Submission:

A proposal for a strong and sustainable future for supported and sheltered housing

The Federation has consulted extensively with our housing association members and stakeholders to develop our recommendation for a secure, sustainable funding model for supported and sheltered housing. This paper sets out the sector’s views in advance of an anticipated announcement by the Government on their strategic direction of travel for supported housing.
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1. Executive summary

The National Housing Federation is the voice of England’s housing associations. The sector is the largest provider of supported and sheltered housing in the country, delivering homes and services to close to half a million people across England. We provide invaluable support to a wide range of people, from those with disabilities to those fleeing domestic violence, from older people to those who are homeless. As well as transforming lives and allowing people to live independently and with dignity, these homes and services deliver significant savings to the public purse. On average they save the taxpayer close to £940 per person every year.¹

Currently, the availability of specialist and supported housing is failing to keep up with demand. This is compounded by the uncertainty created by changes to the benefits system. We are therefore very pleased ministers are reviewing how supported and sheltered housing is funded and look forward to working with the Government to ensure these homes and services are sustainable, of a high quality and offer great value for money.

To ensure people get the support they need to live independently and with dignity, supported and sheltered housing needs to be put on a stable footing. This paper sets out our recommendation for how that could be achieved, reflecting the collective view of the housing association sector. The response from supported housing providers to our consultation has been unprecedented: over 200 organisations fed in their views through our 13 consultation events, and 127 submitted a formal response to our written consultation.

Through our extensive consultation with housing associations we have identified three clear principles that should underpin a new funding model. These reflect the needs of the Government, supported housing providers and those who rely on these services. As a result of reforms to the funding of supported housing:

1. No one with support needs will become homeless or end up in unsuitable accommodation.
2. The actual housing and support cost of delivering a quality service will be fully met, and will be flexible enough to meet changing levels of demand.
3. The taxpayer and those living in supported and sheltered will have evidence of the quality and value for money of the services being funded.

We also propose that the Government incorporates the following considerations when developing a new model:

¹ Financial benefits of investing in specialist housing for vulnerable and older people, Frontier Economics (2010).
- A focus on long-term security for providers, allowing them to continue to invest in new and existing supported housing services.

- Remove the threat of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) cap to give providers confidence to continue developing supported housing schemes while the funding system is reformed.

- Work closely with the supported housing sector in developing a new funding model.

- Departments across the Government work together and support the new funding model in order to provide a secure future for supported housing, reflecting the benefits it provides across the many arms of government.

- That sufficient time is given to manage the transition to any new system, and that in the meantime the current funding arrangements – without the LHA cap - continue until the transition is completed.

Building on these principles our final recommendation is that:

- **Housing costs** are met in a way which gives long-term certainty to funding for providers, to enable continued investment in homes and services that meet tenants’ needs. To do this the Government should continue to fund actual rents and eligible service charges through the mainstream benefits system with checks on who can receive this funding via a new approach to registration for providers.

- **Support costs** should be funded from a central government budget, which different departments could feed into – setting the outcomes they would like to see for the money that they are putting in. Some of this money would be distributed at a national level and some at a local level to ensure spending meets local needs and complements any health and care commissioning. Additional safeguards would need to be built in to protect any local funding.

We look forward to working closely with the Government to discuss this recommendation and help develop a sustainable model to ensure supported and sheltered housing is funded for the long term.
2. **A systematic approach: how we came to our ideas**

Our proposals have been developed through extensive collaboration with our members and demonstrates the importance of getting any future framework right.

This consultation has followed three key streams:

- A **written consultation**: setting out overarching principles and asking for organisations’ views and priorities.
- Member consultation events: we held nine different events across the country for our housing association members.
- Subject specific roundtables with leading stakeholder organisations. These were focused on:
  - mental health and learning disability, jointly organised with Mencap and Rethink Mental Illness;
  - older people, jointly organised with Housing LIN;
  - homelessness, jointly organised with Homeless Link;
  - local government, alongside the Local Government Association (LGA).

We were delighted to welcome around 400 individuals from more than 200 organisations to our consultation events and received 127 formal responses to our written consultation from housing associations and interested stakeholder organisations.

This process was overseen by a task and finish group of housing associations recruited through an open competition and supported by a project team at the National Housing Federation. The recommendations we make here have been reviewed and approved by our task and finish group.

