

HRA GUIDANCE IMPLEMENTATION

**A self-assessment framework
for supporting tenant involvement**

It is expected that discussions between tenants and landlords will take place to agree arrangements that are best suited for tenants and the organisation

STEP 1: PREPARING FOR A SELF-ASSESSMENT

Before starting any form of assessment, it is useful to quickly check why you are carrying it out and what resources you may need to do it. This can also determine how you do the self-assessment i.e. one person or as a team exercise.

We are doing this self-assessment because	The resources we need are

The people that will be involved are	Their role will be

STEP 2: PREPARING A BASELINE, STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Highlight the key strengths and weaknesses of the current HRA operation to provide an initial baseline to compare against the findings of the self-assessment.

Strengths in the operation of the HRA are	Weaknesses in the operation of the HRA are

STEP 2: PREPARING A BASELINE, CONSULTATION

This could be used as a separate assessment or as part of preparation processes.

My landlord ...	What did I/we look at*	What did I/we find
Uses consultation methods that are agreed with tenants.		
Is systematic in consulting with tenants about the HRA		
Has clear, published mechanisms and procedures for consulting with council tenants and/or registered tenant representatives on HRA matters		
Has regular, open discussions with their tenants about financial transparency (what is debited and credited to the HRA and whether these are at levels reflecting the functions of the HRA)		
Accommodates tenants with specific needs and interests in their discussions/consultations		
Reviews their consultation methods to ensure that tenants are satisfied with the opportunities to be involved		
Encourages tenants to raise queries or make complaints about their involvement in HRA decision making		

STEP 3: CONDUCTING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

There are three ways that tenants and landlords may conduct a joint self-assessment

1. Using the fifteen identified criteria which are set out overleaf
2. 'DIY' set out criteria from the findings identified in either baseline exercises in step 2
3. Determining other areas of interest (for options 2 and 3, use the DIY template on page 7 below).

You may work through the whole of this framework or parts of it.

REMEMBER

- **Choose what you want to do carefully and be aware of the commitment required before you start. A full assessment may be spread over months (if practical audits are being carried out including interviews, focus groups, shadowing, mystery shopping)**
- **Keep clear notes throughout the process so you can show clearly how you have reached your decisions**
- **Don't be afraid to ask for more evidence if you are not clear about what you are finding**
- **Provide robust and focused feedback that translates into actions that the Landlord can follow through on**
- **Ensure assessors are comfortable with using any required reporting formats**

CRITERIA OUTLINE

The fifteen criteria in the self-assessment outlined below were discussed and agreed by the tenant working group over the course of three meetings.

Criteria for measuring the principles, Landlords should be working towards:

1. Tenants are placed at the centre of HRA decision-making processes.
2. Decision-making processes are transparent e.g. who decides priorities and how are these arrived at?
3. Landlords keep their tenants well informed about the operation of the HRA

Criteria for measuring how Landlords record financial information:

4. Tenants are clear why and how costs are allocated through the HRA
5. There are clear budget projections laid out including the period of time they are relevant to
6. The meaning of different budget headings and what is accounted through each is clear (and the movement of monies between these)
7. Differences arising between actual income and spend (and how these are recorded) are clearly identified
8. Tenants are clear why surpluses have accrued and how these are used and kept in the HRA

Criteria for measuring how Landlords operate their HRA:

9. The HRA framework meets statutory requirements and supports meeting Charter outcomes
10. The landlord conducts rent reviews transparently
11. Recharge policies and procedures are effective in supporting benefits to tenants
12. There is a rationale for calculating and allocating the costs for wider improvements/neighbourhoods
13. Decisions about spending on stock management (including capital investment life cycles, new builds) are clear to tenants
14. There is a clear method for charging other services
15. There are reviews of HRA/financial frameworks and tenants are involved in these processes

STEP 3: SELF-ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE 1:

The fifteen criteria

Criteria for measuring the principles, Landlords should be working towards:

