plan, and tenants also helped monitor progress over the following six months. The work done has led to improvements in areas that were not inspected too, and the association says it now feels it has a more unified approach.

## **What can tenants expect?**

### **Quality of accommodation**

Housing association and council landlords are already working to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard by the deadline of 31 December 2010. Put simply, a decent home is one which is warm and weatherproof and has modern facilities.

Some homes built with public money have been designed to a higher standard than the Decent Homes Standard. Where this is the case, landlords must maintain these homes to the higher standard.

When landlords and tenants plan local offers, the quality of homes should be set at or above these standards.

### **Repairs and maintenance**

Hallmarks of a good service include a landlord's success in fixing repairs first time round, keeping tight controls on spending and giving tenants real choices in their services.

Landlords must plan the repair and maintenance of homes and common areas carefully to make best use of the money available. There should be a healthy balance between spending on everyday (responsive) repairs to tenants' homes and planned maintenance to keep the housing as a whole in good condition.

Landlords should work with other agencies to provide adaptations for people who are older or who have disabilities – for example, by fitting handrails or ramps in their homes.

The landlord's annual report to tenants must show how it is meeting all these standards and its plans for the future.

# Tenancy standard

## Required outcomes

### Allocations

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

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

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

### Rents

Registered providers shall charge rents in accordance with the objectives and framework set out in the Government's Direction to the TSA of November 2009.

### Tenure

Registered providers shall offer and issue the most secure form of tenure compatible with the purpose of the housing and the sustainability of the community. They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements.

Registered providers shall set out in an annual report for tenants how they are meeting these obligations and how they intend to meet them in the future. The provider shall then meet the commitments it has made to its tenants.

## What can tenants expect?

### Allocations (letting empty homes)

With high demand for affordable homes for rent across the country, landlords must be sure that their rules for letting empty homes are open and fair – for tenants who want to move from one home to another, and for people waiting for a home.

Information on how to apply for a home, how landlords choose new tenants and how to appeal against the decisions they make should be easy to understand and made widely available.

Applying for a home should be made as easy for people with sight, hearing and other support needs, or people who face language barriers, as for anyone else.

Landlords must show how they work with other landlords – through common housing registers (lists of people waiting for a home) and their policies for letting homes.

Landlords should make best use of the homes available. They may have to juggle the needs of individuals with local council plans for the community. For example, councils may want places for people who are homeless or who need to move to smaller or larger homes as their needs change.

While empty homes should be let quickly, landlords must allow new tenants to move in when it suits them, within reason.

Most landlords offer choice-based letting schemes as the fairest way of deciding who gets vacant homes. Landlords who do not offer this option must explain why.

To help tenants move house more easily, landlords should offer help and advice and take part in mobility and mutual exchange schemes (these schemes help tenants move from one rented home to another).

### Rents

Rents, and any rent rises, must be within limits set by the Government. In exceptional cases, where there is a clear case to be made, the TSA may give some landlords extra time to move to these rents, if they would otherwise face financial problems.

Landlords must give tenants clear information about any changes to their rents and service charges. This includes information about the yearly Retail Price Index (RPI) which rents are linked to. (The RPI tracks prices on a wide range of goods and services to see how the cost of living has risen or fallen over a year.)

### Tenure

Every tenant should be given an easy-to-follow guide to their landlord's tenancy management policy, setting out their rights, and what they must do as tenants (such as paying the rent and looking after their home). Landlords should offer support to tenants who find it hard to keep up their tenancy or who face eviction.

# Neighbourhood and community standard

## Required outcomes

### Neighbourhood management

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

### Local area co-operation

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

### Anti-social behaviour

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

Registered providers shall set out in an annual report for tenants how they are meeting these obligations and how they intend to meet them in the future. The provider shall then meet the commitments it has made to its tenants.

### Security for all

The London Borough of Hounslow has been developing local standards with tenants in both council and housing association homes. With funding from the TSA, it has worked on six estates to find out what makes tenants feel safer and what they want their landlords to do to help. It also studied the impact of things such as lighting, design and litter on tenants' feelings of safety and security. It is now looking at what the council and the other landlords can do to influence these factors as part of their local offer.

