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Serving our Communities

NFA Annual Survey Results 2019



The NFA would like to thank all the ALMOs which responded to the Annual Survey. Further information about the ALMO sector can be found on the NFA website.

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Whilst all reasonable care and attention has been taken in compiling this publication, the authors, publishers and editorial team regret that they cannot assume responsibility for any error or omission that it contains.

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Introduction

2019 was a year of continuity for the ALMO sector despite what was a relatively volatile political environment. Our members continued to deliver excellent core housing management services, as well as a range of other services, to support people and communities, including supporting tenants with the continuing rollout of Universal Credit.

In November 2019, the NFA published its review of best practice in housing management in the ALMO sector, highlighting the work that members do to deliver modern housing services against an increasingly challenging backdrop¹. We also celebrated Tower Hamlets Homes being named UK Housing Landlord of the Year; an ALMO winning for a second year running, which is quite an achievement considering the size of the sector.

ALMOs are housing companies which are 100% owned by their parent local authority. ALMOs put tenants at the heart of what they do, with around a third of boards represented by Tenant Board members.

There are 30 ALMOs across the country, managing around **413,000** properties.

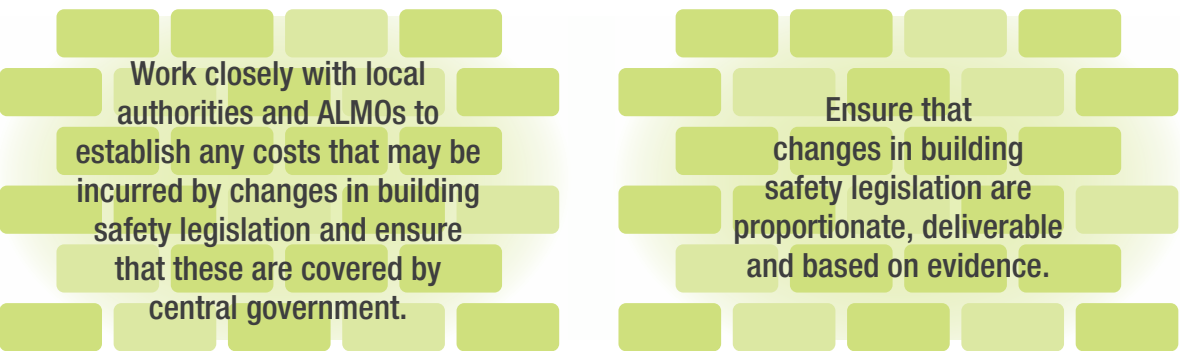
ALMOs deliver core housing services alongside a range of other services which meet their social objectives, and the objectives of their parent local authority.

We were pleased to see the new government’s commitments to ending rough sleeping by the end of the parliamentary period, to empower tenants and support the continued supply of social homes, and to continue working with the sector to ensure every home is safe and secure. We are, however, still awaiting the publication of the Social Housing White Paper to clarify next steps around tenant empowerment, building safety, regulation and new supply.

In the sphere of building and fire safety, ALMOs have not delayed getting on with ensuring that buildings are safe while awaiting any changes to legislation and regulation which may come out of the Grenfell Tower Fire Public Inquiry and government consultation. Within our survey this year, we look at the work that ALMOs have been undertaking in this area, and assess some of the additional costs which are being carried within Housing Revenue Accounts, most especially in areas with high numbers of high rise and complex buildings.

NFA asks in the sphere of building safety

For the government to:






ALMOs have continued to build and acquire properties at a steady rate, with an additional 1,961 properties added to the sector in 2019. However, as with previous years, the amount of new stock is not sufficient to replace those properties sold through Right to Buy, which means that the sector is still shrinking. The government cannot hope to meet its commitment to end rough sleeping by the end of this parliamentary period if it does not considerably increase the amount of genuinely affordable housing, including council housing. We are still awaiting the government’s response to the Right to Buy consultation, which was undertaken in 2018, where we set out key areas of reform which would support the one-to-one replacement of properties sold under the Right to Buy.

The sector is planning to build 12,352 properties over the next five years, which is an increase of 70% on their reported plans at the end of 2018. This strongly suggests that changes to the policy environment, including the removal of the HRA debt cap, have enabled ALMOs and local authorities to extend their longer-term building plans. It is worth noting, however, that the majority of these properties are due to be developed within the Housing Revenue Accounts, so increased pressure on these accounts from unexpected costs could lead ALMOs and local authorities to revise their building plans down.

The impact of COVID-19 means that these plans will be delayed in delivery as organisations focus on emergency and essential work only during the crisis. When the time is right, we will need to look at the recovery strategy for post Covid-19; councils and ALMOs building new social housing would be an ideal government investment to help boost local economies.

NFA asks in the sphere of council house building:




For the government to:

-  invest in social rented housing, increase grant levels and the total grant available to build new social rented homes
-  continue to support a council house building renaissance allowing local authority control over the self-financing HRA
-  reform Right to Buy to ensure one-to-one replacement and an equitable and sustainable home ownership offer for council tenants in the future.

Finally, 2019 was the year that many councils declared a climate emergency and seriously started to plan how they can reduce carbon emissions and mitigate against the impact of climate change. As council housing providers, ALMOs are a core part of the response; through current stock and new build, supply lines, delivery of additional services, and as local employers. We look at some of the work that ALMOs are doing in this area within this report.

NFA asks in the sphere of climate change:

For the government to:

-  develop strategies with property owners and managers to meet the 2050 zero-carbon target, with the provision of seed funding and flexibility on rents to share savings with tenants
-  align a new DHS and the Clean Growth Strategy, bringing all social homes up to an EPC Band C by 2030.
-  include improved energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy in any revised Decent Homes Standard (DHS)

¹ Managing to make a difference, Housing Management in the ALMO Sector, November 2019

Summary

- At 31st December 2019, the NFA membership consisted of 30 ALMOs managing 412,990 properties across 33 local authority areas:
 - 408,348 Council/ ALMO owned stock
 - 1,818 homes managed on behalf of another social landlord or housing association
 - 2,824 homes managed in the private rented sector
- Seven ALMOs** have another housing company for development or housing needs (with a total of 10 companies); and **15 parent local authorities** have other housing companies (with a total of 21 companies).
- 31% of ALMO Board members are Tenant Board members, with 36% Independent and 29% Council nominees.
- The majority of ALMOs deliver services on behalf of the local authority outside the core housing management services. The most delivered services are lettings, allocations or housing advice (79%), money or financial inclusion services (72%), services tackling worklessness (55%) and homelessness services (83%). Around half of ALMOs provide management or maintenance services for other non-domestic properties.
- 43% of ALMOs provide services in the private rented sector, while 45% of ALMOs deliver care and support services. 52% of ALMOs utilise their expertise to deliver services into the wider marketplace as a way of generating additional income for the ALMO.
- 90% of ALMOs employ apprentices as part of their commitment to support employability and develop the capacity of the sector. Around 386 apprentices

- are employed across a wide variety of roles, with the majority in trade roles.
- The sector acquired or built a total of 1,961 homes in 2019 which is broadly in line with last year's new build figures. The majority of these (59%) are for Affordable Rent:
 - 1,256 new build homes
 - 705 acquisitions
 - However, the sector sold at least 2,348 homes under Right to Buy (RtB), which means the sector is still not replacing RtB sales one-for-one.
 - In the last 5 years, the sector has contributed around 8,262 new build and acquisition properties.
 - Over the next 12 months, the sector plans to build 2,567 new homes and acquire 904 homes, a total of 3,471 homes.
 - Over the next 5 years, the sector has plans to build at least 12,352 properties. This is a 70% increase on what was reported in December 2018, strongly suggesting that the more stable policy environment and lifting of the HRA debt cap has enabled ALMOs and their parent local authorities to review their new build plans. In order to maintain this, after COVID-19, we need the government to put in place a plan with the sector to ensure it is able to continue its development of new council housing.