3. **Why we need a new approach to funding supported and sheltered housing**

Supported housing makes good economic sense. It delivers average net savings to the public purse of around £940 per resident per year. Depending on the type of scheme, the level of savings can be even greater; for example for people with learning disabilities the saving is £6,764 per resident per year. Research undertaken in 2009 showed a net financial benefit of the Supporting People programme of £3.41bn per year against an overall investment of £1.61bn. A new, sustainable approach to funding supported housing is needed to ensure the benefits of supported housing are maximised and positive outcomes for the people that live in it continue to be delivered.

The availability of specialist and supported housing is failing to keep up with existing and increasing future demand. This leaves older and vulnerable people in housing that does not suit

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2 See section 7 of this document, supporting information, for more details on our task and finish group.
3 Financial benefits of investing in specialist housing for vulnerable and older people, Frontier Economics (2010).
4 Research into the financial benefits of the Supporting People programme, Capgemini (2009).
their needs and which does not deliver the integrated care and support which is so vital for their independence. It is estimated that around 16,000 more specialist homes are needed every year for older people alone to close this gap by 2030. This does not include the extra homes required for the thousands of others with support needs such as those with learning disabilities or mental health problems.

The challenge is compounded by the Government’s planned Local Housing Allowance cap. While we welcome the Government’s decision to delay to the introduction of the cap in supported housing for new tenants by a year, as it stands it will still be introduced in April 2018. Housing associations must factor this into their future planning now; meaning schemes are no longer viable so are being cancelled and delayed. If the cap remains unchanged, we know that from April 2018:

- 156,000 units of existing supported and sheltered housing in the sector will have to close – 41% of all existing schemes.
- 80% of the total existing development pipeline will remain un-developed – over 9,270 specialist homes.
- Almost a quarter (24%) of supported housing providers told us that all of their supported and sheltered units were at risk of becoming unviable and closing.

A strong and sustainable future funding mechanism for supported and sheltered housing is essential for the people that live in supported housing, for those that provide it, and for the Government. Our proposal seeks to set out how this can best be achieved.

4. The benefits of the approach we are recommending

Our approach will provide a sustainable funding model for supported and sheltered housing ensuring that:

- **People with support needs can access high-quality services to help them live independently.** Our proposed approach would give vulnerable people the security of knowing that they can continue to afford to live in housing that meets their needs within a system still based on individual entitlement. By providing a secure and sustainable income stream for housing and support costs, our approach will enable providers to continue to offer these essential services as well as innovate and develop new approaches.

- **The Government, commissioners and providers can be assured about the quality and value for money of services as well as the outcomes that are achieved.** The housing

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5 Strategic Housing for Older People, Housing LIN (2011).
6 National Housing Federation Analysis.
The association sector is proud of the housing and support it delivers, and of the lives it changes across a broad range of client groups. These services deliver a net saving to the taxpayer and our approach includes a range of safeguards to ensure that quality and value for money is assured throughout the system, including identifying and tackling potential abuse. Coupled with this, our proposed outcomes-focused national support budget will ensure that the Government can clearly set out and deliver on its ambitions for support services.

- The new supported housing schemes needed across the country are developed, with flexibility for housing associations and other providers to innovate. Meeting actual rents and eligible service charges via the benefits system provides the highest possible certainty for providers and residents. Our members have told us that they value the link between benefit income and individual entitlement. This gives them and their residents certainty that housing costs will be met once someone is offered a place within their schemes. This is key to ensuring that they can leverage the private finance required to invest in new development.

5. How our approach would work

We believe that a secure and sustainable future funding mechanism for supported housing will be one in which:

- actual rents and eligible service charges are funded via Universal Credit and Pension Credit, and
- there is an enhanced budget for support, funded via a national outcomes fund and delivered locally.

As part of this approach there would need to be:

- a new approach to registration and regulation for supported housing providers, and
- additional protections to safeguard local funding streams.

The approach we have outlined is intended to apply to all supported and sheltered housing. However we recognise that not all aspects will apply in the same way to all different types of provision. We therefore set out below how this might apply in particular to:

- sheltered housing, and
- short term transitional services

5.1 Housing costs

Within a secure and sustainable future funding model we believe that actual rents and eligible services charges for supported and sheltered housing should be funded via Universal Credit or Pension Credit for those of pensionable age.
The key elements of this approach would be:

- actual rents and eligible service charges funded via the benefits system through either Universal Credit or Pension Credit depending on the claimants age
- a new definition and set of criteria should be developed to clarify which housing should be eligible for enhanced payments, as a minimum this should include housing currently defined as ‘specified’
- all providers seeking enhanced benefit payments above those available in general needs housing should be required to register with a national regulatory body
- there would not be any caps on funding available through the benefit system but a system of ‘flags’ would identify potentially excessive costs for closer scrutiny by a specialist supported housing team within Universal Credit
- eligible service charges within Universal Credit are more restrictive than the current approach. Any ‘people-focused’ housing management costs, if no longer eligible for benefits funding, should be met via funding for support services
- the default setting for payment of the housing element of Universal Credit claimants living in supported housing should be for it to paid direct to the landlord
- the threat of the LHA cap must be removed from the supported and sheltered sector.