## What can tenants expect?

### Neighbourhood management

Landlords should keep the parts of the neighbourhood they manage – such as estates and common areas – clean and safe. Their efforts will go a lot further with the help of partners and they should work with tenants, other landlords, councils and other agencies where possible.

Tenants have a big stake in their neighbourhoods and should take part in decisions on how they are maintained. Landlords must publish a policy on neighbourhoods saying how they will carry out these decisions.

### Local area co-operation

Landlords have much to offer in helping their local communities to thrive – they can provide jobs and training, keep the streets clean and safe, offer good housing and convenient services and help residents to get to know each other.

Landlords should work with Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and other partners to get the best for their communities. (LSPs bring public, business, community and voluntary organisations together to improve their local area.)

### Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) – from graffiti and litter to noisy neighbours and racial abuse – can be annoying and stressful for tenants and at worst ruin people's lives.

Landlords are often in the best position to sort out problems and disputes. They should publish clear policies on stopping ASB in their area.

Ways of dealing with ASB will include:

- telling tenants what to expect their landlord to do – and what the landlord expects from them as members of the community
- taking a strong lead to stop ASB and working with other local agencies to get the best result for their tenants
- looking out for possible trouble spots and taking steps to stop them turning into real problems
- nipping problems in the bud quickly before they get serious, using all the means available, from mediation to legal action
- making it easy for tenants and other residents to report ASB
- keeping victims and witnesses well informed about their case and giving them support while it is being sorted out

# Value for money standard

## Required outcomes

### Value for money

In meeting all TSA standards, including their local offers, registered providers shall have a comprehensive approach to managing their resources to provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services and homes to meet tenants' and potential tenants' needs.

Registered providers shall set out in an annual report for tenants how they are meeting these obligations and how they intend to meet them in the future. The provider shall then meet the commitments it has made to its tenants.

### What can tenants expect?

Landlords must consult, listen and respond to tenants and give them a real stake in making decisions on spending. They must keep tenants well informed and explain the choices on offer clearly, giving every tenant the chance to take part.

Landlords must make extra efforts to involve tenants in decisions which will directly affect them – such as how much should be spent on services that tenants have to pay for through service charges.

Through the annual report to tenants, landlords should say what they've done to get the most for the money available and set out their plans for the future.



## Identifying savings

One of the things that tenants liked about transferring from the local council to XYZ Housing\* was that their homes would be upgraded.

XYZ borrowed heavily from banks to fund the improvements. It was due to spend over £50 million upgrading its tower blocks. Of this, over £30 million had been identified in its business plan, but the remaining £20 million was to be funded from savings it had yet to identify.

We raised our concerns with XYZ and reinforced this through the Annual Viability Review process and regular meetings. This led to the association carrying out a full review of the long-term demand for its tower blocks. It found that it would be uneconomic to improve many of them and that tenants increasingly didn't want to live in them.

A revised asset management strategy included plans to demolish some of the blocks, which reduced overall spend significantly. As a result its business plan is stronger and it is able to refocus on its improvement programme.

This has reassured us and XYZ tenants. In the current economic climate, the association might have had to accept higher interest rates than usual on any extra loans and the costs may have been passed on to tenants in their rents.

\*This case study is real, though we have changed the name of the landlord.



# Governance and financial viability standard

## Required outcomes

### Governance

Registered providers shall ensure effective governance arrangements that deliver their aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner. Governance arrangements shall ensure they:

- adhere to all relevant legislation
- comply with their governing documents and all regulatory requirements
- are accountable to tenants, the TSA and relevant stakeholders
- safeguard taxpayers' interests and the reputation of the sector
- have an effective risk management framework

### Financial viability

Registered providers shall manage their resources effectively to ensure their viability is maintained.

### Improving governance

Governance was weak at Ekaya Housing Association after its Chief Executive and some of its board members left. An independent review identified what the association needed to do, and Ekaya replaced most of the members of its board with people who had the necessary skills. The new board includes three tenants. The changes have now been made, and in November 2009 the TSA reassessed the association and concluded that its governance had significantly improved and was now fit for purpose. Tenants are benefitting from a more professional service.

