



Message from the Chief Executives

Brexit and housing

The result from the referendum was surprising for many, what has been possibly more surprising, and certainly very concerning, has been the apparent rise in racist and xenophobic abuse that has followed it. This short term impact can potentially have long lasting implications for the communities we work with. In a time of great uncertainty for many, the role of housing providers as employers and key community institutions is vital.

We set out below a few sources of advice for organisations on how they can deal with this. We will be organising a series of events in the coming months around some of the community cohesion impacts and what housing providers can do, sharing advice and practice to make sure we are all well placed to support our communities.

It is important for organisations can get clear messages out that they value their diverse workforces and communities. Even those that have not experienced direct abuse or harassment may feel worried for a wide variety of reasons.

For those that experience abuse or harassment the EHRC has provided a list of places to report it as shown the image below. Many housing providers are hate reporting centres so will have systems in place already.

You can report 
HATE SPEECH online:

True Vision: report-it.org.uk
3rd party reporting centres include 
CST: cst.org.uk
Tell MAMA: tellmamauk.org
Stop-Hate UK: stophateuk.org
LGBT: galop.org.uk

 Equality and
Human Rights
Commission

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PRACTITIONER GROUPS

[North West Equality & Diversity Network for Housing Practitioners](#)

[Yorkshire and East Midlands Diversity Discussion Forum](#)

[North East Equality & Diversity Network](#)

[South & South West Equality & Diversity Forum](#)

[Midlands Equalities Forum](#)

[London Diversity Group](#)

Citizens Advice also provide guidance on reporting hate crime [here](#)

Supporting your staff

There is a huge amount of uncertainty about what the current position means for the country as a whole and those who live and work here. As an employer it is important to be able to reassure staff where possible.

For staff worried about, or subject to abuse or harassment the different forms of support outlined above may be appropriate. Some organisations may also have internal forms of advice and support in the form of diversity leads or champions that may be able to help. There may also be access to online or telephone support through your own employer.

As an employer you also need to consider the duty of care to your staff and to work to avoid conflict within the workplace. The CIPD has useful advice [here](#)

With regard to the employment status of those from the EU, as well as more general implications of UK employment law, again, the CIPD have some useful blogs and articles on the impact of Brexit and will be worth following for updated guidance.

[What will Brexit mean for UK employment law?](#)

[What HR needs to know if the UK votes to leave the EU](#)

Working with your communities

Many housing providers have a history of community cohesion work. Despite some of this work reducing in recent years they are still well placed in their communities to play a strong role in reducing community tensions and, in the longer term, providing opportunities for discussion and for voices to be heard.

We produced a report in 2014 on the work housing providers do. What was interesting in that report was how the debate around community cohesion had shifted from one primarily about race and ethnicity to one around the impacts of poverty. The last week has seen significant changes in the debate. The report is available [here](#) and contains useful examples of what providers have done around community cohesion.

There are also 'myth buster' resources available around immigration, asylum and refugees. The Refugee Council provides these [here](#) - local organisations may also have developed similar resources that you can use.

Finally, Housing Diversity Network will be providing more advice and guidance over the coming months and will share examples of what the housing sector is doing in response. Please get in touch if you have anything to contribute or if you have any questions.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training resources and Materials

We have put some of the free training resources and material for members of HDN on our website and will be adding to those over the coming months. The resources can be accessed [here](#)

Why Diversity Programs Fail

A recent article in the Harvard Business Review is well worth reading for all those interested in what makes effective equality and diversity interventions in organisations. Based on a study of over 800 US firms, the authors review the impact of different diversity interventions on the level of representation in managers after five years. Those activities that seem to have the greatest affect include college recruitment, mentoring, Diversity Task Forces and Diversity Managers. The importance of transparency and accountability is also highlighted. The article ("Why Diversity Programs Fail") can be accessed [here](#), along with other articles on the topics of diversity from HBR.

