



NFA News - Issue 2 August 2003

Bidders gain £360 million

Congratulations to 13 successful councils in the ODPM Round 3 bids. The 13 will share about £360 million in conditional allocations for the first two years – 2004 to 2006. That is about 23 per cent of their total bids to 2011, which amount to £1542.5 million. The allocations are:

Local Authority	Total bid 2004/05 – 2010/11 (£ million)	Conditional allocation 2004/05 – 2005/06 (£ million)
Barnet	88.5	to be agreed
Camden	283	45
Easington	117.3	23.6
Gateshead	232	63
Harrow	11.9	5
High Peak	9.4	4.7
Islington	157.5	to be agreed
Newcastle	348	64
Poole	35.4	17.4
Sheffield (partial)	144.8	49.7
Solihull	63.3	to be agreed
South Lakeland	21	4.2
Warrington	30.4	18.3

The allocations for Barnet, Islington and Solihull have yet to be finally agreed and are expected to add about £65m to total allocations for 2004-06. (ODPM table).

The 13 bids cover 185,000 tenanted homes, of which 60 per cent currently do not meet the Decent Homes standard. The allocations total about £8500 per home – substantially higher than the old £5000 limit from the first round of ALMOs. The ODPM said if all plans go through, the three rounds of ALMOs will enable 690,000 homes to be improved. Housing minister Keith Hill confirmed the government's continuing commitment to ALMOs, saying of the Round 3 bidders: "The expectation is that funding will continue over future years if performance is satisfactory and resources are available." NFA chair Gordon Perry said: "This is great news. It confirms that ALMO is the fast track to Decent Homes."



NFA lobbies on ALMO powers

Launched only four months ago, the National Federation of ALMOs has already made its mark with the government. Discussions with the ODPM and ministers have included extending the power to issue anti-social behaviour orders, and allowing ALMOs to bid for Housing Corporation grant funding. We expect this dialogue to continue throughout the coming year. ODPM Head of Local Authority Housing Wendy Jarvis recently gave the sector this endorsement: "The future is bright for ALMOs."

Electronic library

With the NFA website fully operational since March we are building an electronic resource bank of information on ALMOs including all government and Audit Commission papers, ALMO bids, delivery plans, and documentation to aid preparations for inspection. Members' contributions of documents are always welcome.

Expert briefings

Our regular briefings keep members up to date on all developments concerning ALMOs. Forthcoming papers include:

- Governance issues for boards
- Using the Building Cost Model
- Lessons from Round 2 inspections
- Key features of Round 3 bids
- The ALMO profile: key characteristics covering contracting, staffing, boards and other issues. Part 1, on arrangements between ALMO and council, was issued recently. Part II, on governance and staffing, is underway.

Responses to consultation

The NFA responded in full to the Housing Inspectorate inspection proposals, and the ODPM consultations on option appraisal and grant funding to bodies other than housing associations. We will continue to respond as and when further consultations arise.

Regional meetings and conferences

The NFA will hold seminars in the North (York) and South (London) on 2 and 3 September, plus our first national conference in February. More details of these events will be available soon; provisional booking for the seminars is now available.