Part One: Stock Management

In December 2019, the ALMO sector consisted of 30 ALMOs which managed a total of **412,990 properties** across 33 local authorities; of these, **408,348** properties were Council/ ALMO owned stock.²

Since we last reported, one ALMO has been disbanded: Newark & Sherwood Homes.

1. Number of homes managed by region

Region	Number of ALMOs	Total Stock Managed
North	10	166,806
Midlands	7	101,413
South West	4	25, 589
London & Southern	9	119,182
TOTAL	30	412,990

The majority of the above stock (98.9%) is Council or ALMO owned. Eight ALMOs (27%) managed a total of **1,818 properties** on behalf of another social landlord or housing association, while 13 ALMOs (43%) managed **2,824 properties** in the private rented sector.

Housing Revenue Accounts

Based on 29 responses, the HRA is managed in **16** cases by the local authority, in **seven** cases by the ALMO, and **six** cases in joint arrangement.

2. Council property nature and ownership

Property Type	Number of properties	Percentage of stock
Council owned general needs (inc. age designated stock)	339,740	83%
Council owned supported housing	19,015	5%
Council owned leasehold	43,549	11%
Council owned shared ownership	444	<1%
ALMO owned general needs (inc. age designated stock)	1,442	<1%
ALMO owned supported housing	54	<1%
ALMO owned leasehold	2	<1%
ALMO owned shared ownership	270	<1%
OTHER ³	3,832	1%
Total stock	408, 348	

² Data based on returns from 29 ALMOs. We have used the headline figures from one ALMO from the 2018 data return.
³ As classified by the ALMO: includes offices, day centres, non-residential properties, traveller sites, HMOs, Alms Houses, retail units, community rooms, shops, temporary accommodation, hostels and private lets. Does not include garages or sheds.



Eight ALMOs have Registered Provider status.	21 ALMOs have a direct labour organisation (DLO).	Two ALMOs have a separate repairs subsidiary.	Six ALMOs are part of a group structure.
Seven ALMOs have at least one housing company for development or housing needs (with a total of 10 companies); and 15 parent local authorities have other housing companies (with a total of 21 companies). This is largely unchanged from last year.			

3. Decent homes and building safety

We welcomed the government’s confirmation, at the time of the Queen’s Speech, that it will publish a White Paper on Social Housing, taking forward the issues covered in the Green Paper “A New Deal for Social Housing”, published in Summer 2018. The Queen’s Speech also announced two Bills on Fire Safety and Building Safety, to take forward the conclusions of the Hackett Review and the outcome of Phase 1 of the Grenfell Inquiry. There is not yet sufficient detail on any of these to attempt a costing of their implications for local authority housing, other than to note that they are likely to be very substantial. It is unlikely that local authorities will be able to resource the necessary investment and management reforms with current business plan envelopes without compromising other essential investment and we therefore call upon government to help fund these additional but necessary works. Within the annual survey, many ALMOs reported the additional inspections/ works that they had been carrying out to ensure high rise and complex blocks are safe for residents in the period since the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, and with the subsequent concerns about product safety (i.e. fire doors and cladding compartmentalisation).

ALMOs reported various activities including:

- undertaking and updating fire safety risk assessments (FSRA) and works pertaining to FSRAs; commissioning external fire safety consultants, reviewing fire strategies and inspection schedules
 - some ALMOs have moved to intrusive type 4 risk assessments
 - fire stopping works;
- assessing and replacing fire doors;
 - installation of sprinklers;
 - reviewing and renewing signage;
 - cladding removal (where applicable)
 - working with tenant scrutiny groups and panels to review fire safety activities, including communication.

11 ALMOs provided the costs of the additional work which was carried out from summer 2017 until December 2019. Clearly these costs are related to the size of the organisation, the amount of high rise/ complex accommodation and the level of rectification required, however they give a good indication of the considerable additional spend within some local authorities which has not been covered by central government funding. Building safety is an absolute priority for ALMOs and local authorities, and it is likely that these costs will prevent other non-essential HRA investment, including building new homes.

Five ALMOs reported that they had spent between £2 million and £10 million, with three ALMOs spending more than £5 million.	Two ALMOs reported they had spent between £500,000 and £1.5 million.	Three ALMOs reported that they had spent between £173,000 and £230,000.	One ALMO reported they had spent £45,000.
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Spend on additional work, unplanned prior to the Grenfell Tower fire, since summer 2017.

Case studies

St Leger Homes has carried out the following work over and above ACM removal which was not planned prior to the Grenfell Tower fire, and which has cost around £6 million:

- Intrusive Type 4 surveys
- Additional fire stopping works to strengthen compartmentalisation
- Other fire safety works including reviewing and renewing signage, silencing of communal fire alarms, reviewing fire strategies, additional door closer checks, additional smoke detector checks etc.
- Retrofitting of sprinklers to 603 flats across 9 high rise blocks

Stockport Homes:

Following the fire, all tower blocks were inspected by the GM fire service. It has been agreed that sprinklers across all 22 high-rise blocks will be installed within the next 14 months (at a cost of about £10million), which will be followed by installations of sprinklers into all sheltered schemes . Sprinklers have been fitted into some supported housing, and all new building developments that require a sprinkler system will have one installed. The programme to upgrade all fire doors has been accelerated. The frequency of fire risk assessments has been increased.

Your Homes Newcastle:

The fire door replacement programme was accelerated following the Grenfell tragedy and an inspection regime of the doors is in place. YHN has also introduced Contactless Chip Solutions (CCS) which are chips installed in the fire doors and scanned upon inspection, providing a robust asset management solution.

Cornwall Housing Partnership have carried out full fire risk assessments on all blocks, reviewed all fire doors and developed an upgrade programme as required. The organisation’s Tenant Scrutiny Panel has carried out an independent review and CHL are currently putting in place all the recommendations.

