

# GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHTS

## February 2019

*A brief summary of current government consultations of potential interest to RSN members. This is not intended as an exhaustive list of all relevant consultations.*

### **The future for small-scale low-carbon generation – Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy**

This consultation considers future arrangements that would facilitate:

- a route to market which supports small-scale low carbon generation of electricity
- market innovation
- lowering of costs for consumers
- the promotion of the efficient use of electricity through price signals, for instance promoting export when the grid is experiencing high demand

Under the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG), government would legislate for suppliers to remunerate small-scale low-carbon generators for the electricity they export to the grid. The evidence gathered from this consultation will allow government to decide on whether, and how, to proceed with the SEG. This consultation is a result of a call for evidence.

This consultation closes on 5 March 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-for-small-scale-low-carbon-generation>

### **Improving access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government**

The government states that it is committed to ensuring that those who serve in the Armed Forces and their families, and those who have served in the past, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

This consultation sets out proposals for new statutory guidance for local authorities to assist members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families, to access social housing.

This consultation closes on 8 March 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/improving-access-to-social-housing-for-members-of-the-armed-forces>

### **Review of local authorities' relative needs and resources – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government**

This consultation seeks views on the approach to measuring the relative needs and resources of local authorities, which will determine new baseline funding allocations for local authorities in England in 2020-21.

This consultation:

- proposes to simplify the assessment of local authorities' relative needs
- considers the type of adjustment that will be made to an authority's relative needs assessment to take account of the relative resources available to them to fund local services
- proposes a set of principles that will be used to design potential transitional arrangements and examines how the baseline for the purposes of transition should be established.

This consultation closes on 21 February 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-local-authorities-relative-needs-and-resources>

### **Business rates retention reform – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government**

This consultation seeks views on proposals for sharing risk and reward, managing volatility in income and setting up the reformed business rates retention system.

The reform of the business rates retention system will sit alongside wider changes to the local government finance system which the government aims to introduce in 2020.

This consultation closes on 21 February 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/business-rates-retention-reform>

### **Good practice on how residents and landlords work together to keep their home and building safe: call for evidence – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government**

Dame Judith Hackitt's report – [Building a safer future](#) – noted the important role of residents in helping keep their building safe. This call for evidence invites views on how residents and landlords/building managers work together regarding fire and structural safety and good practice on how residents are supported to each play a part in meeting their responsibilities. Responses are particularly welcomed from residents of multi-occupancy residential buildings, owners and managers of such buildings and anyone else with an interest in this issue.

This consultation closes on 12 February 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/good-practice-on-how-residents-and-landlords-work-together-to-keep-their-home-and-building-safe-call-for-evidence>

### **Tree and woodlands: introducing measures for felling street trees – Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs**

Government want to know what you think about proposals to introduce new measures for the process of felling street trees. These measures are intended to make it clearer who is responsible for decisions and what process they should follow. Government are also asking for views on strengthening the Forestry Commission's power to deal with illegal tree felling. Four measures are proposed which include: introducing 2 new duties on local authorities – a duty to consult on the felling of street trees and a duty to report on tree felling and replanting; creating best practice guidance to support local authorities in drawing up a Tree and Woodland Strategy; giving the Forestry Commission more powers to deal with illegal tree felling and strengthen protection of wooded landscapes.

This consultation closes on 28 February 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/tree-and-woodlands-introducing-measures-for-felling-street-trees>

### **Williams Rail Review – Department for Transport**

This call for evidence is to support the Rail Review, led by independent chair Keith Williams. The review was established to recommend the most appropriate organisational and commercial frameworks to support the delivery of the government's vision for the railway.

The review invites written contributions to inform its work on any or all of the review principles, as set out in its terms of reference:

- commercial models for the provision of rail services that prioritise the interests of passengers and taxpayers
- rail industry structures that promote clear accountability and effective joint-working for both passengers and the freight sector
- a system that is financially sustainable and able to address long-term cost pressures

- a railway that is able to offer good value fares for passengers, while keeping costs down for taxpayers
- improved industrial relations, to reduce disruption and improve reliability for passengers
- a rail sector with the agility to respond to future challenges and opportunities

The review will look at the whole rail industry, including:

- increasing integration between track and train
- how to improve transport services across UK regions and devolved nations, including exploring options for devolution of rail powers
- improving value for money for passengers and taxpayers

Your evidence will inform the review and will be considered alongside other evidence received. The review's findings and recommendations will be published in a government white paper in autumn 2019, with reform of the sector to begin in 2020. Where possible they ask that evidence is submitted by 18 January 2019. However the evidence portal will remain open until the end of May 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/williams-rail-review>

### **Proposal for a New Approach to Building: Call for Evidence – HM Treasury**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced at Budget 2017 that five central government departments would adopt a presumption in favour of offsite construction. This signalled that the government was committed to leveraging its buying power to support the modernisation of the construction sector.

Following these commitments the government are now taking the next steps to implement this measure by setting out a new approach to building, to be adopted across government departments where it presents value for money. They have called this a platform approach to design for manufacture and assembly (P-DfMA).

This consultation closes on 17 February 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposal-for-a-new-approach-to-building-call-for-evidence>