Black and Minority Ethnic People in the Workplace in Britain

Another publication worth looking out for is the House of Lords Briefing Note on “Black and Minority Ethnic People in the Workplace in Britain”. This note outlines what the review, announced by Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills in February 2016 will cover as well as commentary from some external bodies on the topic as well as recent statistics. The Briefing Note can be accessed [here](#)

HDN & CIH Equality and Diversity Conference

The date of 26th October has been set for our annual equality and diversity conference with the CIH. This year the theme will be ‘Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in a new era’. We will be exploring the changes that are having an impact on the work of equality, diversity and inclusion, including the shift in social and cultural attitudes towards some parts of society too.

HDN London Mentoring Coordinator

We are currently advertising for someone to coordinate our mentoring programmes in London and the South East. More information is available on our website [here](#) and please pass on to anyone who may be interested.

Best wishes



Sallie Bridgen
Chief Executive



Alison Burns
Chief Executive

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Council stock reduces by 10% in seven years

Government rejects Lords amendments

HCA-backed £1bn housing fund launches

Cap 'threatens health and care integration'

Call to make recruiters responsible for housing migrant workers safely

DCLG: Tenancies change will not hit protected groups

Equality & Diversity News

[Council stock reduces by 10% in seven years](#)

29th April, *Inside Housing*

The amount of council-owned housing stock in England has fallen by 10% in seven years, according to figures from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The latest figures show the number of council-owned homes dropped by nearly 10% between 2009 and 2015. There were 1.6 million council-owned properties in 2015, a 1.5% decline on figures from 2014 and a 9.7% drop from 2009.

[Government rejects Lords amendments](#)

29th April, *Inside Housing*

The government has rejected a number of the House of Lords' amendments to the Housing and Planning Bill, but has introduced some concessions to reflect concerns raised by peers. Ahead of the 'ping pong' stage of the Housing and Planning Bill, the government has considered the Lords' amendments. Peers had voted for an amendment to allow councils to keep part of the higher-value void payment if they could demonstrate social housing was needed in their area; the government has rejected this amendment.

[HCA-backed £1bn housing fund launches](#)

3rd May, *Inside Housing*

A new £1bn fund to help councils build 10,000 mixed-tenure homes has been launched with the support of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Kier Living has joined forces with fund manager Cheyne Capital and the Housing Growth Partnership – a joint venture between the HCA and Lloyds Bank – to launch the New Communities Partnership. The new fund will offer finance to housing providers, in particular councils, to develop housing schemes without government grant. It says it can finance schemes with any tenure split – including private sale, social rent, discounted rent and shared ownership – based on local need.



[Cap 'threatens health and care integration'](#)

4th May, *Inside Housing*

Housing bodies in Scotland have warned the 'Local Housing Allowance cap' could derail the country's health and social care integration agenda. The Scottish Government recently brought the integration of health and social care into law through the Public Bodies (Joint Working Scotland) Act 2014, which requires NHS organisations and councils to pool their budgets for health and social care. However, Fanchea Kelly, chief executive of Blackwood Housing Association, said the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) cap could jeopardise this aim. Supported housing providers are expected to help by providing housing adapted to their needs. However, providers are concerned the LHA cap could make their development plans unviable, as benefit levels would not cover the higher costs of specialist housing.

[Call to make recruiters responsible for housing migrant workers safely](#)

4th May, *the Guardian*

Anti-slavery agencies point to a 'gap' in law after finding that Staffline Group suggested sub-standard lodgings to workers. This "gap" in the law currently allows employment agencies who take on migrant workers avoid responsibility for helping them find safe housing. The call comes after it emerged that workers crammed into a dangerous disused showroom in north Wales had been suggested the accommodation by one of the UK's biggest employment agencies.