Sutton Housing Partnership commissioned extensive fire safety engineering inspections and surveys of all high and low rise blocks, specialist advisory reports on fire safety performance which included assessment of product installation, cladding, structural elements and compartmentalisation. From these reports, fire safety remediation works and capital works projects were commissioned, including the replacement of front doors within blocks, remodeling of communal areas and stairwell escape routes, installation of additional fire stopping and compartmentalisation, and installation of suppression and warning systems. In addition to the Type 1 inspections of the communal areas, SHP will be undertaking Type 4 intrusive inspections from April 2020 to further assess the compartmentalisation and structural elements of the buildings and programme in additional remediation works where required. The Risk and Compliance Team work very closely with the Housing Management team to further strengthen Person centric Fire Risk Assessment information, which is fed into the Building Risk Profile to provide a combined assessment of blocks.

In the light of the building safety proposals, the majority of ALMOs are planning or preparing for additional building safety works over the next five years. Those ALMOs with particularly high levels of high rise and complex buildings, especially London ALMOs, are facing considerable additional costs within the HRA, with one ALMO reporting an anticipated spend of around £52 million. Activities being undertaken include:

- continued installation of sprinklers
 - upgrading low-risk external cladding as part of planned programmes
 - addressing recommendations from FRAs
 - installing fire stopping enhancements
- employment of new building safety coordinator/ manager posts, and dedicated building safety officers to carry out scheduled and ad hoc work
 - tower block fire annunciation pilots

4. The climate emergency

Around two thirds of district, county, unitary and metropolitan councils in the UK have declared a climate emergency, including nearly all of the parent councils where ALMOs operate. Climate emergency declarations recognise the impact of climate change around the world and the role local government will have to play to limit global warming to manageable levels. Declarations pledge to make councils and areas carbon neutral by the earliest possible date; in many cases, 2030. The national government has its own pledge to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 with investment in clean energy solutions and green infrastructure.

The social housing sector consists of four million households (approximately 17% of all households), with local authorities managing 7% of this stock. Just over half of properties in the social housing sector (56%) have an Energy Efficiency Rating A-C, although this is better than the private rented sector (33%) and owner-occupier sector (29%).

Considering the fact that carbon emissions from homes currently account for about 20% of emissions, it is clear that neither local government nor national government targets will be met without considerable investment in existing homes, the majority of which were constructed before 2000. There is also much work to be done to tackle high carbon emissions in construction and new build, as well as changes to how planning is undertaken locally.

The climate emergency is also tied to fuel poverty and general inequality; and poorer communities are more at risk of the negative consequences of global warming, including flooding. There is, therefore, a strong imperative to work with communities to limit the impact. There is also the opportunity to look more widely at an organisation’s impact; for example, divesting pension funds from carbon-intensive investments.

NFA asks

- Strategies to be developed to help property owners and managers meet the 2050 zero carbon target, with the provision of seed funding and flexibility on rent to share savings with tenants.
- Improved energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy to be part of any Decent Homes Standard.
- Alignment between a new DHS and the Clean Growth Strategy bringing all social homes up to an EPC Band C by 2030.
- We support the direction of the proposed new future homes standard and support a 31% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025 compared to the current standard. However, the NFA is urging the Government to go further and aim for a 50% reduction by 2025.

Within the annual survey, ALMOs provided information on a range of areas that they were working on to support their parent local authorities to meet climate change targets. Examples include:

Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing:

Initiatives include the introduction of electric vans into the property services fleet; removal of 10,000 gas fires from council housing; upgrade of E/F rated properties; ongoing boiler upgrades to AA rated; ongoing window and door replacement programmes to make properties more energy efficient; new homes built with assistive technology and remote heating controls; LED lighting and passive motion sensors; electric car charging points to all new homes.



Stockport Homes (SH)

Since 2010, SH has had its own dedicated Climate Change Strategy and in 2019, a new five-year strategy was approved. The organisation has a dedicated Environmental & Energy Team to deliver the strategy. Since 2011, over £60m has been secured in external funding, initiatives and grant, which has helped to deliver mass roll-out of renewable energy technology. SH are also part of the Homes as Energy Systems - ERDF project, which has seen them secure £2.4m of European funding to deliver over 450 low carbon measures over the next 12 months, including thermal wall insulation, PV and batteries and the roll-out of heat pumps.

Nottingham City Homes

Nottingham is the first place in the UK to pilot the ground-breaking whole-house renovation approach known as EnergieSprong, with ten homes successfully completed and a further 17 now underway.

The EnergieSprong approach, pioneered in the Netherlands, upgrades a home with innovative energy-saving and energy-generating measures, including new highly insulated outside walls and windows, a solar roof, and a state-of-the-art heating system. The end result is homes that are almost net zero carbon. This phase of the scheme is being funded through a European Regional Development Fund grant of £5m.

The project will be rolled out to 138 properties throughout the city, managed on the council’s behalf by Nottingham City Homes, with further phases also being planned. The aim is to not only make the houses warmer and reduce energy bills for tenants, but also improve the environmental performance of the homes, helping towards Nottingham’s ambition to become carbon neutral by 2028.

Your Homes Newcastle (YHN)

YHN are committed to supporting the council to tackle climate change and reach their target of net zero by 2030. Work currently being undertaken includes:

- Using robotic technology (QBot) to insulate tenants’ homes. Two thirds of customers who have had the installation installed reported a significant reduction in energy bills.
- In 2019, working in partnership with National Energy Action (NEA) to deliver one-to-one support and guidance on Smart Meters and energy use to over 1,000 customers aged 65 and over as part of the Smart Energy GB campaign.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster

St Leger Homes achieved the Silver Award in the SHIFT (Sustainable Homes Index for Tomorrow) in 2019 in recognition of its work to reduce the carbon footprint of council housing in Doncaster.

The SHIFT assessment looked at the 20,000 council homes managed by St Leger Homes, as well as their offices and supply chain, measuring them against 21 environmental factors.

Key highlights of the work include:

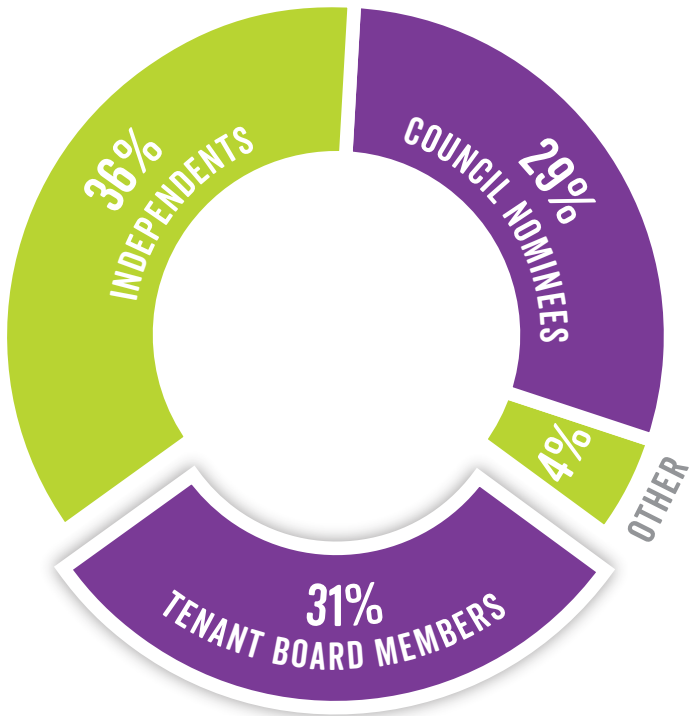
- Over the last two years, 3.3kgs of carbon dioxide per home have been saved as a result of engagement activities such as ‘keep warm’ drop-in sessions and energy saving information.
- Last year, 97% of waste generated by St Leger Homes’ offices was diverted away from landfill and instead turned into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF). RDF can be used to generate heat and electricity.