**Why are we calling for actual rents and eligible service charges via the benefits system?**

Our members have told us that any new funding approach must give them certainty around the income stream for housing costs to give residents confidence that their home is secure and enable providers to invest in new and existing services. We believe that the only way this can be done is by continuing to fund actual rents and eligible service charges through either Universal Credit or Pension Credit. This is essential to ensuring that they can leverage the private finance required to invest in new development.

**What does this mean for the LHA cap?**

Our proposed model does not include the LHA cap and instead providers would receive actual rents and eligible service charges via the benefits system. We are clear that the threat of the LHA cap should be removed from the supported and sheltered sector in order to give providers the confidence needed to continue developing schemes while the funding system is reformed.

**How does our approach provide safeguards around government spending?**

Our approach would see supported and sheltered housing providers registering with an independent regulatory body if they want to access benefit funding at above the level available in general needs. This would ensure that only those services that meet agreed criteria can access enhanced funding for housing costs. To enable the Universal Credit system to manage the risk of excessive claims we believe that there needs to be a mechanism of cost ‘flags’. These ‘flags’ would need to be sensitively developed to identify potentially excessive costs but enable standard claims to be processed automatically within the Universal Credit system. A specialist supported housing team within Universal Credit would investigate such flagged claims, in conjunction with the regulator if necessary. By using existing Universal Credit
regulations around service charges, which are much more prescriptive than Housing Benefit, there would be much greater transparency for providers, commissioners and the Government around what service charges are eligible for funding via the benefit system.

**What existing housing costs might not be eligible for funding via the benefit system?**

Universal Credit operates very differently to Housing Benefit and some changes to what is funded will be needed to facilitate the payment of housing costs in this way. Universal Credit has an exhaustive list of eligible service charges meaning that only those costs which are listed in the guidance are eligible to be funded via Universal Credit. In our interpretation people-focused housing management activities, which for some providers are currently funded via Housing Benefit, would not be eligible service charges in Universal Credit. These kinds of services are often integral to the successful management of schemes and we strongly believe that people-focused service charges which cease to be eligible within Universal Credit should be funded alongside support services. Fully funding these costs will be particularly important where there is a managing agent arrangement in place. We discuss this further below in our proposals around funding support costs.

**What about payment of housing costs direct to claimants within Universal Credit?**

We have been working with the Department for Work and Pensions to develop the concept of ‘trusted partner’ status whereby social landlords can indicate that a Universal Credit claimant may be vulnerable and would benefit from payment of rent direct to the landlord. We would want to see this approach mirrored within supported housing where, because of the nature of the client group, we would anticipate a high proportion of benefit payments made directly to the landlord.

**How might the transition be carried out?**

Universal Credit is being rolled out across the country and we recommend that transitioning supported housing into Universal Credit is also done on the same ‘test and learn’ basis. Service charge eligibility between the old and new approach may prove complicated for some providers and alternative local funding streams will need to be put in place to fund actual costs which are no longer eligible for benefits funding. The transition should be done on a phased basis by local authority and only at a time when arrangements are in place to make up any shortfall in funding for schemes. This would also allow providers time to reconfigure services if necessary.

5.2 **Support costs**

Any proposal for a sustainable future for supported and sheltered housing must look at all the elements of revenue funding for services, not just housing costs. Funding for support services is a key component of a viable supported housing model and in many areas it is at risk as local authorities find themselves taking tough decisions in the face of ever-tightening budgets.

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7 See [Universal Credit Service Charges – Guidance for Landlords](#) for more information.
We propose that the support element of supported housing should be funded via a national support budget overseen by a number of different government departments reflecting the benefits provided by supported and sheltered housing across the many arms of the Government.

The national support budget would be distributed via two routes:

- directly to local authorities to administer in line with nationally agreed parameters to fund a broad range of support services in line with local need, and
- at a national level for highly specialised services where the need is identified nationally not locally. This route could also be used to provide a streamlined way to fund support within very low level preventative services, such as sheltered housing.

