

## Landlords' 2014 survey for evaluation of 'Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy'

**Welcome to the second, final, survey on the Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy ('the RSRS').**

**The survey is being undertaken by the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research and is part of the evaluation commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions about the housing benefit reforms affecting under-occupiers.**

**We carried out a similar survey a year ago, to which many of you replied, covering around half the social housing stock in the UK. The findings helped inform the Interim Report which you can find here:**

**<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/removal-of-the-spare-room-subsidy-interim-evaluation-report>**

**This survey is to update the evaluation and will enable the DWP to understand better how the RSRS is working in practice and what impact it is having on you and your tenants.**

**You can stop the survey part-way though if you wish, and re-enter it at a later time to finish it off. Your answers will be saved. You may also share the survey with colleagues who, by using the link sent in the email you received, will be able to edit the same version of the survey. However, if you also require a PDF of the survey to share with colleagues before completing it online, it can be downloaded from:**  
**<http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Downloads/Landlord-Survey-2014>**

**Where numeric answers are requested, please draw on any data you hold wherever possible, but give us your best estimate if not. Please leave blank any questions where you do not know the answer, and cannot provide a good estimate either. We realise that not all landlords will be able to answer all the questions. All questions relate to the stock that you manage, regardless of whether you own it or manage it on behalf of another landlord.**

**If you are a local authority, please answer the questions just in relation to tenants in the stock that you manage, not those who live in your area in housing managed by other Registered Providers.**

**Any information you provide will be held in the strictest of confidence and will be**

handled securely throughout the study in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998). The information you provide will be used only for research purposes and the research findings will not identify you or your organisation.

Please note that as the survey is anonymous, we will not be able to send you a copy of your answers on request, and suggest you store them elsewhere if you want to keep a record of them for any reason.

## This first section is about you and where you work

### 1. Please indicate what type of landlord you are:

- Stock owning Local Authority
- Arms Length Management Organisation managing council-owned stock
- Registered Provider/Registered Social Landlord
- Private Registered Provider

### 2. In which of these regions/countries do you manage general needs stock? (Please include social rented, and Affordable Rented stock, but not shared ownership, supported or sheltered housing)

	All of our stock	Most of our stock (over 50%)	Some of our stock (under 50% but more than 1%)	None / very little of our stock (under 1%)
Scotland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NW England	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NE England	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yorkshire and the Humber	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
West Midlands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
East Midlands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
East of England	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
South East England	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
South West England	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
London	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 3. In how many local authorities in Britain do you manage social housing stock? (Please include social rented and Affordable Rented stock, but not shared ownership, supported or sheltered housing)

**4. And how many general needs properties do you manage in Britain? (Please include social rented and Affordable Rented stock, but not shared ownership, supported or sheltered housing)**

**This section is about identifying tenants who are affected by the Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy (RSRS)**

**5. To the best of your knowledge, how many of your tenants are currently affected by the RSRS? (Please include all affected tenants, even if you are aware that they are currently in receipt of DHP to cover their full shortfall)**

**6. And how many were affected when the RSRS first came into effect in April 2013?**

**7. Thinking about tenants whose circumstances change so that they start to be affected by the RSRS or cease to be, which of the following best describes how you become aware when tenants start or cease to be affected?**

- We have access to the Local Authority HB database so we can see for ourselves
- The local authority informs us on a case by case basis when people start or cease to be affected
- The local authority informs us on a regular basis (at least monthly)
- The local authority informs us but less often than monthly
- We do not get informed by the LA reliably so rely on the tenant telling us directly
- A mixture of the above
- Other (please explain)

**This section is about making alterations to your stock or reclassifying the size of properties, in response to the RSRS**

**8. Have you physically altered any of your stock to change the number of bedrooms in direct response to the RSRS (eg knocked down walls)**

- Yes
- No
- Not yet but are planning to do so within the next 12 months
- Not known

**8a. How many have you altered so far?**

**8b. How much was the average cost, per property altered?**

£

**8c. Please briefly explain what these alterations involve(d)?**

**8d. How many are you planning to alter within the next 12 months?**

**8e. Why did you decide to do this?**

**9. Have you reclassified the number of bedrooms in any stock in response to the RSRS?**

**(Please do NOT include cases where you did this solely because you discovered that your records were incorrect , for instance because of adaptations that had taken place previously which reduced the actual number of rooms)**

- Yes
- No
- Not yet, but are planning to do so within the next 12 months
- Not known

**9a. How many properties have you reclassified in response to the RSRS?**

**9b. And of these, how many:**

Were originally classed as having 2 bedrooms	<input type="text"/>
Were originally classed as having 3 bedrooms	<input type="text"/>
Were originally classed as having 4 or more bedrooms	<input type="text"/>

