

Annex B: Consultation response proforma

If you are responding by email or in writing, please reply using this questionnaire proforma, which should be read alongside the consultation document. If you are completing the form online you are able to expand the comments box should you need more space.

Your Details (Required fields are indicated with an asterix(*))

Family Name (Surname)*	Cleary
First Name*	Jill
Title	Portfolio Holder - Housing
Address	Appletree Court
City/Town*	Lyndhurst
Postal Code*	SO43 7PA
Telephone Number	
Email Address*	Jill.Cleary@nfdc.gov.uk

Are the views expressed on this consultation your own personal views or an official response from an organisation you represent?* (please tick as appropriate)

Personal View

Organisational Response

Name of Organisation (if applicable)

New Forest District Council

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tick the box which best describes your organisation.

Local Authority (including National Parks, Broads Authority, the Greater London Authority and London Boroughs)

Neighbourhood Planning Body/Parish or Town Council

Private Sector organisation (including housebuilders, housing associations, businesses, consultants)

Trade Association /Interest Group/Voluntary or Charitable organisation

Other (Please specify)

Options for reforming the rules around the use of Right to Buy receipts

Timeframe for spending Right to Buy receipts

Question 1:

We would welcome your views on extending the time limit for spending Right to Buy receipts from three years to five years for existing receipts but keeping the three year deadline for future receipts.

Please enter your comments here

Any increase in time limit would be helpful, so we would support the proposal to increase the time limit on existing receipts to 5 years.

Clearly the ministry recognises the difficulties faced by Local Authorities on the speed of new home delivery in comparison to the volumes of sales achieved through right to buy. We would prefer therefore the increased time limit to be applicable to all receipts, not just those already received.

Cap on expenditure per replacement unit

Question 2:

We would welcome your views on allowing flexibility around the 30% cap in the circumstances set out in the consultation paper, and whether there are any additional circumstances where flexibility should be considered.

Please enter your comments here

a) We would welcome an increase in the cap to 50%, but would also welcome any percentage above this figure.

b) We would also welcome the opportunity to utilise funding from the affordable homes programme to act as a top up to the use of RTB receipts.

Use of receipts for acquisition

Question 3:

We would welcome your views on restricting the use of Right to Buy receipts on the acquisition of property and whether this should be implemented through a price cap per unit based on average build costs.

Please enter your comments here

We do not believe this should be restricted.

Local Government should retain flexibility to replace sold units in any way that is considered appropriate within the local area. For a Council with minimal land holdings for development, acquisitions are a suitable source of replacing units sold through right to buy.

Average build costs based on a large geographic area are also inherently dangerous, and by default areas such as ours will usually fall in the above average bracket, and so be even more restricted than other areas falling below the average.

Tenure of replacement home

Question 4:

We would welcome your views on allowing local authorities to use Right to Buy receipts for shared ownership units as well as units for affordable and social rent.

Please enter your comments here

This Council would welcome the opportunity to use Right to buy receipts for purposes, such as shared ownership, when a local demand exists for this tenure type.

Changing the way the cost of land is treated

Question 5A:

We would welcome your views on allowing the transfer of land from a local authority's General Fund to their Housing Revenue Account at zero cost.

Please enter your comments here

Appendix 1

Each Council should be given the choice, on a scheme by scheme basis, rather than being stipulated in central policy. On instances where a financial transaction takes place, the value of the land should be included in the scheme cost, and so allowable for financing from RTB receipts.

Question 5B:

We would also welcome your views on how many years land should have been held by the local authority before it can be transferred at zero cost, and whether this should apply to land with derelict buildings as well as vacant land.

Please enter your comments here

This should be considered on a case by case basis, rather than being a broad brush policy.

Transferring receipts to a Housing Company or Arm's-Length Management Organisation (ALMO)

Question 6:

We would welcome your views on whether there are any circumstances where housing companies or Arm's-Length Management Organisations should be allowed to use Right to Buy receipts.

Please enter your comments here

If an ALMO is providing valuable new social housing, then this should be eligible to utilise RTB receipts.

Temporary suspension of interest payments

Question 7:

We would welcome your views on allowing a short period of time (three months) during which local authorities could return receipts without added interest.

Please enter your comments here

We would support this proposal.

Other comments

Question 8:

Do you have any other comments to make on the use of Right to Buy receipts and ways to make it easier for local authorities to deliver replacement housing?

Please enter your comments here

For housing authorities with a good track record of delivering new housing, the more funding made available to support the financing the better, the pooling element therefore ought to be eligible for reclaiming, or done away with all together.

Reforming the replacement commitment

Question 9:

Should the Government focus be on a wider measurement of the net increase in the supply of all social and affordable housing instead of the current measurement of additional homes sold and replaced under the Right to Buy? If the target were to change, we would welcome your views on what is the best alternative way to measure the effects of Government policies on the stock of affordable housing.

Please enter your comments here

The Government's focus should be on facilitating ways for local authorities, particularly Housing Authorities to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in their areas. Through the provision of less restricted funding (i.e. Homes England grant), more flexible use of borrowing and the use a more flexible receipts regime, the Government would better enable the delivery of desperately needed affordable housing.