

# GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHTS

## May 2023

*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.*

### **Introduction of a use class for short term lets and associated permitted development rights – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities**

Government state: “The increase in the number of short term lets in certain areas, such as coastal towns, national parks and some cities can impact on the availability and affordability of homes to buy or to rent for local people and on the sustainability of communities more broadly. While short term lets can support tourism and the local economy in such areas it is important that this is balanced with meeting the needs of the local community. The government is therefore consulting on planning measures that would help local areas have greater ability to control any future increase in the number of short term lets in their area and support the retention of existing properties to buy or to rent.

“This consultation seeks views on the introduction of a short term let use class. In addition it seeks views on the introduction of new permitted development rights to provide flexibility where short term lets are not a local issue, and which allows for this flexibility to be removed where there is local concern. We are additionally seeking views on how homeowners might be provided with flexibility to let out their sole or main home for up to 30 nights in a calendar year.”

This consultation closes on 7 June 2023.

[Introduction of a use class for short term lets and associated permitted development rights - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/introduction-of-a-use-class-for-short-term-lets-and-associated-permitted-development-rights)

### **Consultation on a registration scheme for short-term lets in England – Department for Culture, Media & Sport**

This consultation follows a commitment by government to introduce a short-term lets registration scheme through an amendment to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill. The registration scheme aims to ensure England continues to provide safe and high-quality guest accommodation, as well as provide data that will help local authorities identify where premises are being let out in their area. It also aims to provide valuable information to help local authorities enforce health and safety regulations and manage the housing market impact of high numbers of short-term lets (where this is an issue).

This consultation seeks views on a range of questions relating to how the scheme should be set up and administered.

This consultation closes on 7 June 2023.

[Consultation on a registration scheme for short-term lets in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-a-registration-scheme-for-short-term-lets-in-england)

### **Strengthening environmental civil sanctions – Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs**

The government wants to strengthen the Environment Agency's ability to issue monetary penalties for a wider range of environmental offences in England.

They want to know what you think about these changes, including:

- increasing the cap on variable monetary penalties from £250,000 to £25 million, £250 million or unlimited (no cap)
- introducing variable monetary penalties into the Environmental Permitting Regulations

This consultation closes on 15 May 2023.

[Strengthening environmental civil sanctions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-environmental-civil-sanctions)

## **Planning for new energy infrastructure: revisions to National Policy Statements – Department for Energy Security and Net Zero**

The energy National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the government's policy for the delivery of energy infrastructure and provide the legal framework for planning decisions.

Covering renewables, carbon capture and hydrogen, oil and gas pipelines and electricity networks, a range of updates are expected to speed up the planning process so that low-carbon generation can be brought forward at the right time and in the right places, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment on land and sea and ensuring local views are taken into account.

This consultation is more focused and seeks views on:

- clarifying that offshore wind is now a critical national priority, including the related onshore and offshore network infrastructure
- to deliver the 50GW of offshore wind including 5GW of floating wind, we need to cut the process time by over half. The government therefore announced it was introducing the offshore wind environmental improvement package to help accelerate deployment of offshore wind, whilst protecting and enhancing the marine environment
- strengthening the electricity networks NPS to include more detail on the role of strategic planning of networks, which considers the network as a whole, rather than just individual transmission projects
- updating the civil and military aviation and defence interests to reflect the status of energy developments, including offshore wind, and how impacts to civil and military aviation, meteorological radars and other types of defence interests should be managed

This consultation closes on 25 May 2023.

[Planning for new energy infrastructure: revisions to National Policy Statements - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-new-energy-infrastructure-revisions-to-national-policy-statements)

## **Community benefits for electricity transmission network infrastructure – Department for Energy Security and Net Zero**

Government are consulting on a recommended approach to community benefits for electricity transmission network infrastructure.

The consultation is proposing to create voluntary guidance for industry and communities when developing individual community benefit packages. This guidance will cover how to deliver direct benefits payments to eligible individuals and wider community benefits. They also recommend establishing a recommended level of funding for community benefits in agreement with Ofgem.

In this consultation government are seeking to gain the perspectives and views of different stakeholders to establish an approach that is both fair and effective. This includes stakeholders who could be involved in:

- developing and delivering communities benefits
- communities who could receive community benefits

This consultation closes on 25 May 2023.

[Community benefits for electricity transmission network infrastructure - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/community-benefits-for-electricity-transmission-network-infrastructure)

## **Technical consultation on the Infrastructure Levy – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities**

The Infrastructure Levy is a reform to the existing system of developer contributions – Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy - in England. This consultation will inform the design of the Levy and of regulations that will set out its operation in detail. A further consultation on the drafting of those regulations will be published in due course. Alongside this publication is a report on an earlier design of the Levy, commissioned by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

This consultation closes on 9 June 2023.

[Technical consultation on the Infrastructure Levy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### **Environmental Outcomes Reports: a new approach to environmental assessment – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities**

Part 6 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will secure powers to implement a new system of environmental assessment known as Environmental Outcomes Reports. This will allow the government to replace the EU-derived Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment processes with a streamlined system that places greater focus on delivering our environmental ambitions.

The introduction of outcomes-based approach to the Environmental Outcomes Reports allows the government to reflect its environmental priorities directly into plan-making and decision-making process on the largest developments. The feedback from this consultation will help them establish their approach to developing these environmental outcomes across government.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is required to review the two existing sets of environmental impact assessment regulations it is responsible for every five years to consider whether the regulations have met the intended objectives of the legislation and understand their effect on business. The regulations are:

- the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017;
- the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

This consultation closes on 9 June 2023.

[Environmental Outcomes Reports: a new approach to environmental assessment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)