NROSH Lessons Learned Phase II

Fiona Lyall Grant and Christine Whitehead

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HOUSING CORPORATION

NROSH Lessons Learned Phase II

Summary

- This research focuses on six in-depth interviews and three completed questionnaires with the person providing NROSH data who agreed to take part in the National Register of Social Housing (NROSH) but have either submitted data sporadically or lapsed for some time. This research can be compared with NROSH Lessons Learned Phase I, which focused on Housing Associations (HAs) that had submitted good quality NROSH data.

- NROSH is viewed as a valuable substitute for the Regulatory and Statistical Return.

  However:

- Many NROSH people providing NROSH data needed more help, especially from toolkit software suppliers at the early stages when setting up their toolkits

- In one case the extra costs sought by a Communities and Local Government (CLG) contracted toolkit provider proved prohibitive

- The NROSH help desk was not seen as useful in providing help to rectifying toolkit problems

- Two out of the nine HAs had not submitted data because they did not realise they should. If they had been prompted they would have done so

- Generally there was very limited resources or staff allocated to NROSH within the HA

- The majority of HAs thought they could meet the Housing Corporations deadline for submission of NROSH data, provided they did not have to map all fields

NROSH Lessons Learned Phase II

1. Background

In 2005 the Housing Corporation wrote to the Chief Executives of all HAs explaining the nature of NROSH; the fact it was in the developmental stages; and the need for volunteers to pilot the system. Whilst many HAs initially agreed to pilot NROSH at the time, only two HAs supplied NROSH data at the first date for uploading, in October 2005. Since then however, over 70 HAs have signed up to NROSH and have supplied data via NROSH at least once; with some having made numerous uploads. Generally, the quality of the data has improved with the number of uploads, in part because of interaction and assistance from the Housing Corporation and Dataspring.

1.2 Research purpose and aims

This paper follows on from Lessons Learned Phase I, which concentrated on finding out why some HAs had been successful in submitting NROSH data on a regular basis and discovering the lessons learned in submitting good quality data. Six HAs were chosen to take part in a short interview because the data they are providing via NROSH are now of good quality and have been consistently improving over time.

The purpose of this paper is to find out why some HAs agreed to submit NROSH data but have either submitted data sporadically or have lapsed altogether. The aim is to find out what obstacles lay in their way and what can be done to ease the process of submitting NROSH data. The questionnaire used was almost the same for both groups in order to compare experiences.

It should be noted that no HA has ever provided perfect NROSH data with their first upload and in many cases the first upload is a test to check whether data were getting from 'a' to 'b'. To date, no HA has submitted a perfect data upload. It should also be mentioned that by no means have all NROSH fields been included in the monthly uploads HAs provide and only certain key NROSH fields are evaluated against RSR data by Dataspring.

1.3 Methodology

The interview questions evolved as a result of evidence from regular communication with HAs by both Dataspring and the Housing Corporation, and identified where issues arose with some HAs and where the same did not with others. As part of the process the research team wanted to talk to HAs that had different toolkit providers and different housing management systems with the aim of finding out if some were better than others. Similarly, HAs were chosen by size and type of social housing provider to reflect the wider HA sector, see table 1.

Table 1: Sample

	Region of operation	Total units owned	Type	Group structure	Subsidiary of a group	No of subsidiaries
HA1	NE	6648	GNS Supp	Yes	Yes	
HA2 split between two subsidiaries	Lon SE	7198 2371	GNS/Supp GNS/Supp/SO Non-soc hsg	Yes	Yes	3
HA3	Lon SE SW East	2295	GNS Supp SO	Yes Parent	No	1
HA4	East	8212	GNS Supp SO	No	N/A	N/A
HA5	Lon	11369	GNS Supp Non-soc	Yes	Yes	3
HA6	NW East Mid West Mid	21141	GNS Supp SO Non-soc	Yes	Yes	1
HA7	SW	4471	GNS Supp SO Non-soc	Yes	Yes	1
HA8	West Mids	2291	GNS Supp SO Non-soc	No	N/A	N/A
HA9	West Mids	11025	GNS Supp SO	Yes	Yes	1