**9c. Please briefly explain why you decided reclassify these homes?**

**9d. Have you lowered the rent on those properties that were reclassified as a result of reclassifying them?**

- Yes, on all of them
- On some of them
- No, none of them
- Not known

**9e. Why/why not?**

**9f. Which of the following best describes your approach to reclassifying?**

- We reclassified all properties of a similar type, regardless of who is living in them
- We reclassified only properties occupied by tenants affected by the RSRR
- We reclassified only on request or on an individual basis
- A mixture of the above
- In some other way (please explain)

**This section asks about the response of tenants affected by the RSRS**

**10. Which of the following payment methods have you offered and encouraged for your tenants to pay their rental shortfalls arising from the RSRs?**

	We allow tenants to pay by this method	We encourage this payment method	This method is popular with tenants
Direct debits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standing orders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheque	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit card by phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Debit card by phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit card online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Debit card online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Payment cards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11. How many of your RSRs-affected tenants are currently registered for downsizing (but haven't yet moved)?  
(Please leave blank if not known)**

Via Mutual exchange	<input type="text"/>
Via the transfer list (either yours or one held by your LA)	<input type="text"/>
Not registered for either	<input type="text"/>

**12. How many of your tenants who were affected by the RSRs have downsized within the social sector to date?**

**12a. How many of these did so by means of a mutual exchange?**

**12b. And how many did so via your transfer list (or that of another social landlord)?**

**13. How many of your tenants who were affected by the RSRS have moved to the private rented sector to date (Please provide an estimate if possible, or leave blank if the number is not known)**

**13a. Is this figure (for moves to the private rented sector) based on an estimate or figures that you have available?**

- Estimate
- Figures

**14. In total, how many households who were affected by the RSRS have moved, vacating their under-occupied home?**

- Number

- Not known

**15. Do your tenants need to ask your permission to take a lodger?**

- Usually yes
- Usually no
- Not known

**15a. Do you have figures for the number who have applied for permission to take a lodger since 1st January 2013?**

- Yes. How many?

- No, these figures are not available

**This section is about arrears**



**16. What was the total amount of arrears outstanding (from all your tenants, whether affected by any of the welfare reforms or not):**

	Total arrears (in £)	As a % of rent due during previous year
On 31st March 2013?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
On 31st March 2014?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
On the most comparable recent date? (Please give the figure for as recent a date as possible that can be best compared to 31st March, bearing in mind your rent collection cycle and Housing Benefit payment dates.)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**16a. What date is this latest figure for?**

**17. What proportion of tenants currently affected by the RSRS are currently in arrears?**

%

**17a. And what is the average amount (per tenant) that these tenants in arrears owe?**

£

**18. And for comparison, what proportion of your tenants currently affected by the RSRS were in arrears on 31st March 2013?**

%

**19. Are you able to identify the number of your tenants currently affected by the RSRS who have paid all, some or none of their shortfall?  
(The shortfall, in this context, refers to the rental shortfall after HB and DHP have both been paid)**

- Yes
- Not precisely but can estimate
- No, we cannot attribute the source of rental shortfalls

**19a. At the current time, what proportion of your tenants who are currently affected by the RSRS:**

have received DHP in full for the entire time, so have never had an actual shortfall to pay	<input type="text" value="0"/>	%
have paid all their shortfall	<input type="text" value="0"/>	%
have paid some but not all of their shortfall	<input type="text" value="0"/>	%
have paid none of their shortfall	<input type="text" value="0"/>	%
have paid an unknown amount of their shortfall	<input type="text" value="0"/>	%
<b>Total</b>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	%

**20. Have you initiated any possession proceedings against any tenants in arrears affected by the RSRS?**

- Yes
- No
- Not known

**21. Of tenants affected by the RSRS:  
(Please leave blank if not known)**

	Number of RSRS-affected tenants
How many tenants have been issued with a formal warning letter?	<input type="text"/>
How many tenants have been issued with an intention to seek possession (NOSP)?	<input type="text"/>
For how many tenancies have you applied for possession?	<input type="text"/>
How many tenants have had court cases heard?	<input type="text"/>
How many tenants have been issued with a suspended possession order?	<input type="text"/>
How many tenants have been issued with a possession order (not suspended)?	<input type="text"/>
How many tenants have been evicted?	<input type="text"/>

**22. Which of the following best describes your policy towards possession proceedings on tenants who fall into arrears?**