[DCLG: Tenancies change will not hit protected groups](#)

5th May, *Inside House*

The phasing out of lifetime tenancies will not negatively impact protected demographic groups overall, the government has said. In its equalities impact assessment published yesterday, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) assessed the potential

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Government in talks with councils over build freedoms

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Rents continue to rise across the UK and in London

Homelessness duty 'would cost councils £44m'

impact of the policy on several demographic groups. It said: "While it is possible that there may be some negative impacts on some members of protected groups, for instance increasing concerns about future security of tenure where their housing need is marginal, this is outweighed by the wider benefits to protected groups as a whole.

[Drop in claimants hit by benefit cap](#)

5th May, Inside Housing

The number of people hit by the benefit cap fell by nearly 13% between 2015 and 2016, new government figures reveal today. According to statistics published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), 20,189 households had their benefit capped in February this year – 2,904 (12.5%) fewer than in February 2015. A total of 66% (13,300) of households affected by the cap are single-parent families. Since the reform came into force, 41% of those who moved off the cap have moved into work, the statistics reveal.

[Ministers again reject Lords' Housing Bill changes](#)

6th May, Inside Housing

The government has again rejected peers' amendments on Starter Homes and forced council sales as the deadlock over the Housing and Planning Bill continues. On Wednesday, the House of Lords voted for amendments giving councils more freedom over whether or not to build Starter Homes instead of other forms of affordable housing, and allow them to keep cash from sales to build replacements.

[Government in talks with councils over build freedoms](#)

6th May, Inside Housing

Ministers are in discussions with local authority leaders about how councils can work together to speed up housebuilding. Proposals being discussed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Local Government Association (LGA) include giving greater flexibility for councils to spend their Right to Buy capital receipts outside their own areas. The LGA is also

lobbying to maximise the amount of funding it is able to retain from the forced sale of council homes under the Housing and Planning Bill. The bill, which is going through parliament, will introduce a levy on councils based on the estimated value of their higher-value, empty stock.

[Khan pledges housing 'opportunity' for Londoners](#)

9th May, Inside Housing

Sadiq Khan has promised a "decent and affordable home" for every Londoner, after winning the mayoral election. Mr Khan has pledged to ensure 50% of homes in new developments are affordable and establish a new not-for-profit lettings agency. Tony Pidgley, chair of developer Berkeley Group, criticised the 50% target, saying it could 'stop the housing market'.

[Rents continue to rise across the UK and in London](#)

5th May, the Guardian

Latest figures show average rent outside London rose to £764 a month, while within the capital it hit £1,543. The average cost of renting a property outside London rose by 5.1% in the 12 months to April, while tenants in the capital faced a 7.7% increase, according to the latest figures from referencing firm Home Let.

[Homelessness duty 'would cost councils £44m'](#)

10th May, Inside Housing

Introducing a new homelessness prevention duty would initially cost English councils £44m a year in total, a report has found. Today's provisional research findings, undertaken by academics and published by Crisis, found that local authorities would spend in total £43.9m a year on homelessness prevention under the new scheme. However, it found that these extra costs would eventually be offset by £46.8m a year due to fewer full homelessness duty cases, because people would get help quicker. The DCLG has not confirmed whether or not it would match new legislation with extra money for councils.

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DCLG would fund homelessness duty if introduced

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House of Lords committee on Government proposals to scrap Human Rights Act

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CIH: Low LHA rates lock out claimants

[Government loses vote on higher-value home levy](#)

10th May, Inside Housing

The House of Lords has again voted to ensure councils have enough money from high value sales to replace social housing. Despite heavy pressure from Conservative peers to withdraw his amendment to the Housing and Planning Bill, crossbench peer Lord Bob Kerslake forced a vote which he won by 256 votes to 245. The amendment requires ministers to allow councils to keep enough of the receipt from the sale to fund a replacement and that ministers consider social housing in this decision.

[DCLG would fund homelessness duty if introduced](#)

11th May, Inside Housing

The government would provide funding for councils to enable them to comply with a proposed new duty to prevent homelessness. Inside Housing revealed in January that ministers are considering a change to the law in England to bring in the new duty, which already exists in Wales. A source close to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) today confirmed the government would fund any new burdens placed on local authorities as a result of the proposed change.