GNS – general needs social housing
Supp – supported housing
Sub - subsidiary
Non-soc – non-social housing

The interview structure can be found in Annex A. The interview included seven main sections:

1. HA involvement
2. NROSH toolkits
3. Data supply
4. Organised seminars/helpline
5. Resources
6. Group structures – where applicable
7. Other issues

The following sections set out the opinions of the nine NROSH people providing data questioned and are not necessarily indicative of the opinions or experiences of all NROSH HAs. The people providing NROSH data in six HAs were interviewed by telephone and three

were sent the questionnaire to complete and return. In the three cases this was because more than one person in the HA wanted to take part.

2.   HA involvement

The NROSH data provider within the HA was asked how and when they heard about NROSH.

- Seven people providing NROSH data said they had heard about NROSH right at the beginning of the project towards the end of 2004.
- One data provider heard about NROSH through a G15 (15 of the largest HAs that meet regularly) meeting in 2005.
- One data provider did not know because he had joined the HA two years ago.

2.1 When asked who first heard about NROSH and how the information was communicated around the HA, the interviewees providing NROSH data gave varying answers. The information was initially sent to all Chief Executives by the Housing Corporation in 2005. The following is a list of who in the HA communicated the information to the current NROSH people providing NROSH data:

- Regulation manager
- Corporate services director
- Three said the Chief Executive
- Performance and Quality
- Director of the RSR
- Policy and performance
- One data provider was not sure

2.2 The research team wanted to determine if all the nine HAs had signed up to NROSH at the very beginning. This is particularly important because in Phase I of the research we had wanted to determine if those who had successful NROSH uploads had done so because they had been on board right from the start.

- Six HAs agreed to become pilots and signed up to submit NROSH data right at the outset
- Two HAs signed up slightly later, after attending some of the early NROSH seminars
- One HA had to wait a while for the toolkit to be updated to the latest version of the schema

2.3 The people providing NROSH data were then asked if they were given all the information needed at the time of volunteering and if not, what more could have been done to ease the process:

All but one HA said they were given all the information needed at the time of volunteering. However, two interviewees added:

'We were given a lot of information. I thought, and still think a lot of it is quite confusing, particularly some of the definitions'

whilst another said
'We were given all the information but whether it made sense was questionable, you needed specific technical IT knowledge, so it was difficult in that respect'

One HA did not know.

Implications:

- The majority of this sample of people providing NROSH data signed up for NROSH at the same time as those HAs who have submitted good quality data, therefore it seems that signing up in the initial phases makes little difference to success.

- Whilst in many cases the RSR provider is the contact for NROSH, the need for particular IT skills is of particular importance. HAs should be made aware of requirements at the outset

- Useful documentation highlighting the list of mandatory fields required to complete NROSH and NROSH milestones are available from the NROSH website - www.communities.gov.uk/nationalregisterofsocialhousing.

3.   NROSH toolkits

CLG commissioned IT housing management system suppliers to develop toolkits to extract data for NROSH direct from the HAs housing management system. To date, 15 software suppliers have provided such a toolkit. In addition, 4 software suppliers have developed toolkits for their housing management systems outside of the commissioned process. However, NROSH does not have to be submitted via a CLG commissioned toolkit, a HA can set up their own data extraction methods to upload their NROSH data. These are known as Do It Yourself (DIY) toolkits.

