



Housing LIN

Connecting people, ideas and resources

Viewpoint 122

Unlocking the Doors to Supported Housing

OCTOBER 2026

Written for the Housing Learning and Improvement Network by **Sir David Pearson**, Independent Chair of the Government's Supported Housing Advisory Panel and a former ADASS President



What is Supported Housing and why is it Important?

Supported Housing is crucial for the wellbeing of citizens who need suitable housing with the right person-centred care, support and supervision. It is fundamental to the life chances of those who need it.

This is why the new Supported Housing Advisory Panel is determined to do whatever we can to ensure there is sufficient high-quality provision and support in England that meets the needs and aspirations of residents.

The umbrella term Supported Housing masks a very diverse sector covering a range of needs from people experiencing homelessness, at risk of domestic abuse to longer term provision for people with learning disabilities. It can be needed in the short or longer term and at very different stages of life.

Legislation and regulations have been introduced incrementally over decades and is provided through multiple funding sources. The rules by which this funding is complex and can act as a barrier to the development of much needed provision.

The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight Act) 2023

The Act was introduced in the context of Parliamentary inquiries highlighting concerns about appropriateness of some Supported Exempt Accommodation.

The previous Government's response to the Select Committee Report said:-

"The government recognises the very serious issues and consequences of a minority of rogue landlords who are exploiting vulnerable people and the housing benefit system, by providing little or no support to their residents whilst charging excessive rents for poor quality housing."

(Exempt Accommodation: Government Response to the Select Committee Report – June 2023)

Of course, there are many excellent examples of Supported Housing and our collective job is to make sure that these models are more widely available.

The Act puts in place a number of provisions to improve Supported Housing. This includes the requirement that Local Supported Housing Strategies (LSHS's), based on a needs assessment, are in place by the end of March 2027.

There is also a focus on the quality and appropriateness of the accommodation and care, support and supervision through a new licensing scheme. This will be aligned with national standards.

The Supported Housing Advisory Panel

The Panel is created by the Act to provide information and advice to the Secretary of State, Local Government housing and social care authorities. The Panel is made up of people from different parts of the sector. It is representative of registered providers, local authority housing and social services, charities and residents.

Initially, we worked with Civil Servants to develop more detailed Terms of Reference which can be accessed here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-housing-advisory-panel-terms-of-reference>

We are aligning our work behind the Government's strategic objectives. These are that the quality of the accommodation should be well managed and be of a good standard and deliver good quality support which is suited to individual needs. It should be planned for and delivered through a coordinated approach involving, health, social care, housing and planning authorities. There needs to be an adequate supply and it should deliver good value for money.

We were pleased that the then Minister agreed that the scope of our responsibilities could be extended to all Supported Housing (rather than being limited to Exempt Accommodation).

Our information and advice can be provided in a variety of ways including discussions with the MHCLG team and the Minister; commenting on draft policy or regulation, guidance or standards before consultation or publication. We can also produce thematic notes or more detailed information and advice which will be published. We are currently working on our initial advice for publication in the near future. We will also produce an Annual Report. We want to be as transparent as possible about our work and our advice.

Our Work So Far

We decided on our initial priorities a few months ago and have split into smaller groups to work on: -

Residents Voice

This group has been focusing on how implementation of the Act is informed by lived experience and ensuring that people with lived experience understand their rights and the impact of changes.

Access and Supply

Getting the assessment of need right and consistently across the country. There is potential variation in quality and depth of Local Supported Housing Strategies. We need to make sure the country can deliver the supply that the local strategies tell us is needed.

Licensing and Quality

This group has been considering the ability of local authorities to recruit skilled teams to deliver licensing regimes; the clarity of the definition of Care, Support and Supervision and the level of the burden for providers – we are keen to help Government deliver a scheme that is proportionate.

Other Work Being Undertaken

We are also working with Government to review the data and information that is available and whether it is sufficient to understand the impact of changes and the overall performance of the sector in future. In addition, we are involved in:-

- The Government's Value for Money Review of Homelessness provision
- Detailed work with Birmingham City Council and partners on the Exempt Accommodation position in Birmingham
- Considering the Ending Rough Sleeping Programme

Finally, we want our activity to be informed through engaging with stakeholders, interested parties and those with expertise. We are increasingly speaking at conferences and events and meeting with key groups such as the National Housing Federation, Local Government Association of Directors of Social Services, and of course, the Housing LIN.

In addition to our excellent resident Panel Members, we are wanting to ensure that all of our work is rooted in the insights of people with lived experience recognising that different groups may have different needs and perspectives.

In conclusion

A place we call home is the starting point for our health, social and economic wellbeing. Our home is a foundation stone and a springboard for our lives. Whilst for some people supported housing is a stepping stone, for others it is their permanent home. Either way it is essential.

I feel privileged to have this opportunity to work with such a multi-talented Advisory Panel in seeking to ensure that, in future, the people of this country have the supported housing that we need. Whilst there are great providers, there is too much poor quality accommodation and support and, overall, not enough of the right provision.

The impetus of a significant piece of legislation focusing on proper co-ordinated planning and a [licensing scheme](#) is a very important first step, but it is not the end of the matter. There are a number of Government Departments and organisations and leaders in key sectors (housing, health, care, the justice system to name a few) who have a role to play.

Success will depend on taking the right steps but, in my view, also the degree to which all these different parties can galvanise and take action around this common purpose.

Note

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

Cover image courtesy of emh.

Further information

Sir David was our opening speaker at the Housing LIN HAPPI Hour webinar in July 2026 on Creating Safe and Supportive Housing Environments where he presented on the work of the Supported Housing Advisory Panel. Watch again at:

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Events/Creating-Safe-and-Supportive-Housing-Environments/>

The Housing LIN also curates dedicated webpages on supported housing at

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Housing/Supported-Housing/>

as well as advising councils and producing their strategies to assist them implement the requirements placed under the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023.

Further information about our Supported Housing and the Act research and consultancy services can be found at:

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Housing/Supported-Housing/how-housing-lin-can-help/>

About the Housing LIN

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network bringing together over 15,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England, Wales and Scotland to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population. Recognised by government and industry as a leading 'ideas lab' on specialist/supported housing, our online and regional networked activities, and consultancy services:

- connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing that enables older and disabled people to live independently
- provide access to intelligence on the latest funding, research, policy and practice developments
- raise the profile of specialist and supported housing with developers, commissioners and operators, and
- attract business to help and support clients plan, design and operate aspirational housing and services for people of all ages.

If you found this Viewpoint of interest, the Housing LIN curates dedicated webpages on supported housing at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Housing/Supported-Housing/>

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