How will outcomes be addressed within this system?
At national level, a suite of high-level outcome indicators would be developed based on relevant outcomes for different groups of people such as people experiencing homelessness, or living with mental health issues, learning or physical disabilities, addiction issues, women at risk of domestic violence, teenage parents, and ex-offenders. Where funding is distributed locally, commissioning local authorities would be asked to work with their housing and support providing partners to establish local priorities within this framework, clearly linked to local needs.

Given the nature of the client groups served by supported housing, their needs and their aspirations, it is critical that outcomes measurements reflect the journey an individual is travelling, rather than a more blunt assessment. The process of defining outcomes for a particular service would depend on the type of provision and the needs of service users. Customers should be involved in designing the relevant outcomes and this would offer an opportunity to personalise service delivery to their needs.

There are several existing frameworks and indicators which are a valuable source of suitable outcomes and which could be drawn from in designing an outcomes framework for supported housing. These include:

- The Public Health Outcomes Framework
- The Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework
- The Government’s Life Chances Strategy, as this develops further
- the previous government’s Fair Chance Fund for homeless young people.

What might be funded at a local level and how might this work?
An element of the national support budget would be distributed to local authorities to fund medium/high support services following nationally agreed parameters and aligned to local need. Through this approach the Government would set the national priorities and outcomes

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that it wants to see delivered through locally commissioned services. Initially the allocations would need to be based on existing provision but this could change over time as the system beds in. We recognise that existing services may not always reflect changing patterns of need and it might be that a national formula is required to ensure some redistribution across areas over time.

**What might be commissioned nationally and how might this work?**

Whilst we believe that the vast majority of services are best commissioned at a local level we recognise that there are some specialist services which might be more appropriately procured nationally, for example human trafficking services. Some funding from the national support budget could be retained at a national level to secure these kinds of specialist services. Additionally a streamlined national route could also be used to fund very low level support in sheltered housing. This could also be used to fund personal alarms and other technology which enables independence.

A limit on the amount of support available, or a benchmarked cost for technology, could be placed on this funding stream to ensure it remains focused on very low level, preventative support. We envisage that this national route would be used to provide a streamlined route for very low level support, not an additional funding stream for services already in receipt of local support funding.

**How would this approach ensure address quality assurance?**

National or local commissioners will agree the relevant outcomes with providers at the outset of a contract. They would monitor performance against these targets throughout the duration of the contract and this would then influence decisions around renewal of and awarding of future contracts. Outcomes appraisal would form part of an important funding evaluation loop, with the potential for this to be fed into a national facility for overall programme evaluation.

Depending on the scope of the national regulatory body, this could also have a role in scrutinising the quality of support services.

### 5.3 Regulation, registration and quality assurance

We propose that there should be an assigned regulatory body with which supported housing providers must register in order to access enhanced levels of benefit funding over and above that available to general needs organisations.

**Why are we proposing a new registration and regulatory approach for supported housing?**

We recognise that Universal Credit is a wholly different approach from Housing Benefit and it is not possible to simply import supported housing as it stands into Universal Credit. To feel confident that it can pay actual rents and service charges within a largely automated Universal Credit system the Department for Work and Pensions will need mechanisms to:

- assess which providers are eligible for benefits above general needs levels
- assess which properties are eligible for benefits above general needs levels
• identify potentially excessive claims for closer examination
• make a judgement on whether these claims are actually excessive
• trigger investigation of potentially fraudulent activity or providers.

We therefore propose that all supported housing providers seeking enhanced benefit payments be required to register with a national regulatory body. This body would register all supported housing providers seeking benefit payments above the limits placed on general needs properties and would maintain a list of eligible addresses. They could also investigate any concerns around fraud. We also recognise that there may be a need for greater quality assurance of support services in the future to ensure that they are meeting the Government’s aspirations for supported housing.

Our conversations held with the Government so far suggest that self-regulation, sector-led regulation, or local authority led regulation would not be able to deliver what is needed to give the Government the assurance it needs to agree to pay actual rents and eligible service charges via the benefits system. We therefore propose that there should be an assigned regulatory body which supported housing providers must register with to access enhanced levels of benefit funding over and above that available in general needs.

What regulation already exists within the sector?
Many providers of supported housing are already subject to monitoring and regulation for areas of their business relating to housing and/or care provision. For example, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) regulates social housing providers (mostly housing associations) in England. The agency does this to protect social housing assets, make sure that social homes remain available to tenants, and that the taxpayers’ investment in those homes is protected. In addition, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) takes the role of making sure health and social care services provide people with safe and effective care. For this reason, assurance of either housing or care services falls outside of the scope of the considerations set out here – instead, our suggested approach focuses on the support services which are so central to delivering supported housing.

