



**trimmerCS**

***Decent Homes -  
Launch of New Sector Study***

***Presented by Greg Trimmer***

# Third review of HA Progress: Headlines

- HA's are working hard to meet the DHS
- Nearly all are confident they will meet 2010 target
- 83 HAs participated in our research
  - They manage or own 29% of RSL stock
- Most are not just aiming for DHS
  - They are targeting DHS Plus



- Review of the Decent Homes Standard
- What are the 2006 changes?
- Will we make the target?
- What sort of works are being procured?
- Do we really know which homes fail?

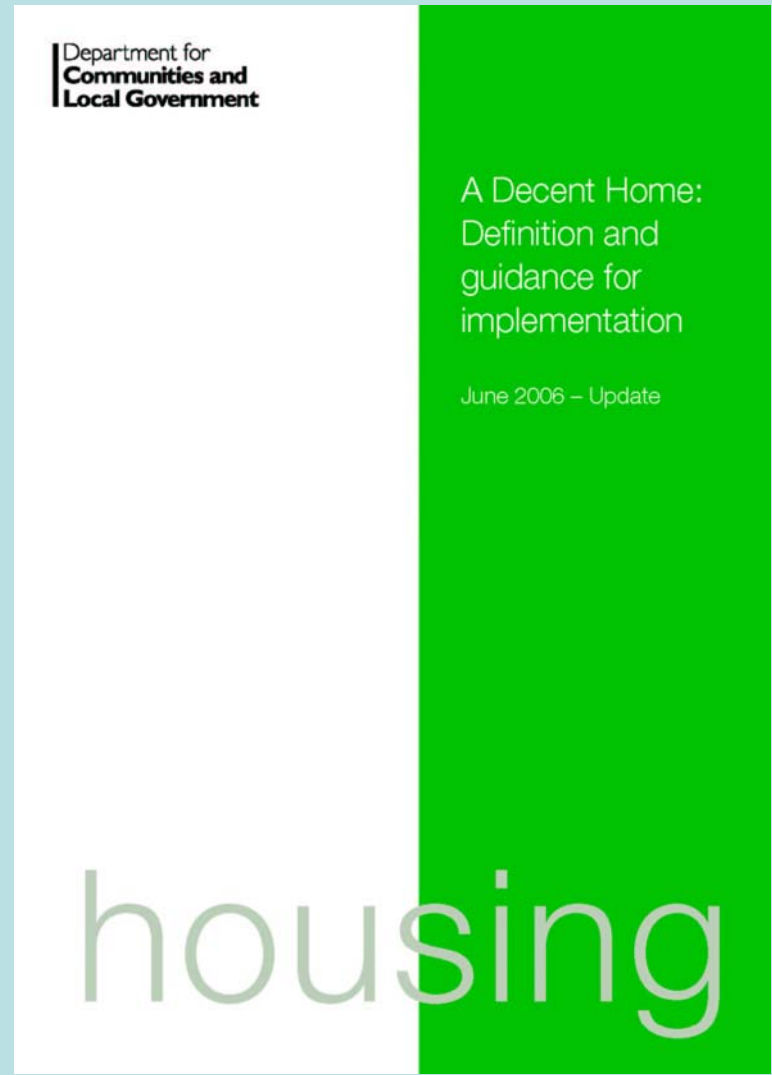


• Involving tenants

*Decent Homes*

# Four Criteria

1. Fit for habitation
2. Not Old *and* in Disrepair
3. Reasonably Modern Facilities
4. Thermal Comfort



# Assessing the Standard

- Old **and** in Disrepair
- Modern facilities
  - Modern Kitchen
  - Kitchen has adequate space and layout
  - Modern Bathroom
  - Appropriate location for bath and wc
  - Adequate noise insulation – external noise only
  - Common entrances of flats
  - **3 failures required**
- Thermal comfort
  - Central heating and insulation



# What's New?

- HHSRS
- Plumbing is now a key component
- Components are listed
- Physical constraints qualify for exemptions
- Warm Air and underfloor heating count as central heating
- Partial central heating is acceptable
- Supported housing and older person housing can have landlord controlled heating systems



# Our Research 2006

- 83 responses from 180 surveys issued
  - 550,000 homes covered by responses
- How are you programming Decent Homes
  - And why are you doing it that way?
- What is the size – and cost – of your decent homes programme?
- Are you doing DHS+ ?
  - So what do you mean by the “*plus*”
- How have you collected stock data?
- Procurement, disposals and tenant consultation



# Findings

- Every respondent tells us they will make 2010
  - Even the 5 RSL's which haven't started yet!
- There still needs to be an acceleration of procurement before 2010
- Clear message is that DHS has led to improved stock condition data
  - But re-surveys frequently inconsistent!
- RSLs seem to be doing better than LAs
  - on the whole



# Findings - 2

- Most HAs offer DHS+
  - But everyone has a different DHS+ standard!
  - Often used to simplify the modern facilities test
  - Also used to reduce the “official” life expectancies
- DHS being funded mainly from rents
  - But increasing interest in selective disposals



# Findings 3

- Will major renewal delay DHS?
  - Mixed picture; most HAs active in renewal pathfinders say no delay to DHS
  - Will HAs apply for waivers? Our research pre-dated the waiver concept!
- Resident involvement
  - Survey suggests high levels of participation
  - Generally few tenant refusals of DHS work



# Are we on target?

- Largely – yes
  - No HA's expect to fail
  - A few ALMO's started late
    - not of their own volition!
  - A few LA's have major financing issues
- Waivers now available
  - But expect searching questions before you get one!



# What works?

- Main focus has been on Kitchens and Bathrooms
  - Most of these contracts have now been procured
- Insulation
  - Major quick win
  - Timing influenced by availability of grants
- Heating
  - Little work apart from boiler replacements
- Major work to fabric
  - The “difficult jobs”
  - Focussing mind on disposals instead of work
- 56% of respondents are doing DHS-Plus



# How much do we know?

- Clearest conclusion from the research
  - Stock data has much improved!
  - Stock data nr 1 influence on DHS implementation!
- Sample sizes are improving
  - In 80% of RSLs surveyed
- Still limited options for IT



# Healthy and Safe

- Out with the 10 point test
  - In with HHSRS
- DHS now tests for category 1 hazards
  - A HHSRS hazard score  $>1000$  = Cat 1
- More homes now count as unfit
  - 1 million unfit homes in 2001
  - now 4 million homes have cat 1 hazards
  - but most of these are not in the social sector (only 680,000!)
- 2/3rds of RSLs collecting HHSRS data
  - 17% say it increases failures; 40% say no change



# Conclusions

- Decent Homes Standard is a very low standard
  - Can we “*go beyond the challenge*”?
- Timing coincides with other maintenance pressures for many HAs
- HC and Audit Commission ***will insist*** on achieving the standard
- We have to get on with it – *and we are...*



***However difficult you think achieving the Decent Homes Standard is...***

***None of us are in housing to offer low standards to people in housing need!***





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*thank you for listening.*