[Why council waiting lists are shrinking, despite more people in need of homes](#)

12th May, the Guardian

The number of families on lists for council housing has fallen because of stricter rules on who can apply. The number of people on waiting lists for council housing stands at 1,240,855 in England, while in Scotland 173,587 applicants are on local authority waiting lists, with demand in some areas far higher: there are 24,909 applicants in the city of Edinburgh. But despite more people in need of homes, waiting lists are going down, not up.

[House of Lords committee on Government proposals to scrap Human Rights Act](#)

12th May, Equality and Diversity Forum

The House of Lords European Union Committee has heavily criticised Government proposals to scrap the Human Rights Act and replace it with a British Bill of Rights in their report released in May 2016. Committee chair Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws, said of the government proposal: "The more evidence we heard on this issue the more convinced we became that the Government should think again about its proposals for a British Bill of Rights. The time is now right for it to do so."

[NAO: 'Too many in hospital rather than at home'](#)

26th May, Inside Housing

A public spending watchdog has warned there are too many older people in hospital who do not need to be there, amid calls for a greater role for housing associations in tackling the problem. The National Audit Office has today published a report showing 1.2m bed days were lost to 'delayed discharge' of people from acute hospitals in 2015, up 31% in two years. The NAO estimates the problem is costing the NHS £820m a year. The findings, published today, are set to renew calls for stronger links between housing, social care and health provision.

[CIH: Low LHA rates lock out claimants](#)

13th May, Inside Housing

Housing benefit rates paid to claimants renting privately have fallen well below actual market rents - leaving claimants with no access to housing. Since 2011, Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates have been supposed to reflect the lowest 30% of market rents, but due to a series of caps it has not risen as fast as rents in many areas. This means claimants in some areas - particularly those under 35 who can only claim the rate for a shared room - cannot afford to rent at all and may face street homelessness. The report will raise concerns among housing associations, with social sector tenants' benefit limited to LHA rates from

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10% rise in
Universal Credit
claimants

DWP to change
Universal Credit
procedures

Starter Homes to eat
up affordable supply

April 2018. In some areas - particularly those of low demand - the shared room rate will be well below existing social rents, meaning tenants on benefits will struggle to pay.

[10% rise in Universal Credit claimants](#)

19th May, Inside Housing

The number of people claiming Universal Credit rose by 10% between March and April this year, official statistics reveal. Figures published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) yesterday show there were 247,801 people claiming the benefit on 14 April – 20,930 more than the previous month in 2016. Universal Credit, the government's flagship welfare reform, rolls six benefit payments into one. Eight million people are expected to be claiming Universal Credit by 2021 – 32 times the number currently claiming the benefit.

[DWP to change Universal Credit procedures](#)

16th May, Inside Housing

The government has pledged to improve Universal Credit procedures this summer, following concerns from social landlords that they are frequently not informed that their tenants are claiming the benefit. Social landlords have raised concerns about problems with the system, including letters arriving late or going missing in the post. One housing association senior employee said the problems made it hard to establish which tenants are claiming Universal Credit and therefore receiving direct payment of benefit. This has led to difficulties supporting tenants with the transition to help prevent arrears.

[Starter Homes to eat up affordable supply](#)

19th May, Inside Housing

A third of councils to respond to an Inside Housing survey have revealed their entire affordable housing planning requirement could be swallowed up by Starter Homes. The exclusive findings from 97 English councils are the first major indication of the extent to which Starter Homes could squeeze out other forms of affordable housing, such as affordable rent and shared ownership.

A spokesperson for the Local Government Association (LGA) said the government's 20% Starter Homes proposal leaves "very little capability for building new affordable rented homes needed in many areas".