3.1 Toolkit use

The following are the toolkits used by the nine HAs. Seven out of the nine toolkits were funded via CLG, the DIY toolkits are the exception. We wanted to find out if the HAs received help from their toolkit providers at the outset, if the help was still available and if there were any costs attached:

Table 2: **Toolkit providers**

	HA1	HA2	HA3	HA4	HA5	HA6	HA7	HA8	HA9
Toolkit provider	Orchard	Quovadx	Comino Context	Aareon Smidell	SX3	Enterprise Academy	Orchard	DIY	DIY
Have you received any help from your toolkit provider?	Yes, they set it all up at the beginning	No, not once the original programmer left	No	Yes	No	Yes	No, we would have to pay £1000	N/A	N/A
Has the support been on-going	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes, above and beyond the call of duty	N/A	N/A	N/A
Is this help still available?	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Are there any costs attached to the help you receive in addition to your housing management system maintenance and support charge?	Yes an annual support and maintenance charge	No	No	No	Not known	No	N/A	N/A	N/A

The research team also asked if they had encountered any problems with the toolkit or with the toolkit provider. Two HAs use DIY toolkits so the question was not relevant and two said they had not experienced any problems. Of the remaining five:

- One said they had no problems with the toolkit provider, but the toolkit was a little difficult in the early days of development
- One said they have had no support from their toolkit provider and the toolkit is not at all user friendly
- Another said the toolkit provider is very difficult to talk to and the big problem is the toolkit because it is so complicated
- One said they have no problem with the toolkit provider but the toolkit they have is the wrong version
- One said the toolkit provider did not meet the date for the release and when it came it was very difficult to map. The provider will only offer support for extra money which the HA is not prepared to pay. They also have problems with the toolkit because it is not accepting the information.

Interestingly, the six HAs interviewed for Lessons Learned Phase I also experienced difficulties with their toolkits and/or providers, but the problems they had encountered had been fixed relatively quickly so they were able to go on and provide good quality NROSH data.

3.2 The people providing NROSH data were also asked if they had received specific help regarding their toolkit from CLG:

Eight out of the nine HAs had not contacted CLG about their toolkit. The one data provider who did contact CLG was told that there was nothing CLG could do and that the data provider needed to contact their toolkit provider.

3.3 The people providing NROSH data within the HAs were then asked if there were any specific issues relating to their toolkit – this could be anything from mapping problems to the time it takes to upload their NROSH data:

HA 1 did not experience any problems *'any toolkit will take time to set up'*

HA 2 said *'we are generating extra tags and we don't know why...I don't want to fiddle about with the configuration on the property reference tag but we get one tag at the beginning and two at the end so we get double properties. Also, the screen to insert the data is not user friendly...we have had to trouble shoot and it is easy to make mistakes'*

HA 3 said *'the mapping is too complicated. The schema is all numbered to over a hundred fields but the toolkit doesn't have any numbers, so it makes it almost impossible to do'*

HA 4, referring to the requirement to populate the number of steps internally and externally, said they would *'really struggle if it became mandatory'*

HA 5 said *'no particular issues'*

HA 6 has *'not experienced any problems'*

HA7 said their toolkit provider *'have released a new toolkit, version 4, but we would have to pay £1000 for it so we can't have it. The toolkit provider says CLG did not give them enough money'*

HA 8 has no problems

HA 9 said they originally supplied data using the EIM/Enterprise toolkit but *'it was felt that due to forthcoming xml/data standards changes and the complexity of data mapping between our IBS system and NROSH for fields that were classed as priority and not supplied in the original upload, we should develop our own toolkit'*.

Implications:

In order for this sample of HAs to provide good quality NROSH data the majority required expert help from the toolkit providers particularly at the beginning but also as they continued. The toolkit, unlike for the successful providers, was a core issue generating frustration for many.

The amount of help available varied significantly (one toolkit provider went 'above and beyond the call of duty')

If a cost is attached, over and above the housing management system annual charge this should be made clear to the data provider at the beginning when setting up a contract with their toolkit supplier.