What would the regulating body do?
In our view any approach to paying housing costs via Universal Credit at an enhanced rate will require a regulating body to:

• assess and register providers of supported housing that are eligible for benefits above general needs levels
• maintain a register of these providers and the properties they manage which are eligible for higher benefit payments
• assist the Universal Credit supported housing specialist team with any investigations into potentially excessive costs
• investigate any potential fraudulent activity or concerns raised by the Universal Credit team, national or local government, or others
take action to address any failure to meet required criteria, including the option of de-registration in extreme cases.

Depending on the extent of the regulating body’s powers it could also have a role in:

- maintaining a strategic overview of the quality and value for money of different schemes
- forming a key part of a feedback loop with local partners, informing both quality assurance assessments and the commissioning cycle.

**Who might undertake the role of an independent regulatory body?**

There are some existing bodies which may be in a position to deliver this function, in order to avoid the establishment of an additional administrative body. The Government should work closely with housing and support providers, and with customer representatives, to determine which organisation is best placed to carry out this function.

**How does our approach ensure services offer quality and are value for money?**

Our approach includes a range of safeguards to ensure that quality and value for money is assured throughout the system, including identifying and tackling potential abuse by:

- independent registration and regulation for supported housing providers ensuring that only those services that meet agreed criteria can access enhanced funding for housing costs
- simplification of what is funded via the benefits system through defining what service charges would be eligible within Universal Credit
- potentially excessive claims identified within the benefit system through a range of ‘flags’ to trigger further investigation of individual claims
- self-payers, who are not reliant on the support of the benefit system, who scrutinise costs within individual services
- national support budget setting out the Government’s ambitions around outcomes and ambitions for supported housing services
- local authority commissioning of services including appropriate gateways for access.

5.4 Additional protections around local funding streams

In our view there is no way in which sufficient security can be built into a wholly localised system of funding for supported housing. The proposals within this section are intended to outline some ideas which might strengthen the safeguards around an enhanced support budget in the context of actual rents and eligible service charges still being met via the benefits system.

The overarching principal of a national budget for support, set at a level to enable genuine support costs to be met locally, is essential. **A guarantee of a ringfence around this budget in perpetuity is a minimum requirement.** Beyond this, further safeguards may offer additional reassurance.
Why does any new approach to funding require additional safeguards around local funding?
Supported housing schemes rely on revenue funding for support services as a key component of a viable model. Housing associations have told us that they value the role of local commissioners yet are concerned about whether funds distributed via local authorities would actually be passed through to providers or potentially used to fund other local priorities. The experience of the Supporting People programme shows that when faced with incredibly tough decisions on where to prioritise shrinking budgets, local authorities cut un-ringfenced support funding year on year. Past experience has demonstrated that, despite best intentions, funding has been cut and lost.

We can’t risk this happening again to these vital services for the most vulnerable and put future development in doubt. Additionally, our proposed approach to funding housing costs would see some ‘people-focused’ services charges which are ineligible within Universal Credit cease to be funded via the benefits system. These costs pay for services that are vital to the provision of many supported housing and it is essential that providers can access funding to cover these costs. It is essential to any new funding model that the national support budget receives adequate funding and safeguards to ensure that these costs can be met going forward.

What steps should be taken to increase safeguards on funding at a local level?
We would be pleased to work with the Government and its partners to find the right mechanism for safeguarding support services funding, once we understand the Government’s intended approach. Creating a central budget for support funding, overseen by a number of government departments, creates a framework within which the Government can define the outcomes it seeks using local authorities to administer the funds and ensure they are targeted to where they are needed locally. There should be a ringfence around the use of this funding.

We also believe the Government could explore placing additional duties onto local government to ensure that those with housing support needs receive this support. There are a number of ways this could be done, including potentially including a duty to plan for the provision of supported housing in line with local need in future legislation. Similarly, Care Act guidance could be amended to ensure that housing support is recognised in preventing future care needs. These steps could help improve consideration of the support that is needed to address local needs but would not alone ensure that needed services are funded.

5.5 Sheltered housing
Sheltered housing is a sizeable sector, three-times larger than the rest of supported housing, providing housing with varying degrees of support for older people. Whilst some older people’s housing offers a high level of support, for example extra care housing, the vast majority of sheltered schemes offer a fairly low level of support that is sometimes limited to the provision of telecare services.