Criteria	What did I/we look at*	What did I/we find
1. Tenants are placed at the centre of HRA decision-making processes.		
2. Decision-making processes are transparent e.g. who decides priorities and how are these arrived at?		
3. Landlords keep their tenants well informed about the operation of the HRA		

* List the evidence, it may be the Landlord has given you documents to look at or you may have attended a meeting or taken part in discussions

Criteria for measuring how Landlords record financial information:

Criteria	What did I/we look at*	What did I/we find
4. Tenants are clear why and how costs are allocated through the HRA		
5. There are clear budget projections laid out including the period of time they are relevant to		
6. The meaning of different budget headings and what is accounted through each is clear (and the movement of monies between these)		
7. Differences arising between actual income and spend (and how these are recorded) are clearly identified		
8. Tenants are clear why surpluses have accrued and how these are used and kept in the HRA		

* List the evidence, it may be the Landlord has given you documents to look at or you may have attended a meeting or taken part in discussions

STEP 3: SELF-ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE 1:

The fifteen criteria

Criteria for measuring how Landlords operate their HRA:

Criteria	What did I/we look at*	What did I/we find
9. The HRA framework meets statutory requirements and supports meeting Charter outcomes		
10. The landlord conducts rent reviews transparently		
11. Recharge policies and procedures are effective in achieving benefits to tenants		
12. Decisions about spending on stock management (including capital investment life cycles new builds) are clear to tenants		
13. There is a rationale for calculating and allocating the costs for neighbourhood/wider improvements		
14. There is a clear method for charging other services		
15. There are reviews of HRA/financial frameworks and tenants are involved in these processes		

* List the evidence, it may be the Landlord has given you documents to look at or you may have attended a meeting or taken part in discussions

SELF-ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE 2: Example of DIY

In this example, the criteria listed below in column 1 support an assessment of how my "Landlord places tenants at the centre of HRA decision-making processes". This format could also be used where an assessment of one area identifies challenges and indicates that further scrutiny is desired.

My landlord...	What did I/we look at*	What did I/we find
Provides support for tenant representative bodies		
Encourages the development and operation of tenant scrutiny panels		
Involves tenants in their reviews of HRA activities		
Provides joint trainings between tenants, officers and elected members		
Includes tenants in decision making processes		
Makes it clear who decides priorities and how are these arrived at		
Makes it clear to tenants where they can access information		
Makes different types of information available		
Provides information that is easy to read		
Implements their TP strategies and are committed to TP activities		

* List the evidence, it may be the Landlord has given you documents to look at or you may have attended a meeting or taken part in discussions

STEP 3: EVIDENCE MATRIX

If you are not sure about what documentary evidence might be submitted, you may want to use this table as a guide. You can also complete the table as part of the report for your Landlord to look at.

EXAMPLE

Assessment element	The evidence submitted told me about				
	Finance	Involvement	Planning HRA operations	Decisions	Performance
My landlord is systematic in consulting with tenants about the HRA	<NAME OF PAPER> <PAGE/PARA NUMBER>	NOT EVIDENT	<NAME OF PAPER> <PAGE/PARA NUMBER>	<NAME OF PAPER> <PAGE/PARA NUMBER>	NOT EVIDENT

EVIDENCE MATRIX

Type of evidence	What could these documents tell me about?				
	Finance	Involvement	Planning	Decisions	Performance
Committee papers					
Working papers					
Option appraisals					
Scrutiny group outputs					
Training programmes					
Service review reports					
Consultation plans					
Written methodology					

EVIDENCE MATRIX (cont.)

Type of evidence	What could these documents tell me about?				
	Finance	Involvement	Planning	Decisions	Performance
Information sheets (hard copies/electronic)					
Event outputs					
Published accounts					
Spreadsheets					
Presentations					
Needs assessment outputs					
Performance reports/ returns					
Standards					
Policy/Procedure documents					
Strategic plans					
Stock reports					
Local area plans					
Service Level Agreements					



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