4. Data supply

4.1 The HAs chosen for this research last submitted NROSH data on the following dates:

Table 3

HA and toolkit provider	HA1 Orchard	HA2 Quovadx	HA3 Comino Context	HA4 Aareon Simdell	HA5 SX3	HA6 Enterprise Academy	HA7 Orchard	HA8 DIY	HA9 DIY
Last data submission	Jan 06	Oct 05	Sept 07	Feb 06	Oct 06	Mar 06	Jul 06	Mar 07	Oct 07
Why haven't you submitted since that time?	Lack of staff resources to map and set up	We have had toolkit problems, we need help	Because the mapping was incorrect	Because of toolkit problems	We were not aware of any data submission requirements	Housing management system is on a different server to our toolkit, we have had problem after problem	Because we can't. We tried to submit in March 07 but it had too many errors	Didn't know we should. We submit once every 3 to 6 months, it would be too much work to do more	Have just submitted
Do you plan to submit in the near future?	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Would like to think so	Yes	Yes
When/why not?	Within a couple of months	We would be happy to send data if we could. We did not even know there was a version 4	We would love to submit monthly, but we have to get it right first	But we never receive reports from CLG because none of the data gets through	No plan to, would need to be advised of data submission requirements	Hopefully the end of November or the beginning of December 07	Because we don't want to pay an extra £1000	If it is requested then we would send it, we need prompts	January 2008

Five people providing NROSH data were having difficulty in submitting NROSH data because of toolkit problems, whilst two said they would have continued to submit data had they been advised to do so. One HA said it was a lack of staff resources that prohibited them from moving forward whilst one data provider had submitted data last month (October 2007).

Five out of the nine people providing NROSH data plan to submit NROSH data in the near future. Out of the remaining four, three would like to submit data but are unlikely to do so either because of toolkit problems or toolkit provider issues whilst the last HA will not be likely to submit NROSH data unless prompted to do so.

The research team went on to ask if there was anything that could be done to ease the process?

- One said no further changes to the data standards from CLG would help

- One said they need more support with their toolkit from the toolkit supplier *'we need to be told what is wrong'*

- Another said they were stuck at the first hurdle because of mapping issues and *'once we get over this there are bound* to *be other issues'*

- One said *'it is really about getting the most up to date schema...then it should be easy'*

- Another said it just takes time for data mapping

- One said *'give us the toolkit free of charge and give us help'*

- Whilst another said they *'have an outstanding helpdesk call, asking for clarification of which xml schema would be preferred for regular monthly uploads of data'*

- Finally one said there is nothing that could be done to ease the process

4.2 Regulatory Guidance

The Housing Corporation recently published Regulatory Guidance regarding NROSH targets which was mailed to all RSL CEOs, requesting that it be distributed to the relevant officers in each HA:

> 'The Housing Corporation (HC) is working towards full implementation of NROSH from 2009/10 and is strongly encouraging RSLs to work with the HC. The HC is planning to replace the Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR) with NROSH from 2009/10, with the last RSR parallel run in 2010/11'. (Sept 2007)
> See http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.12112

The research team asked the sample of HAs if they were aware of this guidance and if they thought the dates given would be feasible for their HA to meet.

Seven out of nine HAs were aware of the guidance. However, one stated that *'it is 2011, too far away to bother about'*. The two HAs who were not aware looked at the HC NROSH webpage after being prompted by the researcher.

Seven out of nine HAs said that meeting the Housing Corporations implementation timetable would be entirely feasible, one saying *'we hoped it would be earlier'* and another saying *'it would certainly be welcomed'*.

The two people providing NROSH data who expressed concerns about being able to deliver to the specified timetable both said that it really depended on what was being asked for at that time *'it depends on what is mandatory at that point. If the data requested is the same as the RSR then it should be easy but if we had to complete all data fields that would be difficult, for example we have no idea of floor size'*.

Implications:

The input of the toolkit providers, as was the case with those HAs submitting good quality data, is relevant to the success of the majority of HAs. Therefore, the main implication arising from this section is the need for help, be it from the toolkit provider or CLG. Without help or advice it is unlikely that these HAs who are experiencing problems will move forward as quickly as others.