## What can tenants expect?

### Governance (decision making)

For landlords, good decision making will be based on having a strong governing body, who have the know-how, skills or experience to help steer the organisation.

Landlords must choose a code of governance to work by and give their reasons for their choice (the code sets out rules for taking decisions and choosing board members, for example). If a landlord does not meet all the rules in the code, they should explain any failings.

Landlords should say what they expect from the governing body chair and chief executive who must all be ready to answer for the decisions they make.

In coming to decisions, landlords must work within the law, the TSA's regulations and their own rules. They must make careful use of public funds while getting a fair deal for tenants and others in housing need.

They must guard the association from risks which could damage its good name and the services it provides. Landlords must do all this openly and be ready to explain their decisions to tenants, the TSA and others.

Every year, landlords must give details of all their homes to the TSA. This information will go on the new National Register of Social Housing and be used to decide future housing needs across the country.

Some landlords use other organisations to provide parts of their housing management services. These organisations may not have the same checks and controls as housing associations but they must agree to help them meet the TSA standards. Landlords must have powers in place to see that they do.

### Financial viability (managing money to keep services running well)

Landlords must use public money and other assets carefully. They should keep a firm control of spending and make regular checks on how money is spent. Landlords must be sure that enough money is always 'on tap' (not tied up in homes or other assets) to keep services running smoothly.

It's important that landlords look at the possible risks to their financial plans and take steps to protect the organisation from money problems. As part of this, they must use the best information available to plan and organise their finances in the future.

Landlords must also answer to the funders who have lent money to them and repay any loans as agreed.

Lastly, landlords must answer to the TSA on money matters and any losses suffered through fraud.

# How can tenants make a complaint?

Here we have set out our approach to handling complaints from tenants about their landlord.

## The primary role of providers and the ombudsmen

A tenant with a complaint against their provider should raise it with their provider.

Providers have prime responsibility for dealing with, and being accountable for, complaints about their service. The TSA's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard includes clear expectations of all providers about how they handle complaints. This includes reference to dealing with complaints about performance against the standards, including those related to their obligations under the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

A tenant who isn't satisfied with the way their landlord has dealt with their complaint should raise it with the relevant ombudsman.

The ombudsman will have a final say on service-related complaints. The TSA does not take on these complaints once this process is concluded and is not an alternative route for complaints about a provider's service to tenants.

The Housing Ombudsman can refer to the TSA issues of regulatory concern about a provider.

## Role of the TSA

Where the TSA receives complaints directly, we direct the tenant to the most effective route for resolution via the respective provider and ombudsmen processes.

The TSA does not deal with service-related complaints on behalf of tenants or groups of tenants – this is a role for the provider and relevant ombudsman.

We do not investigate service complaints but where a complaint received by the TSA raises, in our judgement, issues of **regulatory concern** about a provider we may pursue it directly with that provider.

## Criteria used by the TSA in deciding whether to investigate a complaint

Issues of **regulatory concern** are related to:

- the degree to which the complaint provides evidence or grounds to suspect systemic failure against one or more of the TSA's standards by the provider. This includes the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
- whether, in our judgement, it raises another serious regulatory concern such as:
  - an immediate or potential risk to a tenant's, or a number of tenants', health and safety
  - an allegation of mismanagement or fraud
  - a significant risk to the reputation of the sector

We expect to discuss these complaints with the provider in the first instance. Where appropriate, we will share the outcome of the investigation with the complainant.

## Collective or group complaints

Collective complaints will not be treated differently by the TSA to individual complaints, although they may help highlight the scale of tenants' concerns.

## Contacts for further information

Housing association tenants should contact:

Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych  
London WC2B 4HN  
Tel: 0300 111 3000  
Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)  
Website: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Council tenants should contact:

Local Government Ombudsman Service  
PO Box 4771  
Coventry CV4 0EH  
Tel: 0300 061 0614  
Email: [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)  
Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

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Website: [www.tenantservicesauthority.org](http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org)

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# What does the regulatory framework mean for you?

A guide to social housing standards

This guide sets out the six standards that social housing landlords in England must meet from April 2010. It also explains how our regulatory framework puts tenants at the heart of decision making through what we call 'co-regulation'. It also sets out how tenants can go about making a complaint about their landlord.



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