

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHTS

October 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.

Technical consultation on a Community Wealth Fund in England – Department for Culture, Media & Sport and Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

This technical consultation follows a commitment made by the government in its response to the consultation on the English portion of dormant assets funding. This stated that community wealth funds would be the fourth cause to receive dormant assets funding in England.

Government state: “Empowering local people and devolving decision-making power to communities is at the heart of the government’s vision for a community wealth fund. This consultation is intended to embed those aims from the very beginning by seeking people’s views on the principles that will underpin the design of a community wealth fund in England.”

The government intends for a community wealth fund to target places that are experiencing high levels of deprivation and/or low social capital. In the first instance, a community wealth will target small towns of fewer than 20,000 residents.

This consultation closes on 19 October 2023.

[Technical consultation on a Community Wealth Fund in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/consult/technical-consultation-on-a-community-wealth-fund-in-england)

Consultation on directions to the Regulator of Social Housing: tenant rights and complaints – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

This consultation seeks views on a proposed direction from the Secretary of State to the Regulator of Social Housing, using powers under section 197 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as amended.

Government state: “Through the changes outlined in the Social Housing White Paper, the government is taking extensive action to ensure tenants are protected, have decent quality homes, and are treated with fairness and respect.”

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 requires the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to give a direction to the Regulator for the purpose of securing that registered providers of social housing are required to provide their tenants of low-cost rental accommodation with information about their tenants’ rights and how their tenants can make a complaint.

This consultation seeks views on a proposal to use this power to direct the Regulator to set standards relating to the provision of information to tenants on making complaints, tenants’ rights, and relevant regulatory requirements.

This consultation closes on 22 November 2023.

[Consultation on directions to the Regulator of Social Housing: tenant rights and complaints - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/consult/consultation-on-directions-to-the-regulator-of-social-housing-tenant-rights-and-complaints)

Proposed amendments to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme Regulations – Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Government introduced the Boiler Upgrade Scheme in 2022 to support the decarbonisation of heat in buildings. Under the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, capital grants are available to support the installation of heat pumps and biomass boilers in homes and non-domestic buildings in England and Wales.

During this period, they engaged Ofgem as the Scheme Administrator and a range of stakeholders to identify where changes may be needed to support a continued increase in deployment and ensure the target of 600,000 heat pump installs a year is reached by 2028. In this consultation, they set out proposed amendments to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme and are seeking views on:

- whether they should be able to differentiate grant levels in different circumstances
- whether to retain or amend the existing EPC requirements
- whether biomass boilers with a cooking function should be eligible under the scheme

This consultation closes on 12 October 2023.

[Proposed amendments to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme Regulations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-amendments-to-the-boiler-upgrade-scheme-regulations)

Plan-making reforms: consultation on implementation – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Government state: “Our vision is for local plans (and minerals and waste plans) to be simpler to understand and use, and positively shaped by the views of communities about how their area should evolve.

“We want them to clearly show what is planned in a local area – so that communities and other users of the plan can engage with them more easily, especially while they are being drawn up. We want them to be prepared more quickly and updated more frequently to ensure more authorities have up-to-date plans that reflect local needs. And we want them to make the best use of new digital technology, so that people can get involved without having to go through hundreds of pages of documents at council offices and to drive improved productivity and efficiency in the plan-making process.

“Through this consultation we are asking for your views on our proposals to implement the parts of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which relate to plan-making, to make plans simpler, faster to prepare and more accessible.”

This consultation closes on 18 October 2023.

[Plan-making reforms: consultation on implementation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation)

Call for evidence: non-statutory flexible working – Department for Business & Trade

Flexible working is a change to an employee’s working hours, location or pattern. For many people, after pay, access to flexible working is the key thing that they look for from an employer.

Flexible working is a broad term. It can relate to working hours or pattern: part-time, term-time, flexi-time, compressed hours, or adjusting start and finish times. It can also include flexibility over where someone works.

Arrangements for flexible working can be agreed between employers and employees on a contractual or non-contractual basis. Employees may ask for flexible working through the statutory right to request, or an informal non-statutory route – for example a discussion with their manager.

Informal flexible working can benefit individuals and businesses alike. Government wants to explore this further through this call for evidence. They are seeking views from individuals and businesses on their experiences of non-statutory flexible working and how it operates in practice.

This consultation closes on 7 November 2023.

[Call for evidence: non-statutory flexible working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/call-for-evidence-non-statutory-flexible-working)