If the Housing Corporation issued clear guidance on how often they expected HAs to upload NROSH data more HAs might be inclined to submit data.

5.   Organised seminars

During 2005, 2006 and 2007 the CLG and Housing Corporation delivered NROSH seminars around the country. The seminars consisted of presentations by CLG and the Housing Corporation followed by workshops for participants.

5.1 We asked the person providing NROSH data if anyone from their association had attended the workshops and if so if they found them useful?

All HAs have attended the seminars and workshops and all found them useful to some extent. One data provider had attended all years saying *'they have been very useful in helping understand the principle of it [NROSH]'*.

However, for those who are having difficulty in uploading their data the later workshops were not found to be so helpful *'it was more of a transition so not that helpful for us'* and on a similar note another said *'they would have been useful if we could submit data'*.

Implications:

It might be useful to have a 'back to basics' type seminar for HAs who are having difficulty submitting NROSH data. Whilst the later seminars were deemed as useful for successful NROSH HAs as for those HAs who are still experiencing problems, the relevance of the sessions were brought into question.

6.   Help desk

From the outset of NROSH a help desk has been administered by CLG. Any queries the HA has to do with data validation or data standards were to be sent to the help desk.

6.1 We asked if the interviewee had used the NROSH help desk:
Six people providing NROSH data had used the NROSH help desk.

The reason two HAs had not called the help desk was because they were having major toolkit problems so would not have been in a position to use the help desk as intended. The final HA had not used the help desk because they had not needed to. This HA would submit data if they thought they had to.

6.2 Help desk response times:

Attitudes as to the usefulness of the help desk related mainly to whether the response was prompt and sorted out the query:

Three HAs said the response from the help desk was *'quite good'*; one said it was *'ok'* and another said it was *'very quick'*. However one HA said that it *'varies – good for technical issues, poor for clarification of data standards'*.

When asked if the help desk resolved their query, only one HA said yes. The remaining HAs said that the errors were toolkit problems that the help desk could not sort out. One stated that the help desk thought it had answered adequately *'it did from their point of view – the problem is with the software supplier and the toolkit'* whilst another said *'they said we should get on to our software supplier and pressure them'*.

These responses are not surprising given that the majority of our sample were having real difficulties with their toolkits and were therefore unable to submit NROSH data.

We went on to ask on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being very good and 4 being very poor) how the data provider rated the NROSH help desk:

Five people providing NROSH data rated the help desk as 2 (good) although one of these gave the rating a 2 to 3. The reason given for this was that they found the help desk was improving. The sixth HA who rated the help desk at 3 (poor) said *'they offered no further help'*. This HA had previously been told to put pressure on their toolkit supplier. The remainder had not used the help desk.

Implications:

The main difference between HAs that supply good quality data, and those that do not, as far as the help desk is concerned, is that HAs that are struggling uploading data often have issues with their toolkit provider. It would be useful if CLG could interact with toolkit suppliers if communication between the HA and supplier breaks down. This would help ensure that the process of submitting NROSH data is not abandoned by the HA.

7.   Resources

The research team wanted to find out if the HA had allocated specific resources to NROSH, the theory being that the more time put into NROSH the better the results would be.

Seven people providing NROSH data said they had no specific resources allocated to NROSH; it was just a matter of fitting it in with the rest of their work programme. The same can be said for successful HAs submitting NROSH data. However two HAs did have allocated resources:

One said they have *'a project sponsor, a Director, two project managers (one business and one IT) and another member of IT (mapping and submission)'* who are involved with NROSH. Even with all these people on board, this HA has not submitted data since 2006 because of toolkit issues. The other HA said they have two people working on NROSH from performance analysis, although neither are fully dedicated to the project.

