

New £2m backed pilots to put more power in the hands of tenants

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20 new projects will receive a share of £2 million from the government's Social Housing Innovation Fund.

- Twenty innovative schemes across England to receive a share of £2 million to strengthen social housing tenants' voices and get problems sorted faster
- Year-long trials will test new digital and face to face support that strengthen neighbourhood leadership and influence, tackle stigma and give voices to underrepresented tenants
- Innovative projects include new AI assistance for social housing, a 'living room on wheels' for chats with housing officers and national online hub for shared ownership

Social housing residents are being put firmly centre stage in a major new government drive to get landlords to listen and involve tenants in important decisions.

By the end of April, 20 new digital and on the ground projects will have launched across the country, providing real-world fixes to issues tenants are most concerned about – ignored repairs, poor updates, slow responses and being bounced between services.

Each project will run for 12 months to road-test bold new ideas that give tenants clearer and faster ways to talk to and influence their landlords.

Thousands of tenants will be involved in the trials, which will involve testing interventions in targeted areas to see which are most successful so that the learnings from the projects can be rolled out nationwide.

Specialised help will boost their voices, including tenants who face challenges like disabilities, trauma or low digital access, so their needs are heard and met.

Strong digital and creative face to face projects will also be tested in neighbourhoods, with programmes to strengthen the presence of tenants on boards – giving residents of all ages and backgrounds the chance to lead and shape matters affecting them.

Lords Minister for Housing and Local Government Baroness Taylor said:

“We’ve doubled this fund to £2 million so we can ramp up practical, real-world interventions that strengthen tenants’ voices and ensure they are respected and taken seriously.

“The best ideas will be rolled out nationwide and tenants will shape every step, so what we take forward genuinely works to transform tenants’ experiences.”

Thanks to the government’s Social Housing Innovation Fund, announced last October, organisations who competed for new funding will now each receive a share of £2 million to get going on their projects over the next 12 months.

They will work directly with tenants to ensure projects meet real needs and reach clear goals that prove their scalability.

The fund supports the government's wider objective to turn around tenants' experiences in social housing and empower them to speak up when things go wrong, with new legislation like Awaab's Law already holding landlords to account on tenant safety.

This is alongside the government's £39 billion Social and Affordable Housing Programme, now open for business, which is delivering the biggest boost to social and affordable housing in a generation.

Further information

The Social Housing Innovation Fund has awarded 20 projects across the country. This includes:

- Belonging Begins Here (BBH): Connecting our Communities. Accent Group. £120,000.
- Trusted Voices: A Council of Elders Model for Refugee Tenant Engagement. Ashley Community & Housing Ltd. £76,442.
- Ermine Community Partnership. Lincoln City Council. £104,049.
- Connected Neighbours: New Models for tenant-landlord engagement. Clarion Housing Group. £119,110.
- Our Homes. Leeds City Council. £119,371.
- Hidden Voices to be Heard. Loconomy Ltd. £120,000.
- Amplifying Survivor Voices - Domestic Violence & Violence Against Women and Girls Residents. London Borough of Hillingdon. £120,000.
- Tenant Board Member Academy: Building Leadership from Within. Manningham House Association Limited. £70,000.
- The Tenants' Voice. National Communities Resource Centre Limited. £113,631.
- Building Safety Resident Engagement at Scale. Newham Council. £120,000.
- YouNG Networkers. Nottingham Community Housing Association. £98,889.
- A National Voice for Shared Owners. The Places Foundation (led by Shared Ownership Resources). £120,000.
- Richmond Community Ambassadors - Making a difference locally. London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. £102,316.
- Virtual Voices: Enhancing Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Engagement Through Accessible Communication. Rooftop Housing Association. £75,500.
- The G15 Residents' Group: A Model for Strategic Resident Involvement. Southern Housing (led by G15 Resident Group). £70,000.
- The LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge: tenant-led change in social housing. Stonewall Housing Association. £95,250.
- Improving resident scrutiny. Together Housing. £103,340.
- Breaking the stigma: Stronger scrutiny in social housing. Vico Homes. £72,368.
- Front room on wheels. Wigan Borough Council. £70,000.
- Wythenshawe Enabled - Powered by Difference. Wythenshawe Community Housing Group. £95,900.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-2m-backed-pilots-to-put-more-power-in-the-hands-of-tenants>