



The National Register of Social Housing

What is NROSH ...?

The National Register of Social Housing (NROSH) will be a property database containing a record of each individual unit of social housing in England. It will provide neighbourhood level information for the whole country which will be accessible by central, regional and local government and other interested parties, and reduce the burden of reporting on housing providers.

Background

The Government is in the process of establishing a national Neighbourhood Statistics Service, the purpose of which is to provide accurate, standardised and up to date information on living conditions at the most local geography possible. This was a recommendation of the Social Exclusion Unit's Policy Action Team 18 and will support the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. This is a high priority project.

In the area of housing there are major gaps in the existing national datasets that are now being filled by developing new national databases. While local authorities currently provide a number of detailed annual returns to central government covering both social housing and private sector housing stock, these are aggregated to local authority level and cannot be broken down to neighbourhood level. As a result there is no centrally available supply of neighbourhood level data on various basic statistics such as dwelling stock, its condition, rents and vacancy rates etc. Local authorities also have to conduct separate aggregations of their data for different "customers".

In addition the Housing Corporation (HC) has an ongoing need for an up to date record of the dwelling stock, which is owned and managed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). This is at present provided by time consuming annual returns from the RSLs in particular the Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR), and cannot be disaggregated to the neighbourhood level.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) is required to carry out a revaluation of every dwelling in England and Wales for council tax purposes. New council tax bandings will come into effect from April 2007 requiring completion of the revaluations by September 2006. The valuations will be based on records of dwelling attributes that need to be updated and validated. Electronic capture of the attributes of social housing would make an important contribution to this process.

The new Housing and Employment Mobility Scheme (HEMS) which aims to improve the ease of movement around the country for social housing tenants will also need to capture data from social housing landlords. These needs are being taken into account during the development of NROSH.

The ODPM are concerned that the increasing need for more detailed information does not create an additional burden on social landlords and is therefore going to standardise the data definitions across NROSH, RSR, HEMS and VOA.

The ODPM, HC and VOA now wish to capture numerous standardised attribute data relating to the national stock of 4.1 million social rented dwellings from the databases maintained by local authorities and registered social landlords and migrate it onto NROSH and the VOA national database.

Timescale

NROSH plans to make its first collection of social housing details as at 1 April 2005. The information will be due for return by 30 April 2005.

What this means for ...

... Housing Associations

The Housing Corporation are keen to take advantage of the opportunity presented by NROSH to reduce the current burden on housing associations of aggregating data for the RSR. They propose to amend the RSR inputting system to accept property-related data directly from RSLs' databases. The data would be passed to NROSH and re-aggregated as required for the RSR. The Corporation, working closely with the National Housing Federation (NHF), will approach RSLs shortly to discuss options for piloting the system. NROSH should also save RSLs from providing the same data to local authorities each year for their HIP returns. RSLs' data will also be used by the VOA, removing the need to supply it twice, and the same technical mechanism will be available for HEMS.

Housing Associations will **in addition** benefit from the ability to use the detailed data in NROSH to research and compare information outside their own stock.

... Local Authorities

NROSH is intended to reduce the current burden on local authorities aggregating social housing stock data for their annual HIP and HRA returns, as well as for neighbourhood renewal, market renewal, growth area and other area based initiatives. As for housing associations once electronic systems have been set up the authorities will be able to transfer selected data directly from their databases to NROSH leaving the ODPM to do the aggregation. These data will be used by the VOA, and the mechanism will be available for HEMS. Local authorities in their housing strategy role will have access to the complete database to carry out their own analyses.

... Regional Agencies

The regional agencies, in particular the Government Offices, Housing Boards, Housing Corporation and NHF will have access to the NROSH database which they can analyse at any sub regional level for the development and monitoring of their regional housing strategies.

... Data Standards

The ODPM will be seeking the cooperation of all software suppliers in the social housing market sector to enable their customers to pass data to NROSH as simply and efficiently as possible. The data standards will be published and an XML Schema derived in accordance with the

e-Government Interoperability Framework. NROSH will initially be able to accept data transfer in alternative formats, such as CSV, where there is a clear business need.

... Other interested parties

With standardised information available on individual dwellings across the whole country interested parties will be able to use NROSH for their own research using a web interface directly to the data. This will give access to much more detailed and comprehensive information than has ever been available before, and enable more meaningful analysis.

Contact

You can contact the NROSH team on:

nrosh@odpm.gsi.gov.uk

or via mail to:

ODPM
Zone 1/E1
Eland House,
Bressenden Place,
London, SW1E 5DU.

Further information on the NROSH programme can be found on the ODPM web site:

www.odpm.gov.uk/housingstatistics

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU
Telephone 020 7944 4400
Internet service www.odpm.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2004.

Copyright in the typographical arrangement and design rests with the Crown.

This publication (excluding the Royal Arms and logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright with the title and source of the publication specified.

Further copies of this report are available from:

ODPM Free Literature
PO Box 236
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS23 7NB
Tel: 0870 1226 236
Fax: 0870 1226 237
Textphone: 0870 1207 405
E-mail: odpm@twoten.press.net

This document is also available on the ODPM website

Published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Printed in the UK, August 2004 on material containing 75% post-consumer waste and 25% ECF pulp.

Reference No. 04 HC02497.