7.1 FTE/ staff input

When asked how many FTE people in the HA are involved with NROSH, the answers given were generally guesses. Answers are detailed below:

- HA 1 - One
- HA 2 - Two – but not full time
- HA 3 - About a tenth of a person
- HA 4 - 0.1 person
- HA 5 - Not sure, but it would definitely need more IT people to make it work
- HA 6 - No one, we work on it as and when
- HA 7 - 0.10, just little bits
- HA 8 - One person half a day every six months and slightly more if we attend seminars
- HA 9 - 0.5

7.2 NROSH responsibility

The research team went on to ask who in the HA was actually responsible for NROSH

- One said a member of the IT team
- One said the Information services manager
- Four people said it was the person responsible for coordinating the RSR
- One said both a Project sponsor and a IT manager
- One said both the Performance and quality team and a member of IT
- One said the Housing services manager

Of these, six people providing NROSH data were also responsible for the coordination of the RSR. The remaining three all liaise with the RSR coordinator when mapping NROSH.

The research team wanted to know at what level FTE resources were allocated. One HA said at *'middle level'* but gave no further explanation. Another said at the performance manager level, whilst two others said they are not allocated. Five people providing NROSH data said they didn't know.

Following on, the research team asked what types of expertise the people involved with NROSH had.

One said high level and seven said IT skills and housing expertise.

7.3 Costs over and above the housing management system annual service charge

We also wanted to know if the HA was asked to pay any other costs to their toolkit provider other than the usual annual housing management system charge. We were particularly interested if the costs were seen as prohibitive.

Seven out of the eight people providing NROSH data did not pay any extra costs, although two HAs had set up their own DIY toolkit so as not to incur any extra costs. One HA has been asked to pay £1,000 for help with their toolkit which they will not pay. This data provider has been struggling to submit NROSH data but does not see why they should pay the toolkit provider extra money. The final data provider did not know.

Implications:

It is important for the success of NROSH for the person providing NROSH data to either also work on the RSR or liaise closely with the person who does. This will become even more important when the new xml schema is implemented to reflect the new data standards because they more widely reflect the way in which RSR data are collected.

8.   Group Structures

Group structure organisations are given the option as to how to submit their NROSH data. Some may prefer to submit data for the group as a whole, particularly when they have all the information held on one management system, whilst for others it might be more convenient to either submit data individually, on behalf of the subsidiary or indeed for the subsidiary to submit the data themselves.

Eight out of nine HAs sampled for this research belong to a group structure. However, one group who returned the questionnaire via email failed to answer the group structure questions.

Seven out of the eight group structures submitting NROSH data are a subsidiary of a group whilst the remaining one was a stock holding parent submitting NROSH data – see table 1 for a breakdown.

We went on to ask how many subsidiaries belong to the Group:

- Three groups have one subsidiary
- One group has two subsidiaries
- Two groups have three subsidiaries
- One group has four subsidiaries

8.1 Submitting group data

We asked how the group planned to submit NROSH data, on a group wide basis or individually for each subsidiary.

- Individually – three, and one other initially but may turn to group wide submission
- Group wide – three

The reason given for submitting data individually is because these groups only have one subsidiary. Those with two subsidiaries or more prefer to submit NROSH data at the group wide level.

8.2 Reporting ownership and management of stock

We went on to ask how the group would separate out ownership and management when reporting NROSH. This is particularly pertinent to avoid double reporting.

One HA said that all the subsidiaries own and manage their own stock although *'there are likely to be some funnies around the edges that might muddy the waters, agencies etc'*

Three people providing NROSH data said the ownership and management of properties show up separately on their systems so it would not be an issue. Another said the unique property reference numbers splits out each subsidiary so it would not be an issue. One HA said they had a combination of ownership codes and admin unit structures on their system so that the units are already separated out. Finally one data provider pointed out that they are a non stock holding parent and only have one subsidiary so reporting would be straightforward.

We asked if there was any possibility that the data provider's reference number could be the same on the owners and managers housing management systems and would therefore be collected by both toolkits.

Generally it was stated that property reference numbers could be the same but there would not be duplication because only one HA would submit NROSH data. However, one HA did not know.

