

Glossary

Affordable housing – housing for rent or sale, including shared ownership, at below market levels. Affordable housing includes:

- social rented housing for which guideline Target Rents are set through the national rent regime
- Affordable Rent housing and
- Intermediate housing

provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision¹.

Affordable Rent – rents (including service charges, where applicable) up to a maximum of 80% of local Market Rent. Most new social housing now being developed by Registered Providers with government funding under the Affordable Homes Programme will be let at Affordable Rents. Affordable Rent homes are allocated in the same way as properties let at usual social housing rents, i.e. through Homemove.

The council's draft Tenancy Strategy expects rents for Affordable Rent housing in the city to be capped at the lower of either 80% market rent level or the Local Housing Allowance housing benefit limit, to ensure Affordable Rent homes remain truly affordable to local tenants of registered providers of social housing.

Affordable Home Ownership – Low Cost Home Ownership schemes to help people take their first steps onto the housing ladder who cannot purchase on the open market due to lack of affordability and problems obtaining a mortgage. For example, Homebuy enables first time buyers to enter the housing market by buying a 25% to 75% share of a property and paying rent on the remainder.

Affordable Housing Programme – the Homes and Communities Agency's Affordable Homes Programme 2011-15 is a programme of investment for Registered Providers to increase the supply of new affordable homes in England. This programme reflects a move away from central government block grant funding for new development and its replacement with private finance funding and the Affordable Rent model. The extra rent enables the housing provider to borrow more money to pay for building the home.

Most homes in the programme will be at Affordable Rents, with some for affordable home ownership, supported housing and in some circumstances, social rent. An announcement is awaited on what will replace this programme in 2015.

Code for Sustainable Homes – a national sustainability standard developed by the Government for the design and construction of new homes as part of building assessment tools called BREEAM (Building Research Establishment environmental

¹ National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 DCLG

assessment method). The Code rates the whole home as a complete package, measuring its sustainability against:

- energy/CO2
- pollution
- water
- health and well-being
- materials
- management
- surface water run-off
- ecology and
- waste.

It scores each dwelling within a scale from Level 1 (the lowest) to Level 6 (the highest, achieving Zero Carbon status). Even the lowest level is above standards required by Building Regulations.

Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 – Code Level 4 homes have, for example, to be 44% more energy efficient than required by the 2006 Buildings Regulations and 25% more energy efficient than under the 2010 Buildings Regulations.

Estate Regeneration Programme – a medium term programme to provide new sustainable and affordable homes in the city and improve some of our most disadvantaged council estates. The council's programme aims to maximise opportunities to build new homes on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and other council land, both using infill sites of vacant land and buildings and undertaking larger scale redevelopment of existing estates in need of improvement. Its name - New Homes for Neighbourhoods - emphasises its focus on producing new homes and involving local residents in improving their neighbourhoods.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) – the government agency that allocates funding to deliver new Affordable social housing in England. Since April 2012 the HCA also regulates registered providers under the Regulatory Framework for social housing in England.

Intermediate housing – homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not Affordable Rent housing.

Lifetime Homes standard – a set of 16 design criteria for building accessible, flexible and easily adaptable homes to meet the broadest range of housing need and enable simple and cost-saving future adaptations if and when required:

1. wider parking spaces for easier access to vehicles
2. a convenient level or sloping footpath from car space to home
3. level or gently sloping access to homes rather than steps
4. a level threshold at the entrance door
5. wider, shallower, 'easy going' stairs
6. doorways and hallways wide enough for a wheelchair
7. basic wheelchair access and turning room throughout the property
8. entrance level living room accessible to all
9. potential for an entrance level bedspace
10. entrance level wc and drainage to fit an accessible shower if required

11. bathroom and cloakroom walls strong enough to take grab rails etc if required
12. provision to allow a through floor or stair lift if required
13. potential route for ceiling tracking hoist between bedroom and bathroom
14. bathroom layout giving easy access to facilities
15. windows and handles at a convenient height for all and low level cill in living room so a seated person can see out
16. sockets, switches and controls for day to day use at a comfortable height for all users.

Low Cost Home Ownership – there are a number of schemes designed to help residents buy an affordable home, including shared ownership, First Buy equity loans and New Buy. These schemes are to help first time buyers, key workers and social tenants who would otherwise be unable to buy a home. They are generally open to households earning less than £60,000 a year.

Market Rent – generally, local private rented sector rents. The RICS definition of Market Rent is used for calculating Affordable Rents as a proportion of Market Rent: ‘Market rent is the estimated amount for which a property, or space within a property, should lease (let) on the date of valuation between a willing lessor and a willing lessee on appropriate lease terms in an arm’s-length transaction after proper marketing wherein the parties had acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion. Whenever market rent is provided the ‘appropriate lease terms’ which it reflects should also be stated.’²

Passivhaus standard – Passivhaus homes are super insulated with a high level of air tightness, requiring up to 75% less energy for space heating than standard practice for UK new build. Passivhaus homes provide high standards of comfort and building health and the construction method can provide opportunities for young and semi-skilled people to be involved in building process.

Registered Provider (RP) – a provider of social housing registered with and regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. Registered providers include housing associations (known as private RPs) and councils with retained housing stock.

Subsidy – funding required over and above the income from the newly developed properties.

Target Rent – guideline rents set to a government formula for social rented housing owned by local authorities and private registered providers, which are substantially below local market rents. Current council tenants’ rents are being increased towards Target Rents through phased increases under ‘rent convergence’. We will start to charge full Target Rents for new council tenancies subject to approval of the HRA revenue budget

² Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) guidance on valuation for Affordable Rent

