

[New expert group created to advise on improvements to social housing sector](#)

News story

Experts from across the housing sector have been brought together to form a new expert panel to advise the government on the delivery of the social housing white paper.



The [social housing white paper](#) – published last year – outlines a wide-ranging package of reforms to improve standards for residents and enhance regulation of the sector.

The reforms aim to deliver long-lasting and meaningful change – addressing safety issues, strengthening the complaints process, professionalising staff and rebalancing the relationship between resident and landlord.

Eddie Hughes MP, Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing said:

Giving social housing residents a stronger voice and ensuring landlords raise standards is at the heart of our landmark reforms to transform the sector.

The expert panel will help to ensure that we deliver on these reforms, bringing together people who will scrutinise our plans and guarantee we achieve the vision set out in the Charter.

The panel will meet four times over the next year to provide scrutiny and advice as the government implements the social housing white paper. This follows extensive engagement with residents, housing associations and other stakeholders.

The government has already made progress to improve the quality and safety of social housing – launching a [review of the Decent Homes Standard](#), a [working group on electrical safety](#), and holding a [consultation on smoke and carbon monoxide alarms](#), as well as running a national campaign to raise awareness of

how to seek redress when things go wrong.

The social housing white paper outlines that every social housing resident should expect to:

- be safe in your home
- know how your landlord is performing
- have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly
- be treated with respect
- have your voice heard by your landlord
- have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
- be supported to take your first step to ownership

Membership of the Expert Challenge Panel is:

- Chartered Institute for Housing
- Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence
- Communities that Work
- Confederation of Co-operative Housing
- De Montfort University
- Grenfell United
- HACT
- Local Government Association
- National Federation of Tenant Management Organisations
- National Housing Federation
- Shelter
- Social Value Lab
- Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse
- TAROE Trust
- Tpas

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£9.5m investment for military space communications

To be launched in 2023 and approximately the size of a washing machine, the satellite will support the 'Titania Operational Concept Demonstrator' which is exploring the military utility of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) direct-to-earth free-space optical communications (FSOC).

As modern battlespace technology requires increasingly high bandwidth, FSOC has the potential to transform military communications with its ability to transfer large volumes of data, with a low risk of detection or interception.

The technology works by transmitting the data at high speeds via narrow laser beam between two very specific points. In this case Titania will communicate with 'Puck', Dstl's new Optical Ground Station – carrying on the tradition of the UK naming space projects and satellites after Shakespearian characters.

Dstl's space programme manager, Dr Mike O'Callaghan said:

The Titania space mission will accelerate the development and adoption of space-based optical communications, allowing our Armed Forces the ability to operate in an increasingly contested environment.

The Titania satellite will support the UK space sector and provide a solid foundation on which to conduct experimentation into FSOC and allow the science to be developed. We are delighted to be working with In-Space Missions on this highly innovative project.

With transfer speeds of multi-Gigabytes per second, the increased rate of data transfer provided by FSOC will enable faster military decision making, and when launched, Titania will focus on demonstrating the rapid transfer of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance data.

This world-leading science will inform choices for military space capabilities and could be utilised for future military satellite communications, potentially providing high speed connectivity to link air, land and maritime platforms.

The satellite will be built in the UK by Hampshire-based In-Space Missions, with the contract directly supporting 20 jobs at the company and in the UK supply chain. Forming an important part of developing the MOD's space capability, the contract follows the recent launch of UK Space Command at RAF High Wycombe, which saw the headquarters of Defence space capabilities and operations officially 'stood up'.

Commander of UK Space Command, Air Vice Marshal Paul Godfrey said:

Following our stand-up as a Joint Command, the Titania satellite contract is the next exciting step for the UK in space.

It's a brilliant example of the partnerships being developed and enhanced across the UK space enterprise, developing capabilities that not only enable military operations, but underpin countless activities essential to our way of life and the safety of our nation.

Supported by the £24 billion uplift announced by the Prime Minister last

year, the programme reaffirms commitments outlined in the Defence Command Paper with a focus on developing space capabilities and operating in this domain. The construction of the Titania satellite is part of the MOD's investment of over £1.4 billion into next-generation technology in the Defence Space Portfolio across the next 10 years.

The contract to build the satellite has been awarded through the Serapis Lot 2 commercial framework, run by Dstl in collaboration with BAE Systems. The framework aims to reach non-traditional defence suppliers, small and medium-sized enterprises, and academia to develop new capabilities with the space domain.

[UK calls for greater global ambition as UN finds world warming faster than expected](#)

- UN report out today warns we could reach 1.5 degrees warming in the next decades without immediate action
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson and COP26 President Alok Sharma call for urgent steps to cut global emissions
- UK lobbying countries to increase ambition on climate change ahead of COP26 in Glasgow in November

The UK is calling for urgent global action in response to a UN report published today on the science of climate change, that says the planet has warmed more than previously estimated.

This latest report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a stark warning from scientists around the world that human activity is damaging the planet at an alarming rate.

The report warns that climate change is already affecting every region across the globe and that without urgent action to limit warming, heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and loss of Arctic Sea ice, snow cover and permafrost, will all increase while carbon sinks will become less effective at slowing the growth of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

It highlights that cutting global emissions, starting immediately, to net zero by mid-century would give a good chance of limiting global warming to 1.5C in the long-term and help to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

The Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Today's report makes for sobering reading, and it is clear that the

next decade is going to be pivotal to securing the future of our planet. We know what must be done to limit global warming – consign coal to history and shift to clean energy sources, protect nature and provide climate finance for countries on the frontline.

The UK is leading the way, decarbonising our economy faster than any country in the G20 over the last two decades. I hope today's IPCC report will be a wake-up call for the world to take action now, before we meet in Glasgow in November for the critical COP26 summit.