8.3 Non-participating subsidiaries

We asked when the data provider expected the subsidiaries that had not taken part in NROSH to start submitting NROSH data.

- One HA said they did not know but hopefully '*when the toolkit has been fixed*'
- Another said they would submit for the entire group in their next submission
- Another said they aimed to meet the Housing Corporation's timescales
- Another said when the '*system is set up and running properly*'

The research team wanted to find out if there were any specific issues relating to submitting data for a group which did not arise for individual housing associations and if problems were raised how best they might be resolved.

None of the people providing NROSH data saw any issues with NROSH which arose because of being part of a group structure, although one data provider thought it might be good to get the data for one subsidiary correct before submitting on behalf of all subsidiaries.

9. Other issues

The following are comments and issues raised at the end of the interview.

'We were enticed into the project by NLPG [1]reference numbers but I gather they had problems with licensing with OS[2]. UPRNs[3] might have added value. XML is becoming more standard but the toolkit is hard to trouble shoot'.

'I think NROSH is a good cause, I look forward to getting some data submitted, I'm just waiting for version 4'.

'We have really been left to our own devices, the information and communication has been really poor. The problem was with the ODPM at the start, for paying for something [toolkit] without clauses in, they expect the HA to battle with the toolkit provider. It is ludicrous; they expect us to submit something we can't do'

'I still feel that communication about this is poor and sporadic. Whilst information has been disseminated through the RSR route there seems to be little exposure on a wider scale. I am not sure that awareness is uniform across the sector and in some cases there may not be the detailed awareness at the senior level that might be assumed. Overall, despite the few seminars and newsletters (which as noted above have on occasion provided contradictory messages), the whole project appears to me (from the data provider's view) to be ad hoc and not particularly well managed. It feels that there is a small group of people running the project that are on top of what they are doing and know how it is progressing, and this is then just spurted out every now and then with an expectation that we are still all on board and on top of the changes with a sudden request for data. I am personally very dubious about NROSH's ability to replace the RSR and am frankly concerned that the detail, accuracy and thoroughness with which we approach the RSR will be compromised'.

10. Conclusion

The main differences in the findings between Lessons Learned Phase I and this phase of the research seem to be with respect to support and communication issues. The toolkit providers used by this sample are more or less the same as those used by the HAs that have submitted good quality data. However, if the toolkit does not run smoothly and extra help is required, a breakdown in communication apparently ensues, leaving the potential people providing NROSH data unable to continue effectively.

All the people providing NROSH data interviewed for this research wanted to be in the position to submit good quality NROSH data. The fact that NROSH could replace the vast majority of the RSR was seen as a positive. The NROSH workshops, although useful in the main, were seen as benefiting those who are able to submit data rather than being supportive and informative for those HAs that are not. The help desk did not seem to address many of the more important issues.

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[1] National Land and Property Gazetteer
[2] Ordnance Survey
[3] Unique Property Reference Number

Clearer communication both at toolkit provider level and CLG level would help alleviate some of these problems.

Annex A

NROSH Lessons Learned Phase II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HAs THAT HAVE EITHER LAPSED THEIR NROSH UPLOADS OR SUBMIT DATA SPORADICALLY

Housing associations (HAs) are able to use the National Register of Social Housing (NROSH) to extract their social housing data from their Housing Management System using a toolkit which has been developed with CLG. The objective of NROSH is for HAs to supply regulatory data at property level rather than supplying data at stock and Local Authority levels as is currently the case.

Phase I of this research focused on finding out why some HAs have been successful in submitting NROSH data on a regular basis and discovering the lessons learned in order to submit good quality data.

Your HA has been chosen to take part in this research because data has been provided to NROSH in the past, but no longer makes regular submissions. The Housing Corporation have commissioned this research in order to establish why this has happened and what could be done to ease the process of submitting NROSH data.