Sutton Housing Partnership

London Borough of Sutton declared a climate emergency in 2019, and Sutton Housing Partnership is introducing a range of measures to improve the efficiency of properties and increase overall performance. As part of this, the organisation is piloting EnergieSprong deep retrofit at eight properties and has been awarded match funding from multiple schemes to deliver in the region of 100 units across the borough. The organisation is also evaluating the viability of stock against the 2030 emission targets to tackle the worst performing units, and those that will present challenges in increasing the SAP rating to band C or above.

Part Two: Staffing and Governance

1. ALMO board composition



ALMOs have always maintained a strong tenant presence on their boards, and this has not changed in 2019. **Just under a third of board members are tenants (31%), 36% are independent board members, and 29% are council nominees.**

The mean average size of an ALMO board is 11 members. The majority of ALMO board chairs are independents (21 out of 29, 72%), four are tenants (14%) and four are councillors (14%).

75% of ALMOs provide remuneration to board members (25% pay just the chair, 50% pay the chair and some/all of the board members). An additional 11% are considering paying in the future.

2. Apprentices

The ALMO sector continues to invest in the future housing workforce through apprenticeship programmes. 90% of ALMOs have apprentices working within their organisations, employing around 386 apprentices. The majority of these apprentices (64%) are employed within the trades:



Part Three: Services

Alongside core housing management, ALMOs have continued to deliver a range of services on behalf of their parent local authority. Within this section, we look at services delivered on behalf of the local authority and services provided as a market product.

1. Services delivered

26 out of 29 ALMOs (90%) deliver other services on behalf of their local authority. These include:

Homelessness work	83%
Lettings, allocations or housing advice	79%
Money or financial inclusion services	72%
Tackling worklessness	55%
Emergency out of hours services	41%
Cross-tenure ASB management	38%
Private rented services	34%
Family support services	34%
Adult support services	34%
Call Centre	24%
Writing/ developing housing strategy	21%
HR/ back office services	21%
Project management consultancy	10%
Responses	29

15 ALMOs out of 29 (52%) provide **management or maintenance services for other non-domestic properties.** This includes:

- Educational establishments: **Eight ALMOs (28%)**
- Commercial & retail services: **Eight ALMOs (28%)**
- Other (including a range of council-owned/ public buildings, and shops): **Six ALMOs (21%)**

For those ALMOs which deliver services in the private rented sector, the services delivered include:

- Housing management services: **Eight ALMOs (28%)**
- Repairs and maintenance services (including gas services): **Nine ALMOs (31%)**
- Lettings and allocations: **Nine ALMOs (31%)**
- Other services (including working with Private Rented Sector (PRS) landlords to place homeless people; a free tenant matching service for PRS landlords; leading on co-located multi-agency employment, benefit and mental health support to PRS tenants: **Three ALMOs (10%).**

In the last year **six ALMOs** have moved away from providing services in the PRS and two have moved in to providing services.

13 ALMOs (45%) deliver **care and support services**. This covers a range of services, including (but not limited to) provision of telecare and community alarms, care and support services for specialist groups, independent living support, day care services, respite, extra care and sheltered housing services, assistance with pathways from hospital, mental health services and move-on accommodation and floating support.

🏠 **11 ALMOs** deliver care and support services on behalf of their local authority (38%) and one ALMO additionally does so for another local authority

🏠 **Five ALMOs** deliver as a market product (17%)

15 out of 29 ALMOs (52%) utilise their expertise to deliver services in the **wider marketplace** as a means of generating additional income for the ALMOs. This includes:

🏠 Repairs and maintenance services (including gas and handyman services): 11 ALMOs (38%)

🏠 Development or asset management: One ALMO (3%)

🏠 Estate or grounds maintenance: Four ALMOs (14%)

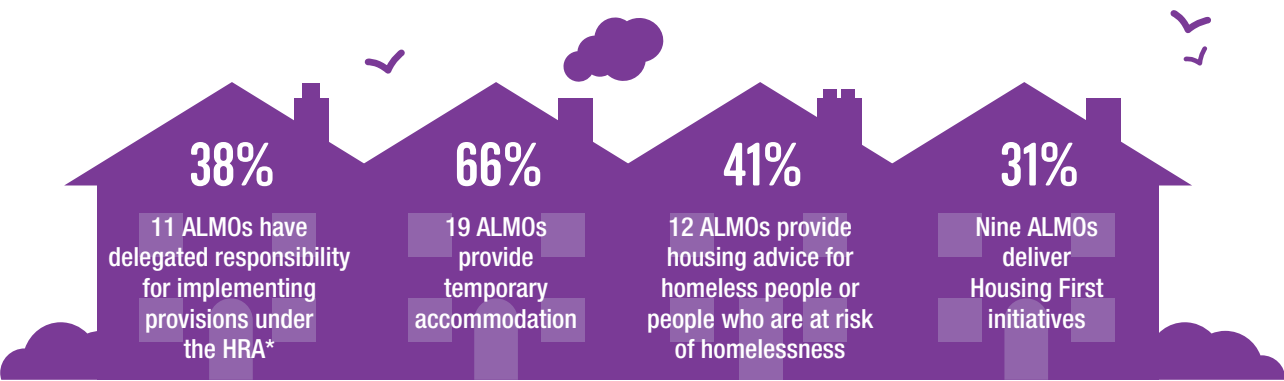
🏠 Care and/or support services to private homes: Six ALMOs (21%)

🏠 Other services: Three ALMOs (10%)

2. A focus on homelessness

Homelessness services have become increasingly burdened over the last 10 years as the numbers of homeless and precariously housed people have increased; according to the Annual Rough Sleeping Count, there has been a 165% increase in rough sleeping (the most visible type of homelessness) since 2010, with sector experts agreeing that this under-represents the true number. Consequently, ending rough sleeping during this parliamentary period is a key policy pledge for the current government and the sector.

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA*) in 2018 placed new duties on local authorities and has been designed to drive a more preventative approach to managing homelessness. As trusted housing partners, ALMOs have been working with their parent local authorities to introduce new ways of working to reduce homelessness and support those who are already homeless. We highlight examples of this work below to demonstrate the scope of these services and some of the innovation happening in the sector. The NFA will be undertaking more detailed work on this in 2020.



