

ARCH/ NFA/ CWAG New Build Network Meeting

20th February 2019 - Woburn House, London

Following the confirmation of the scrapping of Housing Revenue Account Borrowing Caps in last year's Autumn Budget the expectation from Government will be that councils should now deliver the "new generation of council housing" promised by Prime Minister Theresa May.

We have arranged a meeting of the ARCH/NFA/CWAG NewBuild Network to give Network members the chance to come together to discuss what the scrapping of HRA Borrowing Caps means in practice and what further help and assistance ARCH, the NFA and CWAG may be able to provide to support our members.

We have an exciting line up of speakers including senior officials from MHCLG on the Government's response to the recent consultation on the Use of RTB Receipts and on modern methods of construction (MMC) and the Government's support for off-site construction. We will also hear from colleagues at CIPFA on the Prudential Borrowing Rules and the lifting of HRA Borrowing Caps and what this means for councils in practice and the event may be of interest to local authority Section 151 Officers and housing finance colleagues.

We are conscious that many of our members, particularly those that have not been able to develop a new build programme up to now, will need time to build up in-house skills and capacity to deliver new council housing and/or develop partnerships with other councils or housing association partners and we will hear from the LGA on the offer of some limited financial assistance from the LGA to help develop such capacity.

The recent announcements on the lifting of HRA Borrowing Caps, the scrapping of the HVA Levy, the new 5 year social rent policy and the recent RTB receipts consultation of which will help give councils greater certainty to encourage investment in new council housing through their Housing Business Plans but we recognise that the Government could do more.

Although we've got a lot of what we have been campaigning for over the last few years, if councils are going to be encouraged to borrow prudentially within the HRA to build new social rented housing, given that its highly unlikely a Conservative government will abolish the RTB, we will continue to push for:

- Regional caps on RTB discounts
- Extension of the cost floor for new build
- A return to a 10-year social rent policy & rent convergence
- Maximum flexibility on use of RTB receipts (subject to what comes out of the recent consultation).
- Greater priority for social rented housing within the Homes England Affordable Housing Programme
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We want to hear from our members whether these are the right "asks" and/or if there are further matters on which we should be lobbying Government.

A full programme will be available shortly but places are limited and we recommend you book your places now by clicking the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/archnfacwag-new-build-network-meeting-20-february-2019-tickets-54294954671>