1. HA involvement

1. How and when did your association hear about NROSH?
2. Who in your organisation first heard about NROSH and how was it communicated within the organisation?
3. Did you sign up to pilot NROSH at this time? If not, why not, and when did you sign up for it?
4. Were you given all the information you needed at the time of volunteering? If not, what could have been provided to ease the process?

2. NROSH toolkits

1. Which HMS do you use and who is the provider?
2. Which toolkit do you use?
3. Who is your toolkit provider?
4. Have you encountered any problems with your toolkit provider?
5. Have you encountered any problems with the toolkit ?
6. Have you received any specific help from your toolkit provider? If yes,
- Was this at the beginning of the project?

- Has the help been on-going?
- Is it still carrying on at the moment?
- Are there any costs attached to the help you receive? (In addition to your usual HMS charges)

7. Have you asked for any specific help from CLG regarding your toolkit?

If yes,

- How many times have you asked?
- What help did they give?
- Did the help given resolve the problem?
-
- Is it still carrying on at the moment?
- Are there any costs attached to the help you receive?

8. What, if any, specific issues do you have with the NROSH toolkit? This could be anything from the time it takes to map NROSH` from your management system to the actual time it takes to submit NROSH data.

3. Data Supply

1. You last submitted NROSH data on...
2. Why haven't you submitted data since then?
3. Do you plan to submit data in the near future?
   - If not, why not?
   - If yes, when?
4. Is there anything that could be done to ease the process?
5 .Are you intending to submit data on a regular basis? If not what can be done to ensure that you want to take part?
6. When would you expect to make the next submission and thereafter how regularly?
7. Are you aware of the HC Regulatory Guidance regarding NROSH targets?
If not, give them the web address for this (www.housingcorp.gov.uk/nrosh) and explain targets.
8. Do you think these targets are feasible for your organisation, as things stand currently?
   - If not, why not?
   - What could be done to enable your organisation to meet these targets?

4. Organised seminars/help desk

1. Has your association attended any of the NROSH seminars?
   - If so, which years (2005 to 2007) and did you find them useful and informative?
2. Have you used the CLG NROSH help desk?
3. What was their response time?
4. Did the response answer your query adequately enough in order for your organisation to correct the problem?
- On a scale of 1 to 4 how would you rate the CLG NROSH helpline-helpdesk; 1 being very good, 2 being good, 3 being poor, 4 being very poor
- If poor or very poor could you please give details

5. Resources

1. Do you have resources specifically allocated to NROSH? What positions?
2. How many FTE people in your association are involved with NROSH ?
3. Who is actually responsible for NROSH?
4. Is this the person also responsible for coordinating the RSR?
5. If not does the person responsible for NROSH liaise with the person responsible for the RSR?
6. At what FTE level are the resources allocated?
7. What are the expertise of people involved?
8. Are there any direct charges from your toolkit provider, over and above the annual housing management maintenance/service charge, that you pay for NROSH?
- If so, what is the cost and what is provided?
- Is this charge a one off payment or is it renewable annually?
- Do you find the cost reasonable for the service provided?

6. Group structures (only ask if the HA is in a group or is the parent of a group)

1. Is the group parent stock holding or non-stock holding?
2. How many subsidiaries belong to the group?
3. How does your organisation submit or plan to submit NROSH data – individually for each subsidiary or on a group wide basis?
4. How will the group separate out ownership and management when reporting NROSH?
5. Is it possible for the data providers Property Reference number to be the same on both the owner and managers systems?
6. If so how will you decide who reports on the property?
7. How many subsidiaries currently take part in NROSH?
8. When do the remaining subsidiaries plan to start submitting NROSH data?
9. Are there any specific issues relating to the completion of NROSH for groups that do not arise for individual HAs?
10. What are they and if so how would you expect the issues to be resolved?

7. Other issues

1. Do you have any other comments or issues that have not already been raised about NROSH that would be helpful to put into a good practice document?

2. Do you have any other comments about your own experience and more generally?

Many thanks for taking part in this research