As extreme events are felt across the globe, from wildfires in North America to floods in China, across Europe, India and parts of Africa, and heatwaves in Siberia, COP President Alok Sharma has been negotiating with governments and businesses to increase global climate ambition and take immediate action to help halve global emissions in the next decade and reach net zero emissions by mid-century in order to keep the 1.5C goal set out in the Paris Agreement within reach.

The UK is already showing leadership with clear plans to reduce its emissions by 68% by 2030 and 78% by 2035, leading to net zero by 2050. Today, more than 70% of the world's economy is now covered by a net zero target – up from 30% when the UK took over as incoming COP Presidency. In May, all G7 countries came forward with 2030 emission reduction targets that put them on a pathway to reaching this goal by 2050.

Some progress has been made globally since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015. More than 85 new or updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to 2030, representing over 110 parties, have been submitted to set out how countries will cut their emissions and address the climate crisis. However, today's report shows that more action is urgently needed.

In a meeting with scientists later today (Monday 9th August) Alok Sharma will encourage countries that have not already done so, to urgently submit new or updated NDCs with their plans for ambitious climate action ahead of the vital COP26 summit later this year in Glasgow, particularly the major economies of the G20 who are responsible for over 80% of global emissions.

In response to the report, Mr Sharma said:

The science is clear, the impacts of the climate crisis can be seen around the world and if we don't act now, we will continue to see the worst effects impact lives, livelihoods and natural habitats.

Our message to every country, government, business and part of society is simple. The next decade is decisive, follow the science and embrace your responsibility to keep the goal of 1.5C alive.

We can do this together, by coming forward with ambitious 2030 emission reduction targets and long-term strategies with a pathway to net zero by the middle of the century, and taking action now to

end coal power, accelerate the roll out of electric vehicles, tackle deforestation and reduce methane emissions.

UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

The impacts of climate change are already affecting lives and livelihoods around the world, with increasing frequency and severity. Alongside the need to drive down emissions, this report rings the alarm to urgently help vulnerable communities adapt and build resilience – in developed and developing countries alike.

Protecting the most vulnerable is a priority for the UK's COP26 Presidency. World leaders must heed the science and work together to adapt to our changing climate, as well as act to avert, minimise and address loss and damage for those on the frontline.

[Reliance Social Housing CIC's grading under review](#)

Press release

Providers being investigated for an issue regarding their compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard are added to the regulator's GUR list.



The Regulator of Social Housing reports that Reliance Social Housing Community Interest Company has been placed on its gradings under review list today (9 August 2021).

At the time of the last [Statistical Data Return](#), the provider had fewer than 1,000 social housing units and therefore does not have a current published

regulatory grading in accordance with our established procedures.

The regulator is currently investigating matters which may impact on Reliance's compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

The regulator's [gradings under review list](#) is available on the [website](#).

Further information

For press office contact details, see our [Media enquiries page](#).

For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

Notes to editors

1. The GUR lists providers where we are investigating a matter that might result in them being assessed as non-compliant in relation to the regulator's Governance and Financial Viability Standard.
2. The [regulatory standards](#) can be found on the RSH website.
3. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.

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[Tom Harris appointed to the HS2 Ltd Board](#)

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has today (9 August 2021) appointed Tom Harris as a Non-Executive Director to the [High Speed 2 \(HS2\) Limited](#) Board.

Tom has been appointed for a 3-year term, commencing on 1 July 2021, following an open and fair competition.

Tom, who has been a Non-Executive Director on the HS2 Ltd Board since July 2020, was appointed as a community engagement leader to strengthen the

company's focus on community engagement, further ensuring that those impacted by HS2 continue to be listened to and treated with the respect they deserve.

Tom, a former parliamentarian, was also a member of the [Expert Challenge Panel](#) supporting the government's independent review of the railway industry, which recently resulted in the publication of the government's plan to transform the railways in Great Britain, the [Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail](#).

This appointment has been made in accordance with the [Governance Code for public appointments](#). It follows the recent appointment of several other non-executive directors to the board to strengthen oversight and scrutiny of the UK's largest infrastructure project: Sir Jonathan Thompson in April this year, and Ian King and Elaine Holt last year.

HS2 Minister Andrew Stephenson said:

I am delighted that Tom will be able to continue his important work ensuring that the company remains fully focused on the people the project impacts.

HS2 is committed to continuously improving its engagement with local communities and minimising the impact of construction wherever possible, through new best practices and cutting-edge innovation.

Tom Harris said:

I'm delighted to have been appointed to the HS2 Ltd Board. I've enjoyed being a part of this project over the past year, helping to strengthen the company's focus on community engagement and ensure everyone impacted by the new railway feels they are being listened to and treated with respect.

As HS2 moves north, with work now underway on Phase 2a extending the line to Crewe, and the bill for the leg to Manchester currently being drafted, it's more important than ever that HS2 Ltd is clear, concise and respectful in its dealings with those affected, and I look forward to ensuring that happens.

The process to appoint a new Chair of HS2 Ltd is underway, following Allan Cook's departure on 31 July 2021.

The vacancy for Chair of HS2 Ltd is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Following the publication of the [independent Oakervee review](#) in February 2020, which recommended proceeding with HS2, Prime Minister Boris Johnson confirmed the project would go ahead to deliver better connectivity across the country, greater capacity on the rail network and shorter journey times.

Construction of Phase One of HS2 is now supporting over 16,000 jobs and more than 650 apprenticeships, with the project expected to have a lasting impact on jobs, skills and businesses in the UK, as part of the government's [Plan for Jobs](#). Over 2,100 companies now have contracts to deliver work on HS2 and 97% of these are UK-based businesses. In February 2021, the [Phase 2a Bill was given Royal Assent](#) in a historic milestone that will bring the new high-speed railway to the north.