

2nd October 2017

Alok Sharma MP
Minister of State
Department for Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham St
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Mr Sharma,

We are writing to welcome your efforts, in light of the tragic events at Grenfell Tower this summer, to meet with social housing tenants to help inform the Government's national approach to social housing.

We understand you have already been talking to a number of tenant representative bodies as well as tenants of different landlords across the country and we, at the NFA, would like to extend an invitation to you, as part of this work, to come to talk to ALMO tenant board members in order to be able to hear from tenants engaged in this distinct part of the social housing sector.

As the body representing England's 34 Arm's Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) managing about half a million council owned homes across 38 local authorities, we are keen to help your government understand tenant's concerns, what is working well within the sector and what is not working so well and where improvements can be made.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the announcement of a green paper on social housing in England by your colleague, Sajid Javid MP, in his speech to the National Housing Federation annual conference 2017 last week.

The NFA and its members aspire to provide excellent, value for money and customer-led services for residents in partnership with their local councils. ALMOs across the country are committed to working with tenants to continually improve services and make the best use of the resources they have to provide decent, safe and affordable homes for their communities.

In light of the awful tragedy in Kensington and Chelsea this summer we would like to assure you that the NFA is already discussing these issues with our membership and our Board to try to ensure these events are never repeated and that we are ready to contribute to the wide-ranging, top-to-bottom review of the issues facing the sector that the government proposes.

We very much hope to be able to engage with you and your colleagues in the nationwide conversation on social housing to help improve both the quantity and quality of social

As wholly owned council companies ALMOs are locally based and completely accountable to their parent local authorities. Tenant involvement has been fundamental to the success of ALMOs so far and one third, or more, of most boards are tenants playing an important role in decision-making to ensure that services directly meet the needs and aspirations of residents and the wider community. The other board members are councillors and independents. ALMOs also use other forms of tenant engagement such as scrutiny panels, mystery shopping, focus groups, community engagement projects, online forums and panels as well as more traditional Tenant Associations or Resident Forums.

Our members recognise that improving housing standards is only one part of a wider role to improve neighbourhoods. Hence, they have an active role in tackling worklessness, health inequality and improving the local environment as well as building new homes.

I attach a briefing on ALMOs and our member's work for your information and I hope that you might be able to arrange a time very soon to meet with a range of ALMO tenant board members and discuss at first hand the issues affecting tenants within the ALMO sector today.

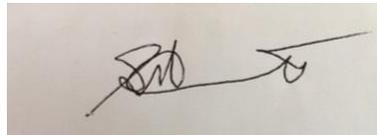
I hope this will be possible and if it is please ask your office to contact the NFA's Policy Director, Chloe Fletcher on 07526 171033 or email chloe.fletcher@almos.org.uk.

We look forward to your response.

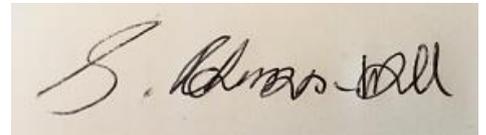
Yours sincerely,



Hugh Broadbent
NFA Chair
Member



Sue Abbott
NFA Tenant Board member



Sarita-Marie Rehman-Wall
NFA Tenant Board