Derby Homes

Derby Homes are developing an integrated response to homelessness in partnership with other local stakeholders. Initiatives include:

- 1. Proactive Engagement and Enforcement Partnership:** A multi-agency team co-ordinated by Public Health and made up of a wide variety of organisations such as the police, probation services, drug and alcohol support groups, religious and faith organisations and housing providers. The PEEP provides voluntary treatment, enforcement where necessary, and probation recall and arrest.
- 2. Housing-led support for entrenched rough sleepers:** an asset-based approach which supports a small number of the most complex cases. Last year two people were identified through the PEEP and were supported from the streets to employment through the programme. The housing-led support works with coaches from the Mayday trust.
- 3. SafeSpace** – which provides basic shelter, rapid assessment and support to deliver housing pathways for rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping. This is another example of strong partnership working with funding provided by MHCLG, Derby Homes, Police and Crime Commissioner and Public Health. The delivery of the model includes the faith sector, drug and alcohol treatment services, a supported accommodation provider and a paramedic seconded from East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS).
- 4. Work with the private rented sector (PRS)** – prior to the HRA coming into force, Derby Homes calculated that it would create a need for an additional 160 homes. This led to the development of a new team to work with the PRS to create these homes and support individuals, landlords and lettings agencies to maintain tenancies. In 2018/2019, the PRS team achieved 138 new PRS tenancies which either prevented or relieved homelessness. In 2019/2020 (to end of Q3), the PRS team had created a further 128 new PRS tenancies.
- 5. Work with the probation service** to support offenders and prisoners with wraparound housing and support in partnership with the YMCA. The STAR project creates a pathway for offenders leaving prison to be housed in good quality accommodation with tailored support provided by the YMCA. Derby Homes own seconded probation service officer provides the link between probation, the prison and housing, and works closely with the support workers when ready to move on into their own independent tenancy



Your Homes Newcastle (YHN)

YHN provide a number of different homelessness interventions, which include:

1. **Refugee move-on service** for newly granted refugees leaving asylum accommodation
2. **Hospital discharge service** to prevent people presenting as homeless when they leave hospital, which resulted in no homeless presentations from hospital in 2019.
3. **Advice and drop-in service for 16 and 17 year olds**, including family mediation. Service provided to 16 and 17 year olds is innovative in that the social work provision is situated within the housing organisation, rather than outside of it. The young person is treated as a child in need but the social worker is able to navigate the system more successfully due to being embedded within it, resulting in the number of 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless reducing from 131 in 2012/13 to 38 in 2018/19.
4. **Provide settled accommodation** to cases accepted as homeless relief cases by the local authority.
5. **Temporary accommodation** through a 10 unit hostel and 16 unit supported accommodation.
6. **Actively targeting households at risk of eviction** and proactive intervention to prevent eviction and tackle the root causes. YHN focuses on pre-56 days which goes beyond the duties set out in the HRA.
7. **A Housing First approach** which offers secure tenancies and does not use licences. The organisation has in place a dual diagnosis specialist who is a qualified CPN and drugs and alcohol practitioner with prescribing powers to offer services directly to the tenant.
8. YHN provides a service which can be accessed by **tenants who are EU nationals** to apply for settled or pre-settled status, which fits with YHN's 'no-one should be left behind' and City of Sanctuary welcoming approach towards immigration. The organisation was awarded a UK Housing Award in 2019 for the City of Sanctuary work.
9. **YHN are working in partnership with Crisis** on a national level as one of only three Local Authority areas in the UK to end homelessness completely in the next 10 years.
10. MHCLG also fund YHN to **deliver rapid rehousing**. They employ four workers to engage with homeless hostels and supported accommodation, working with providers and the residents to move them on from temporary accommodation and into council housing as swiftly as possible and in a sustained way.



Barnet Homes

Through MHCLG's Rough Sleeper Initiative, Barnet Homes' **Rough Sleeper Team** provides outreach support to rough sleepers within the borough of Barnet with the aim of supporting them to access the services they need and to move off the streets and into settled accommodation. Task and Targeting meetings are also held with key partners to focus on 'entrenched' rough sleepers.

Barnet Homes funds **Homeless Action in Barnet** to provide a day centre and floating support to the Foundation hostel for rough sleepers.

Barnet Homes' **Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop** is a multi-agency approach to tackle domestic abuse (a leading cause of homelessness) that includes representatives from housing, advocacy, solicitors, Solace Women's Aid, Victim Support and Police amongst others to provide a range of support under one roof for those who require it in the borough and for those who attend from other boroughs. Barnet Homes' Sanctuary Scheme enables survivors to remain in their homes, and involves partnership working between the ALMO, the Police, Fire Brigade, and Solace Women's Aid.

Barnet Homes Housing Options Service was successful in bidding for support from the London PLUS project which is provided by Homeless Link and Shelter. The project has supported Barnet Homes and the Council to set up a **multi agency homeless partnership event** with two being held in 2019. The aim is to make homeless prevention everyone's business. Barnet Homes managers support the Council in its early intervention and prevention agenda by attending a range of Strategic Boards, for example Youth Justice, Reducing re-offending, MAPPA, MARAC, IOM, 0-19 Early Help, VAWG, Corporate Parenting and accommodation solutions for adults and family services. There are clear pathways for referrals and joint protocols for a range of customers such as young people and vulnerable adults which help to provide early interventions and reduce homelessness.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster

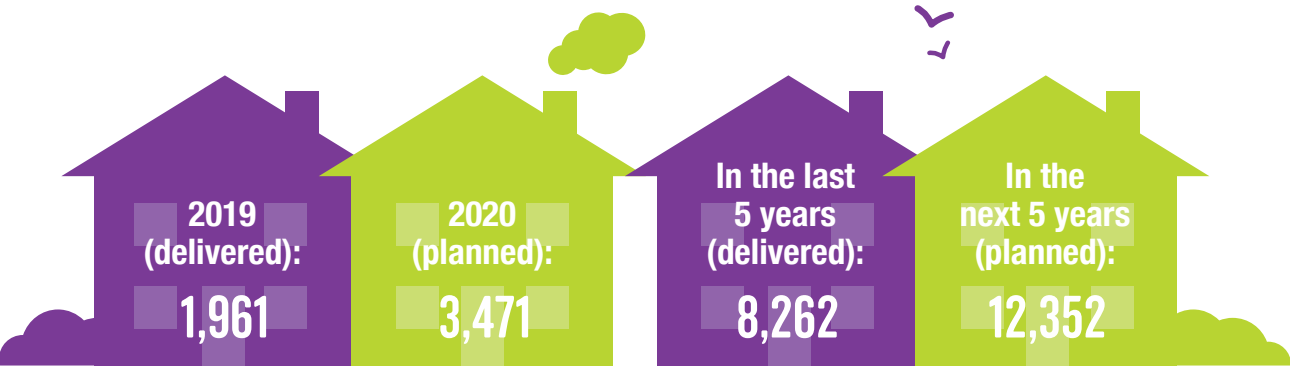
Doncaster's approach to tackling rough sleeping is driven by the Doncaster Complex Lives Alliance, which has been developed through Integrated/Accountable Care arrangements.

