

BROKENSHIRE UNVEILS NEW MEASURES TO STAMP OUT 'POOR DOORS'

- Measures will tackle segregation and help put a stop to so-called 'poor doors' and playgrounds that keep children apart
- Announcement comes as Communities Secretary unveils new plans for a 'national conversation' after Brexit
- Research reveals extent of stigma towards social housing

New measures to tackle stigma and help end the segregation of social housing residents in mixed-tenure developments have been unveiled by Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.

The move aims to stamp out so-called "poor doors" – where entrances for social housing residents stigmatise and divide them from other residents in the development – and other forms of segregation, such as restrictions on access to playgrounds.

This month marks 100 years since the advent of social housing, but a new survey today reveals nearly a quarter of people would "feel uncomfortable" living close to council and housing association properties.

Under the measures, planning guidance will be toughened up and a new Design Manual will promote best practice in inclusive design.

They form a part of the Government's new Communities Framework, which lays out a vision for building communities with a stronger sense of belonging and shared prosperity.

It also commits the Government to leading a 'national conversation' with communities across the country after Brexit about the type of country we want to be.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

I've been appalled by stories of segregation and tenants being denied access to certain shared facilities such as playgrounds.

Social housing has transformed the lives of millions of people over the past 100 years. It has the power to continually shape lives for the better, but we need to see residents being treated with the respect they deserve.

We want to end that real sense of stigma social housing residents have experienced, and today's new measures show our commitment to stamping it out, before it can begin.

In March, it was reported that social housing residents at the Baylis Old

School site in Lambeth, south London, were prevented from accessing a communal playground which could only be used by their wealthier neighbours.

The new Design Manual will set clear expectations for the inclusivity of future developments and help ensure planning decisions promote social interaction in communities.

The new survey, the first-ever detailed research on public attitudes to social housing, shows a generational divide in attitudes, with older people less likely to feel comfortable living close to council and housing association properties. 38 per cent of over 65s reported feeling comfortable, compared to 53 per cent of 18 to 25-year-olds.

As part of the Government's engagement with social housing residents before and after publication of the Social Housing Green Paper, residents raised stigma as a key issue facing them. The new measures follow the publication of this Green Paper, which made clear our commitment to tackling this issue.