

2 December 2011



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Dear Colleague

I am enclosing a questionnaire by way of consultation on the Dispute Resolution Principles that my colleagues and I are designing and I should be very grateful if you could spare a little of your valuable time to complete it. I am confident that, with your help, we can create a set of Principles that will be an excellent resource for providers, residents, members of parliament, councillors, and tenant panels.

As you know, under the Localism Act that has nearly completed all its parliamentary stages, I shall become the single ombudsman for all social housing on 1 April 2013. From that date, a complaint or a dispute will either reach my office directly after eight weeks or by earlier reference from a "designated person". Once the matter reaches us we shall work with landlords and tenants to resolve disputes impartially using processes that are fair, evidence-based, and free of bias and prejudice.

As well as that (and this is where the consultation comes in) we are going to use these principles of dispute resolution as the basis of our work with providers, MPs, councillors, and tenant panels to enable them to resolve disputes that come to them – and with tenants so they understand these principles too.

I hope you will agree that what we are proposing will support and add value to the sector. By completing the enclosed questionnaire you will help us to help you.

With many thanks

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Biles".

Dr Mike Biles
Housing Ombudsman