The Alliance brings together a range of partners across Health & Social Care, Housing, Criminal Justice and includes a key role for community, voluntary and faith sector organisations. The work of the Alliance spans commissioning and delivery functions in a whole system approach. Key partners in the delivery model are:- Doncaster MBC (in delivery and commissioning roles including public health commissioning), St Leger Homes, RDaSH Community NHS Trust, DBH Foundation NHS Trust Aspire drug and alcohol service, Doncaster Primary Care Federation, Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company/Sodexo, South Yorkshire Police, Crisis (Skylight), Changing Lives, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and Doncaster Children's Services Trust. Also involved in delivery are a range of commissioned and non - commissioned supported accommodation providers including Riverside Care & Support, Target Housing, South Yorkshire Housing,

ONGO Housing, YMCA, Doncaster Foyer and Bridge it Housing. The Alliance is also a member of the MEAM Network, which is a very helpful support guidance and benchmarking community. The Alliance has created a robust and systemic approach to delivery and integrated case management that is underpinned by strong bespoke ICT systems, performance and tracking dashboards and accountable governance arrangements. These systems and the Complex Lives Alliance as a whole have been identified as good practice nationally, including through the award of the Municipal Journal 2019 award Health & Care integration.

Part Four: New Stock

New Build and Acquisitions:



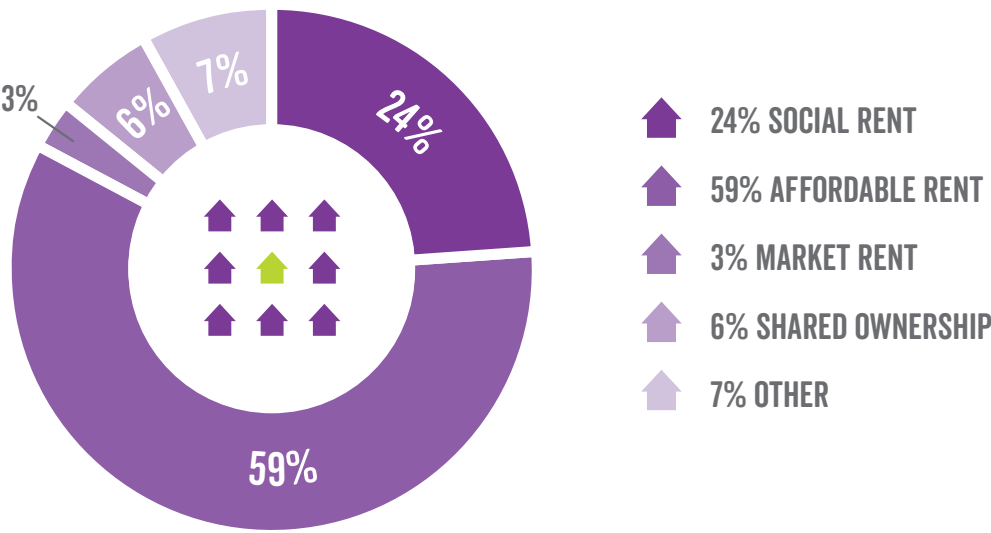
1. New build and acquisitions

The ALMO sector built or acquired **1,961 properties** in 2019. This compares with **1,949 properties** in 2018, and **1,417 properties** in 2017.

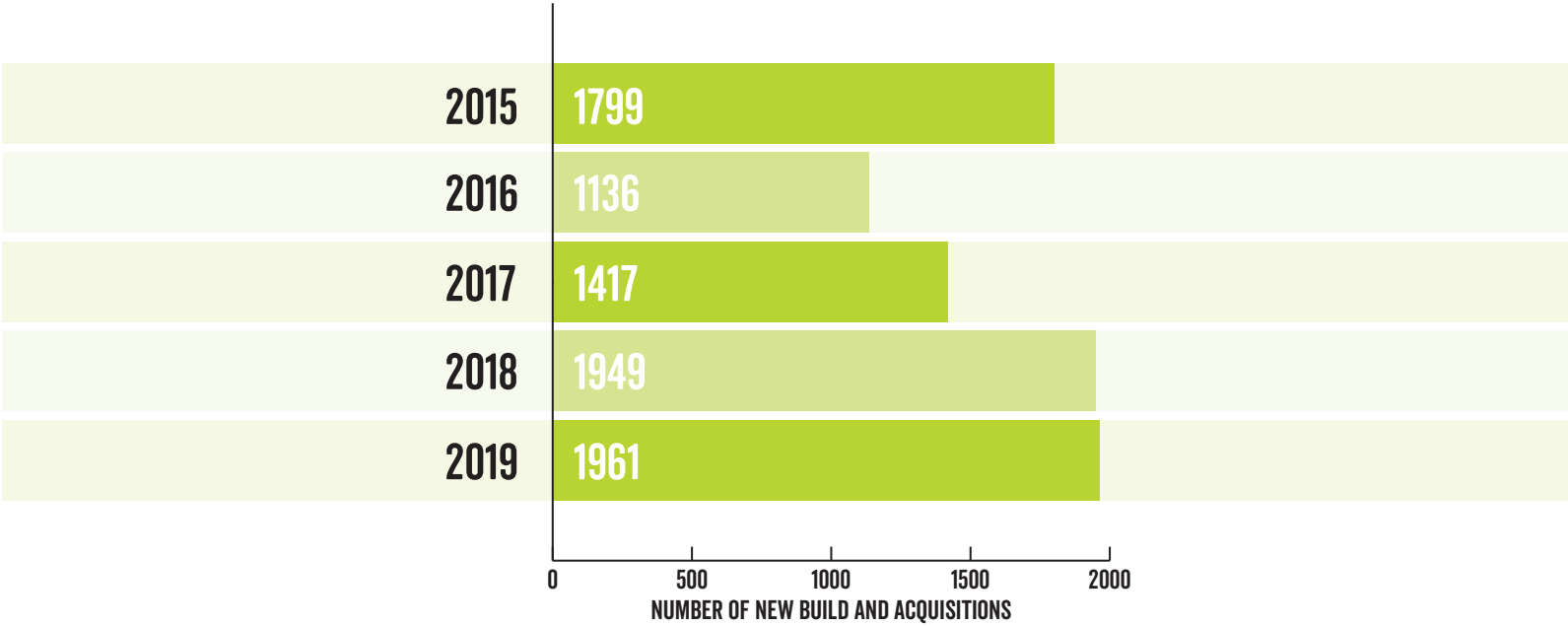
Region	New Build	Acquisitions	Total
North	458	93	551
Midlands	187	248	435
South (Inc London)	250	325	575
South West	361	39	400
Total	1,256	705	1,961

Geographical breakdown of new build and acquisitions

Where tenure breakdown is given, the majority of new build and acquisitions are for Affordable Rent:



Last 5 years



TOTAL 8,262

Whilst the yearly actual amount of new build and acquisitions has increased since 2015, it is also worth noting that the sector has shrunk by a quarter reflecting the increasing amount of new supply being generated in the council housing sector.

Breakdown of new build and acquisitions - 2019

New build (1,256 properties)

ALMOs built **1,048** new properties in 2019.

In addition, ALMOs developed 190 properties with other Housing Associations, and 18 with private developers.