	RSRS-related arrears	Arrears for other reasons
a. We offer our usual support, but follow our usual possession proceedings if this fails to resolve the situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. We offer support that goes substantially above the level we'd usually offer, but will then follow our usual possession proceedings if this fails to resolve the situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. We will not evict tenants who are working with us, even if this has failed to solve their problems and their arrears are still growing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. We will not evict certain groups of tenants (eg vulnerable, or with children) even if they repeatedly fail to pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. We will not evict any tenants even if they repeatedly fail to pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**This section is about your tenants' experiences of applying for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)**

**23. Has your total DHP funding (including any top up from the Scottish or Welsh Government) been sufficient to allow you to offer DHP to cover the shortfalls in full of all RSRS-affected tenants, as long as they apply for it?**

- Yes
- No
- In some areas but not others
- Not known

**23a. In how many of the local authorities in which you work are you familiar enough with the policy on DHP to advise tenants affected by the RSRS as to whether they might be eligible?**

- All
- Most
- Around half
- A minority
- None

**23b. Which of the following processes of applying for DHP apply for your tenants:**

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. The tenant applies direct to the LA and we have no involvement in the process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. We advise the tenant on whether they are likely to be eligible for DHP and provide assistance if required, but the tenant applies themselves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. We assist tenants with filling in the DHP application, and the LA encourages us to do this. Tenants are allowed but not encouraged to apply without our assistance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Tenants must apply through us. The LA will not accept their applications without our backing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. We have been allocated a DHP sum from the LA to decide how to allocate to our tenants ourselves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**23c. Which of the following best describes the system used most often for assessing eligibility for DHP for your tenants?**

- Tenants need to be in a priority group
- Tenants need to be found to be unable to afford the shortfall
- Tenants need to be in a priority group, and ALSO to be found to be unable to afford the shortfall
- Some other system (please explain)
- Not known

**24. Do you have any other comments about DHP?**

**This section is about allocations**

**25. Do you have your own allocations policy covering at least some of your stock?**

- Yes
- No – all allocations are made via LA-wide policy/policies/via a common housing register and we do not design the allocations policy

**25a. Have you made any changes to your allocation policy DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS to increase the priority given to downsizers in response to the RSRS?**

- Yes, for all potential downsizers
- Yes, just for those affected by the RSRS
- No – they were already Band A (or equivalent if using points system)
- No – they were, and still are, Band B (or equivalent if using points system) or below

**26. Which of the following best describes your approach to deciding what size of home to let to new tenants?**

- New tenants would not normally be allowed to under-occupy (according to DWP's size criteria)
- New tenants are only allowed to under-occupy if they are in employment (and not on HB) or are pensioners and therefore unaffected by the RSRS
- New tenants, including those affected by the RSRS, are allowed an extra bedroom if they wish, after we have assessed the affordability and believe they can afford the shortfall
- Certain groups of new tenants (such as parents with access visits from children), including those affected by the RSRS, are allowed an extra bedroom if they wish, after we have assessed affordability and believe they can afford the shortfall
- New tenants, including those affected by the RSRS may sometimes only be offered housing that includes an extra bedroom (according to the DWP's size criteria) for instance because we don't have sufficient smaller stock for them

**27. Do you offer shared housing (i.e. groups of unrelated adults sharing a house)?**

- Yes, we have been doing this since before the RSRS was introduced
- Yes, and we have introduced, or expanded this option since the RSRS was introduced
- Not currently but we are considering this
- No, and we have no plans to do so

**28. Can you tell us more about why you do or don't offer shared housing?**

**29. Do you allow tenants affected by the RSRS and with arrears to downsize?**

- Usually yes
- Yes if they are below a certain level and/or the tenant is trying to pay them off
- Usually no
- Not known

**30. Is there a financial incentive available to your tenants who wish to downsize?**

- Yes
- Yes in specific circumstances (please explain)

- No
- Not known

**30a. How much would downsizers typically be offered?**

£

**This section is about difficulties letting properties****31. Have you experienced any difficulties in letting properties as a result of the RSRs?**

- Yes
- No
- Not known

**31a. Which types of properties have proved harder to let?**

- Homes with 5 or more bedrooms
- 4 bedroom homes
- 3 bedroom houses
- 3 bedroom flats
- 2 bedroom houses
- 2 bedroom flats
- 1 bedroom homes

**32. How many properties in total were void on 31st March 2013?**

**32a. And how many were void on 31st March 2014?**

**This last section is about development plans**

**33. As a landlord, are you involved in developing new housing?**

- Yes
- No / Not currently

**33a. Have you altered your development plans in response to the RSRS and its consequences in order to build:**

	Building fewer	No change	Building more
1 bedroom properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 bedroom houses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 bedroom flats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 bedroom houses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 bedroom flats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 bedroom properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 or more bedroom properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**34. Do you have any other comments on the impact of the RSRS on your organisation or your tenants?**

**Finished the survey?**

- Yes, please submit my answers



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