

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)
Referrals and Regulatory Enquiries team
Level 2, 7-8 Wellington Place, Leeds
LS1 4AP

By email to consultation@rsh.gov.uk

3rd March 2026

MCB submission to consultation on updates to consumer standards and requirements

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to your public consultation at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rsh-launches-consultation-on-updates-to-consumer-standards-and-requirements>

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is an infrastructure organisation for over 500 mosques, community centres and other Muslim-led civic society organisation. Our participation in this consultation is as a party “with an interest in social housing.”

- a. Analysis of 2021 census data¹ indicates that 40% of the Muslim population in England reside in the most deprived fifth of Local Authority districts; and furthermore, almost half a million more Muslims now live in these most deprived locales than in 2011. Overall, British Muslims, the vast majority of whom are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), are over-represented in the social housing sector, with an estimate 31% residing in social housing, compared to 20% of the overall population.
- b. We full endorse Shelter’s “Let’s Kick Racism out of Social Housing” campaign² and emphasise that the British Muslim community continues to face extreme challenges in relation to racism and Islamophobia as evidenced by the Home Office annual hate crime statistics³, 2025 annual report of the Islamophobia Response Unit monitoring body⁴ and more. The post-Southport riots in summer 2024 with overtly racist and anti-Muslim sentiments are also a case in point, and where a range of short-term and medium-term responses that social housing landlords can be taking has been widely published⁵.
- c. We also aspire that social housing – through these updates to consumer standards and requirements - should be part of the solution and not perpetuate the problems the British Muslim community and other racialised minority groups currently face in terms of housing access. This could include regulations and structures which proactively seek the voices of tenants and staff of all backgrounds, ethnicities and faith/belief groups, and ensuring that governance functions and organisational culture within social housing providers are adequately set-up. For example, ensuring the composition of boards and leadership teams are sufficiently diverse, able to recognise institutional bias in management of tenants and dealing with complaints, and are proactive enough in taking action.
- d. We suggest there should be explicit references to anti-racism in regulatory standards. This would not duplicate legislation but rather would reinforce expectations of leadership behaviour and organisational accountability across the sector.

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- f. Structural disparities in housing access are also well-documented, for instance a detailed 2024 study *Housing governance and racialisation: 'inclusivity' in housing access and experience*⁶, found that “[...] racial inequality in housing access has been identified as persistent, historically-embedded, and normalised in the UK context [...] Existing research has established how racially minoritised residents are at disproportionate risk of experiencing overcrowding, housing deprivation, and precarious housing [...]”
- g. The challenges of later-life housing are also intensified for people from BAME backgrounds. Many live in areas of entrenched deprivation, with poorer access to green space, higher exposure to environmental stressors, and housing that has not benefited from sustained investment, according to the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST)⁷.
- h. The above factors contribute to higher rates of long-term health conditions and earlier onset of disability, impacting both quality of life and life expectancy. This was demonstrated by recent research by Housing LIN⁸ (based on in-depth interviews with 76 older women and men and eight families from the Bangladeshi community, alongside a community research advisory group of local residents with Bengali heritage and a professional advisory group), painting a stark and troubling picture, revealing the day-to-day realities of living in poor-quality and overcrowded homes, widespread lack of awareness of available options to improve or adapt existing housing as people age or as health and care needs increase, and severely limited opportunities to access suitable housing close to established family, cultural and community networks.

We trust this submission will support the RSH's updates to consumer standards and requirements, and we are happy to contribute further to the consultation's work as required.

We look forward to your response.

ENDS.

About the MCB

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), founded in 1997, is an inclusive umbrella body of over 500 mosques, charities, professional networks and more, representing a large cross-section of Muslims in the UK today. We are pledged to work for the common good of society as a whole, encouraging individual Muslims and Muslim-led organisations to play a full and participatory role in public life. Our longstanding vision is to empower Muslim communities to achieve a just, cohesive and successful British society.

¹ <https://mcb.org.uk/resources/censussummary2025/>

² <https://campaigns.shelter.org.uk/competence-conduct-regulator-consultation>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2025>

⁴ <https://www.theiru.org.uk/islamophobia-cases-surge/>

⁵ <https://www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk/reflections-on-the-2025-far-right-riots-what-should-we-be-doing-now>

⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2024.2344505>

⁷ <https://post.parliament.uk/challenges-facing-disadvantaged-and-deprived-communities/>

⁸ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingOlderPeople/DiversityMatters/amar-bari-amar-jibon/>

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