Where data on tenure is provided, the majority of this new build is for affordable rent (76%); 12% is for social rent and 11% is for shared ownership.

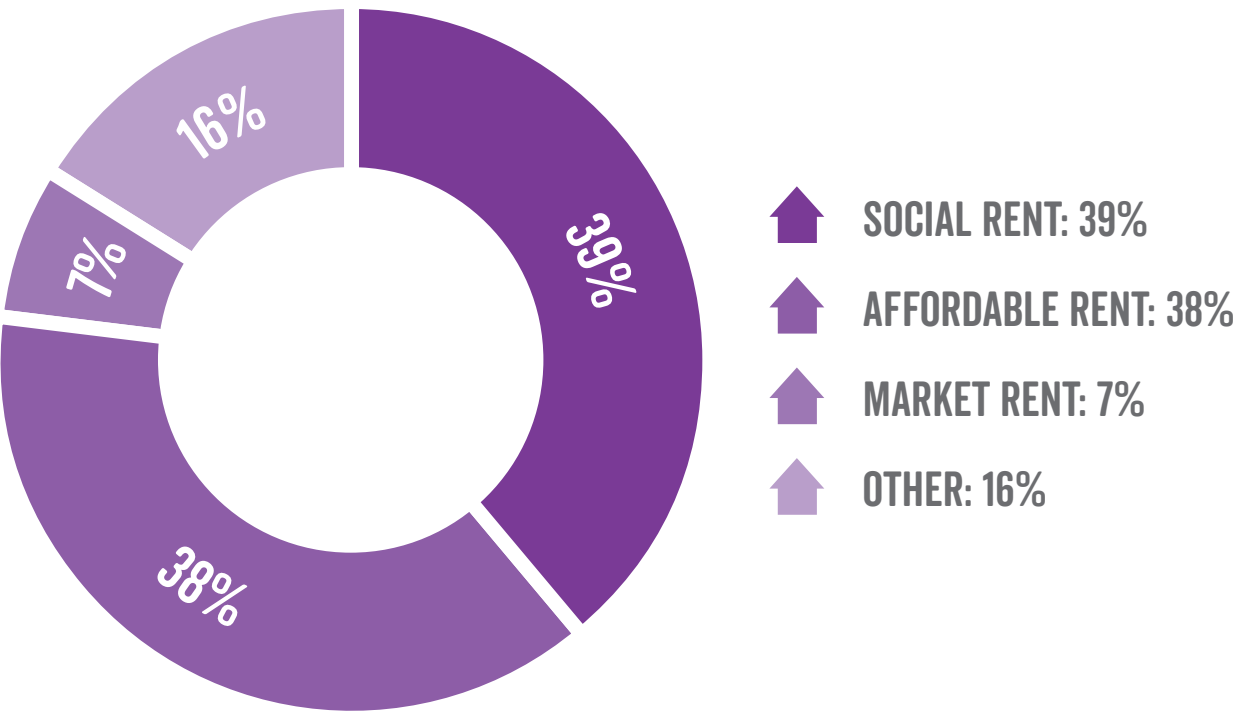


Last year, ALMOs had developed a total of 1,280 new build properties themselves or in partnership with other housing associations and private developers. It is likely that it is still too early to see the impact of the positive policy changes (e.g. the removal of the HRA borrowing cap and the more stable policy environment) in actual build programmes, but we may gradually see increased numbers over the next few years.

Acquisitions (705 properties)

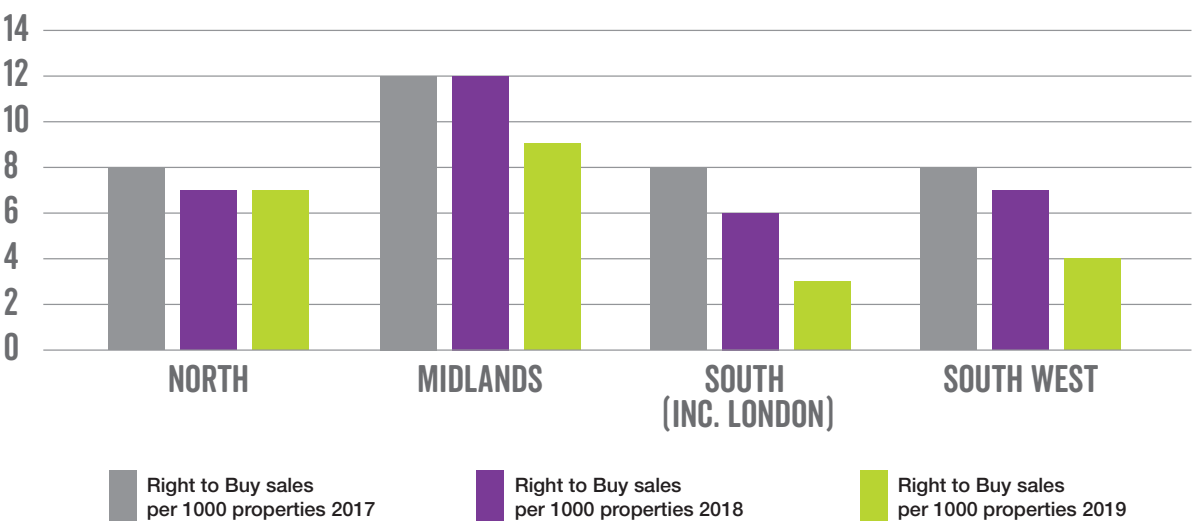
ALMOs acquired a total of 705 properties for the sector. The majority of these were in the South region including London (325 properties), and the Midlands (248 properties).

As with previous years, a considerable higher percentage of these properties are for social rent (39%) compared with new build properties; 38% are for affordable rent, and 7% for market rent, and the remaining 16% other tenure, including temporary accommodation for homelessness.



2. New stock versus properties sold under Right to Buy

Based on data from 28 ALMOs, at least 2,348 homes were sold under the Right to Buy in 2019.⁴ This is 437 more than the 1,911 new build and acquisitions which were added to the sector by these ALMOs in 2019. As can be seen below, ALMOs in the Midlands have experienced the highest levels of Right to Buy over the last three years:



⁴ Several organisations could only provide data according to the financial year (from April 2019), so the actual number of Right to Buy sales is likely to be higher.

It is also clear that due to the high rates of RtB in the North and the Midlands, there is a much greater disparity between the levels of new build and acquisition versus the levels sold under RtB, with a considerable deficit in both the North and Midlands.

Property Type	Number of properties sold	Number of properties built or acquired
North	1,043	501
Midlands	922	435
South (inc. London)	285	575
South West	98	400
TOTAL	2,348	1,911

Data from 28 organisations ⁵

The Government consulted on the Right to Buy in October 2018 but has not yet published the findings of the consultation. Whilst the NFA fully supports the Right to Buy policy in principle, we have referred to the current implementation of the policy as being like a 'leaking bucket', since design flaws mean that there has never been a one-to-one replacement for properties sold. We urgently need the Government to implement changes to the policy including:

- The time period for spending RtB receipts should be extended from three years to five years
- Councils should be able to pass RtB receipts to their ALMOs;
- Discount levels need to be reduced back to sensible levels and eligibility criteria lengthened again;
- The Treasury should forego its share of receipts so that 100% of revenue raised from sales is retained and reinvested locally;
- The cost floor should be extended to 30 years to cover the debt for new build.

