

The National Federation of ALMOs

The NFA and its Members

The National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) is the trade body which represents all Arms-Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) across England.¹ The NFA represents all 37 ALMOs across England, which manage 503,311 council homes across 40 local authorities, nearly a third of the council housing sector.² The NFA represents the interests of ALMOs at the national level and provides advice and training for members.

ALMOs were first established as not for profit companies in 2002 to manage council housing on behalf of their local authority and to help deliver the Government's Decent Homes Programme aimed at improving housing conditions in council housing. Funding was made available to those ALMOs that were able to demonstrate a high level of performance and sound financial management, which eventually was all of them. Since then, ALMOs have continued to provide indispensable services, not only have they raised accommodation standards of millions of homes throughout the country, but have also enriched the lives of millions of residents, families and their local communities.

The establishment of ALMOs was arguably one of the most effective public service reforms over the last 50 years and led to a significant improvement in housing management services, housing conditions and a new positive working culture within council housing organisations. It was embraced by councils across the political spectrum and made a significant contribution to improving services and value for money in communities across England.

A defining feature of all ALMOs is that tenants have a voice in how their homes are managed. At least one-third of all ALMO board members are tenants with the remaining positions filled by councillors and independents, often with relevant business and housing experience.

Over the last four years ALMOs have built 2,000 new homes and were scheduled to deliver a further 9,000 for their parent councils over the next five years prior to the changes made to housing finance.

Our members are committed to their local areas and have an active role in improving the local environment and contribute to the quality of the lives of tenants by identifying and meeting local community and housing needs. They enhance the communities they serve by providing services such as: out of school clubs, employment and training schemes, activities for both young and older people, advice/support (i.e. debt management) and tackling fuel poverty, to name a few.

¹ Please visit our website www.almos.org.uk for more information.

² This is a third of 1.64m council dwellings in England, the most recent local authority housing statistics available - Department for Communities and Local Government (2015) Local authority housing statistics: year ending March 2015, England.

NFA Asks

ALMOs are building new homes, providing high quality services to their communities, managing private rented properties and supporting vulnerable tenants. But ALMOs could do more.

The NFA is calling for the Government to:

- Restore the integrity of the self-financing settlement for council housing and allow councils to retain all the proceeds from any sales of higher value voids and right to buy properties as well as the additional revenue from the higher pay to stay rents.
- Reverse the future under investment in social housing by scrapping the 1% reduction in council housing rents over the next 4 years as these are some of the lowest rents in the country already.
- Unlock the potential to invest in council housing by removing the HRA borrowing caps and relying instead on prudential borrowing rules to invest in new homes and pay the money back from their rental income.
- Support a new social housing building programme which would save the public purse significant amounts of money through a lower welfare bill in the long term, give a boost to our national economy and help relieve our national housing crisis in the short term.

ALMOs know the difference a safe, secure, affordable home can make to families and neighbourhoods and we would like the Government to champion our members' work building and supporting their communities across the country.

Published by:

NFA - National Federation of ALMOs

Octavia House, Westwood Way, Coventry, CV4 8JP

 @nfa_almos

Email: info@almos.org.uk

Website: www.almos.org.uk

Telephone: 024 7685 1729

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