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Dementia Care and LGBT Communities: A Good Practice Paper

Hatching a plan for older people's housing

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European Islamophobia report published

Mental health service interventions for people who sleep rough

Care provision fit for a future climate

Dementia and housing: An assessment tool for local commissioning

Publications



[Dementia Care and LGBT Communities: A Good Practice Paper](#)

28th April

This paper, which the National Care Foundation in partnership with The National LGBT Partnership and the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group has produced, focuses on the needs of the LGBT communities, exploring how care professionals can provide more appropriate support.

[Hatching a plan for older people's housing](#)

5th May, Housing Lin

This viewpoint looks at the future role of planning in this changing context, suggesting that a comprehensive review of planning practice relating to older people's housing could help meet housing needs across all generations.

[Predicting and managing demand in social care: Discussion paper](#)

10th May, Housing Lin

This discussion paper from the Institute of Public Care offers a personal view from John Bolton about how councils with responsibility for adult social care can more effectively predict and manage demand for their services.

[European Islamophobia report published](#)

12th May, EDF

The first edition of the annual European Islamophobia Report (EIR) was published in May 2016. It recommends that Islamophobia be recognised as a crime and included in national statistics across Europe. The study looks at employment sector, education, politics, media, internet, the justice system and networks.

[Mental health service interventions for people who sleep rough](#)

11th of May, Housing Lin

This report has been developed by Lambeth Council in partnership with South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, Thames Reach and the Greater London Authority. The report explores:

- the risks associated with rough sleeping
- the use of the Mental Capacity Act
- the use of the Mental Health Act
- raising safeguarding adults alerts.

[Care provision fit for a future climate](#)

12th May, Housing Lin

This new JRF report by Oxford Brookes University and the Universities of Manchester and Lancaster, is one of the first studies to examine the risks of overheating in the UK care sector. It found that there are already overheating risks in care homes today, which will be exacerbated by climate change. It recommends that designers, development teams, care home managers and staff need to recognise that excessive heat as well as cold can be a health risk. It also recommends enhanced regulations, standards and guidance from key national health and care bodies and central Government.

[Dementia and housing: An assessment tool for local commissioning](#)

24th May, Housing Lin

This self-assessment tool focuses on local commissioning processes and decision-making. The main principle being applied in this tool is that all available assets and resources need to be combined, both to create the conditions that reduce the risk of developing dementia, and to develop a framework of support to help those with dementia, their families and carers, to have as good a quality of life as possible.



HDN Website - Careers Page

Check out our website for the latest jobs with Orbit Group, Trident Housing Association, London & Quadrant Housing Trust, Bernicia and many more.

<http://www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk/jobs>

Practitioner Group Updates

If you or any of your colleagues are interested in joining any of the groups, please contact carla@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk. As a practitioner you are welcome to attend any of the meetings and be added to all six email groups.

Dates for the next meetings are:

North West Equality & Diversity Network for Housing Practitioners

The next Forum meeting will be held on the **20th July 2016**, Your Tung Sing, Manchester

Yorkshire and East Midlands Diversity Discussion Forum

The next Forum meeting will be held on the **20th September 2016**, venue to be confirmed.

North East Equality & Diversity Network for Housing Practitioners

The next meeting will be held on the **22nd September 2016**, Gateshead Housing, Tyne and Wear

South & South West Equality & Diversity Forum

The next Forum meeting is still to be confirmed.

Midlands Equalities Forum

The next Forum meeting will be held on the **1st July 2016**, Black Country Housing Group, Blackheath

London Diversity Group

The next Forum meeting will be held on **8th September 2016**. Thames Valley Housing, Twickenham

Upcoming Events

- [Unconscious Bias & Inclusive Management](#) - 5th July 2016, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire

For further information on the above events please visit the HDN website or contact carla@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk



The Housing Diversity Network's Equality & Diversity Briefings are produced in association with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). For further information on CLES please visit their website at www.cles.org.uk, contact Matthew Jackson on 0161 233 1928 or email Matthewjackson@cles.org.uk