⁵ We have excluded the new build and acquisition figures from one ALMO that did not provide RtB figures.

Part Five: Future Development Plans

1. Over the next 12 months

Over the next 12 months, ALMOs plan to build or acquire at least **3,471** properties⁶:



24 out of 29 ALMOs (83%) have new build plans over the next 12 months:

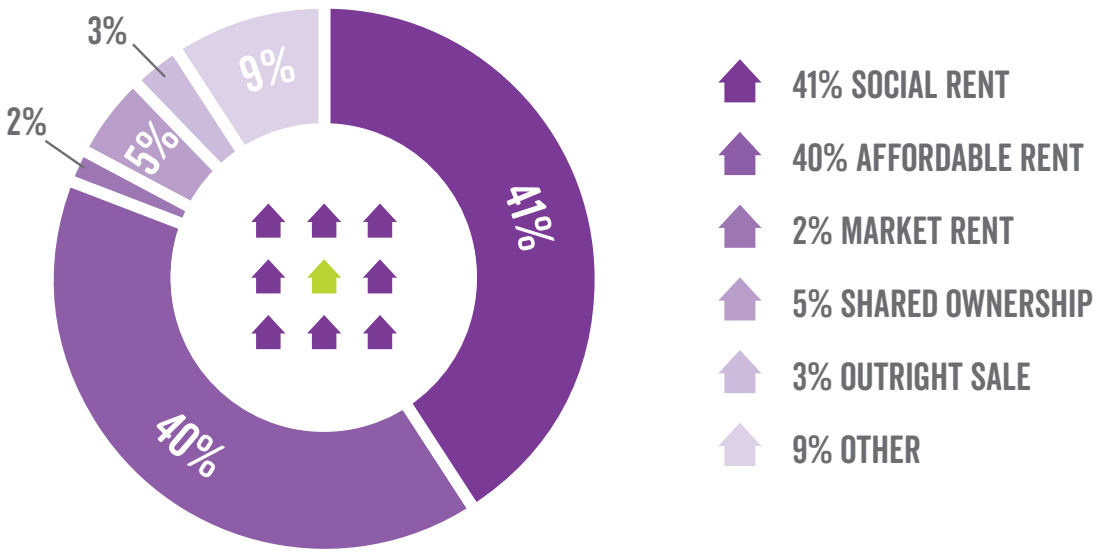
74% of planned properties will be HRA owned, 11% Registered Provider owned, 6% General Fund owned, 4% ALMO owned and 3% local authority development company owned, with remaining 2% unspecified.

The majority of ALMOs (22 out of 24) are funding all or part of their development through the HRA, with 14 ALMOs using HCA grant. Five ALMOs are additionally funding development through the General Fund. One ALMO is developing in partnership with another organisation, and one ALMO is using private investment. Eight ALMOs are using a range of different funding sources to fund development including Homes England grant, Community-led grant, NHS funding and an annuity lease back model.

19 out of 29 ALMOs (66%) have acquisition plans over the next 12 months:

66% of acquisitions will be HRA owned, 14% Registered Provider owned, 12% housing company owned; 2% ALMO owned, with the remaining 4% unspecified.

Where reported, the planned breakdown of tenure for new build and acquisitions is as follows:

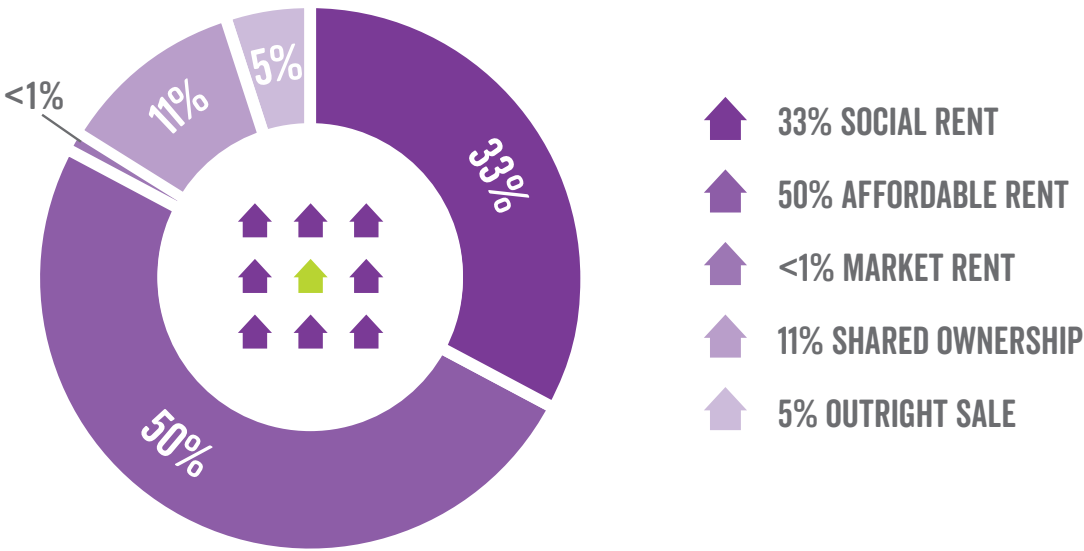


2. Over the next 5 years

The ALMO sector had plans in December 2019 to build approximately 12,352 properties over the next five years, the majority of which is being developed within the HRA. Around 79% of this new build is planned to be built on existing council land, with 21% built on land which was privately owned and bought by the council.

REGION	Number of new build properties	Percentage of the total
North	2996	24%
Midlands	2556	21%
South (inc. London)	4500	36%
South West	2300	19%
TOTAL	12,352	

Where the breakdown of type of property is known, ALMOs are anticipating building:



Last year, ALMOs reported that they were planning to build around 7,265 properties in the five years from December 2018, giving an increase of 70% in their projections between December 2018 and December 2019. Clearly it appears the more stable policy and funding environment has allowed ALMOs with their local authorities to review and extend their longer-term new build programmes.

Considering that all ALMOs are developing within the HRA, there is a clear risk to the new build programme from other unplanned HRA costs which will need to be prioritised, including those emerging from the building safety work, the impact of welfare reform, and rising homelessness. Although there has been a more stable policy environment recently with a focus on increasing local authority building,

we are still waiting for the Social Housing White Paper, building safety proposals, and response to the Right to Buy consultation; all of which could negatively impact on new build plans. Stability and the ability to make long-term plans is absolutely crucial in ensuring ALMOs and local authorities can play their part in tackling the housing crisis, and we ask the government to keep this in mind when developing national policy.

⁶ Please note, these figures were submitted prior to the outbreak of Covid-19. We are already being told that it is stopping construction work on existing sites and putting other development on hold, so there will certainly be a delay to these plans in 2020.

The NFA Team

Further details can be found at www.almos.org.uk/nfa_team



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