



Housing Rights Service (HRS) believes everyone should have a home. We work to improve lives by tackling homelessness and housing problems in Northern Ireland. Having a home is critical to the well being of individuals, families and the wider community in which we all live.

HRS helps to inform developments in local housing legislation, policy and practice by providing client focused comment. Our policy work is based on client experiences and, where possible, we involve service users in policy development and public affairs work. We also implement a rolling public affairs programme to maximise the opportunities to influence policy decision makers.

A number of priority areas have been identified for our policy work over the coming period. They are structured around the four core themes contained within the Northern Ireland Housing Strategy.

Access to Decent, Affordable, Sustainable Homes

- Ensuring private rented sector offers a more viable and attractive tenure
- Advocating for initiatives to help struggling homeowners and tenants, including a fair rent setting policy for social housing.
- Advocating for initiatives to help mitigate impact of welfare reform e.g. guidance on Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Ensuring a fair and effective system for social housing allocation.
- Improving standards for the management and maintenance of rented homes.

Meeting the Needs and Supporting the Most Vulnerable

- Making sure people in greatest housing need get the right support at the right time.
- Advocating for a statutory assessment of support needs under homelessness law.



Getting the Structures Right

- Ensuring tenants and service users are involved in shaping the future delivery of housing.
- Ensuring homelessness and support services are prioritised and structured effectively to deliver maximise impact.
- Advocating the need for better regulation, with increased emphasis on tenant services, and the establishment of an independent housing regulator.

Driving Regeneration and Sustaining Communities through Housing

- Supporting initiatives to bring empty homes back into use.
- Promoting shared housing as an integral part of the system for social housing allocation and delivery.

With slow economic recovery, continued public expenditure cuts and implementation of welfare reform our policy work will continue to focus on sustaining homes and improving housing options. We will work to promote the development of government policy and initiatives which support people at risk of losing their home and which provide access to good quality, affordable housing options.



For further information:

Nicola McCrudden
Policy & Communications Manager
(e) nicola@housingrights.org.uk
(t) 028 90267919
www.housingrights.org.uk/policy



@HousingRightsNI
@HousingPolicyNI

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service