Despite this low level of support, housing costs are in general still higher than general needs housing because of the communal space and special features within the building, for example...
communal lifts. This means that an approach to paying housing costs above Local Housing Allowance will be needed as well as access to funding for support provision.

We believe that actual housing rents plus eligible services charges for sheltered housing should be funded via mainstream benefits. This is the same approach we propose for supported housing and would see residents in sheltered housing receiving housing costs via either Universal Credit or Pension Credit depending on their eligibility.

It is important that any registration and funding route for sheltered housing is simple and proportionate, reflecting the high numbers of stock, the generally low level of support provided and the relatively small amount of benefit funding that would be required above that provided to general needs properties.

A streamlined national route could be used to fund very low level support in sheltered housing. This could also be used to fund personal alarms and other technology which enables independence.

An alternative route might be to explore providing funding for this kind of low level support via Pension Credit. There is currently no agreed approach to funding housing costs within Pension Credit. Given the very low level of support often provided within many sheltered schemes we believe the possibility of providing an element of ‘support’ funding, perhaps equivalent to one or two hours a week, via Pension Credit, should be explored. This would enable funding via the outcomes fund to be focused on those with higher need and enable very low level preventative support to be funded in a very straightforward and transparent way.

5.6 Short term transitional services

Short term transitional services often provide very high levels of short-term support to people experiencing extremely difficult life events. It helps residents stabilise their situation, tackle their immediate issues, and develop their resilience to move onto more permanent accommodation. Transitional services also include accommodation that acts as a ‘stepping stone’ helping someone move from one environment, for example a hospital, to a settled home. Examples of this type of provision include refuges, homelessness hostels, and young people’s services.

As with the other types of provision we believe that actual housing rents plus eligible services charges for short term transitional services should be funded via mainstream benefits. To enable Universal Credit payments above those permitted within general needs housing the providers of these services would need to register with our proposed independent regulatory body.

We recognise that there are particular challenges around meeting housing costs via Universal Credit within short-term services. These include waiting periods and payment schedules which will provide significant challenges to providers because of the shorter length of time customers
stay in this accommodation. It might be that a different arrangement is required for residents of these kinds of services with the need for this flagged against particular properties within the benefits system. We would welcome the opportunity to look at this in more detail once the Government’s direction of travel is known.

6. Conclusion

Supported housing exists to empower people to realise their potential and to ensure they are socially included in the communities they live in. We believe our proposal can form the basis of a strong a sustainable future for supported housing. A positive announcement from the Government on the future of supported housing, based on the ideas set out here, would be a hugely significant step for the sector following months of uncertainty.

The pillars of our proposal are:

- the removal of the threat of the Local Housing Allowance cap from the supported and sheltered housing sector
- funding actual rents and eligible service charges for supported and sheltered housing via the benefits system through Universal Credit and Pension Credit
- strengthening funding mechanisms for support services by establishing an enhanced national budget for support services
- exploring approaches to safeguarding any funding that is devolved to a local level, including the use of a ringfence
- working with the sector to develop proposals around a new approach to registration and regulation for supported and sheltered housing providers.

We look forward to working closely with the Government to discuss our proposal and help develop a sustainable model to ensure supported and sheltered housing is funded for the long term.
7. Supporting information

The following additional information is provided as background to the proposals outlined in this document.

**The Supported Housing Task and Finish Group**
As the National Housing Federation developed ideas and tested our proposals for the future of supported housing, we established a Task and Finish Group to act as a sounding board for this work. The group was made up of 18 housing association staff, selected from around 120 applicants. It was asked to:

- help shape and inform the Federation’s policy activities to develop a credible preferred model or models for funding housing costs in supported and sheltered housing
- act as a sounding board providing expertise and experience to inform this work
- ensure that the Federation’s work reflects the breadth of housing association experience and activity from across the supported and sheltered housing sectors.

**Consultation document**
The Federation carried out an extensive consultation exercise to inform the ideas outlined in our submission, as described earlier in this document. A key part of this exercise was a written consultation, to which we received over 120 responses. The consultation can be found on our website.

**Consultation summary**
We will soon be publishing a summary of the responses we have received to our consultation with the housing association sector, and we will make this available on our website.

**Supported housing: understanding need and supply**
In December 2015, the National Housing Federation published a report highlighting the growing shortfall in supported housing places. This report is based on research carried out by Sitra and it is available on our website.

**Case study examples**
The National Housing Federation has developed an interactive map of case studies showing the housing and support work carried out by our members and through local partnerships. This is accessible on our website.