

CORE 2017/18 Log Review Proposals for Change

Summary

This paper presents proposals being considered for the 2017/18 CORE Lettings and Sales Logs. Data providers are invited to provide feedback on these proposals. This feedback will be taken into account along with that from other data providers and stakeholders to produce a final set of 2017/18 log revisions.

Please send any feedback on these proposals, quoting the proposal number(s), to CORE@communities.gsi.gov.uk by **Monday 31st October 2016**.

Background

Each year a review takes place to identify necessary changes to the data collection forms (aka 'Logs'), including reductions and deletions, to reflect changes in social housing activities and to meet new policy and data provider needs. The current review will affect data collected from April 2017. A copy of the current 2016/17 logs are available [here](#).

The review sought proposals from key stakeholders within DCLG, across Government and across all social housing providers. These proposals have been reviewed and assessed by the CORE project team, and a set of specific changes are now being put forward for consideration. There are 17 proposals in this paper but only two refer to the potential addition of new questions (one on lettings, one on sales) – most proposed changes refer to changes to the wording of an additional question, further response options for an existing question or amended guidance to improve data quality and ease data entry for data providers. Please also consider the proposal 1, we seeks to allow the recording of Rent to Buy lettings. This is a departure from the current remit of CORE as Rent to Buy will be let at intermediate rent.

Your views will be taken into account before producing a final proposed version of the Log review proposals by the end of the year. Please send any comments you have to CORE@communities.gsi.gov.uk by 31st October 2016.

Details of Proposals

1. Rent to Buy

Change Type: New category of letting

Proposal: To record all lettings of Rent to Buy by Private Registered Providers by adding a new category of letting type Providers at the start of the form. We anticipate Rent to Buy

lettings to be predominantly managed by Private Registered Providers and this change will not affect forms completed for Local Authority lettings.

It is proposed that we record Rent to Buy as a separate Letting Type. This will ask whether the letting is a Rent to Buy at the start of the form and create a specific Rent to Buy form (based on the general needs form)

CORE Lettings Log 2017/18 STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL		
Is this an <u>Affordable Rent log</u>, <u>Social Letting Log</u> or <u>Rent to Buy log</u>?	AR <input type="checkbox"/>	Social <input type="checkbox"/>
		Rent to Buy <input type="checkbox"/>

Rationale for Change: Policy colleagues and HCA are keen to record details of new Rent to Buy lettings and we believe that these will be of interest to ministers. Rent to Buy are lettings provided at intermediate rent for a minimum period of 5 years. After that minimum rental period, the property can either be a) sold at market value of the day b) sold on shared ownership terms c) relet at market rent d) continue to be let at an intermediate rent. We propose to record lettings made by RPs for Rent to Buy. We will also record rent to Buy sales (see XX below).

2. Question 2c – Length of fixed term tenancy

Change Type: Change to guidance

Proposal: To improve guidance to ensure that Local Authorities subtract the introductory period from the amount given at question 2c.

Rationale for Change: Currently, the log says to exclude any introductory period. However, in future local authority fixed term tenancies will include any introductory period. We propose to update the guidance to ensure that local authorities exclude the introductory period (which will initially be 12 months) from the tenancy length given at question 12c. This will make the recording of tenancy length comparable with the way PRPs record this information.

3. Question 6 (Universal Credit/Housing Benefit receipt)

Change Type: Change of question categories

Proposal: To change categories in the question to:

6. Is the tenant in receipt of or likely to be in receipt of the following):

- Universal Credit only – with housing element 6
- Universal Credit only – with no housing element 7
- Universal Credit with Housing Benefit* 8 (*Supported housing only)
- Housing Benefit (if not in receipt of UC) 1
- Neither 2 Don't know 3

Rationale for Change: This question is somewhat unclear, as it is not stated whether providers are to record those in receipt of Universal Credit, but not the housing element, or just those who use UC to cover their housing costs. This should be made explicit in the question and guidance. Note that Supported Housing tenants will receive both Universal Credit and Housing Benefit as the UC system has not yet been set up to provide the housing element of UC to SH tenants. For this reason we propose adding “Tick all that apply” but will provide validation to prevent invalid combinations of responses.

4. Question 9a: Main reason for leaving last settled home.

Change Type: Change of question categories

Proposal: To add new categories and expand other categories as follows:

Remove

- End of Assured shorthold tenancy or Fixed Term tenancy
- Eviction or repossession
- Couldn't afford rent or mortgage

Add

- End of Assured shorthold tenancy or Fixed Term tenancy – on a 'no fault' basis
- End of Assured shorthold tenancy or Fixed Term tenancy – eviction; tenant at fault
- Repossession
- Couldn't afford fees attached to renewing the tenancy
- Couldn't afford the increase in rent
- Couldn't afford rent or mortgage – welfare reforms
- Couldn't afford rent or mortgage – employment
- Couldn't afford rent or mortgage – other

Rationale for Change: In order to create better informed policy decisions around preventing homelessness DCLG need to understand, as far as is possible, the drivers and patterns behind homelessness. The additions are important in building a picture around the causes

and instances of homelessness that people applying for social housing have experienced that will allow the Department to create better policy. It will help inform our decisions around how best to prevent and reduce homelessness.

5. Question 12c – How long has the household lived in this local authority district

Change Type: Change of question categories

Proposed change: To expand the categories in Q12c so they are more flexible for analysis of residence test proposals. We propose the following:

New to Local Authority

Less than 1 year

1 Year (1 year but under 2 years)

2 years (2 years but under 3 years)

3 years (3 years but under 4 years)

4 years (4 years but under 5 years)

More than 5 years

Don't know

Rationale for Change: Residency test guidance is still being considered by the minister so we need to provide responses to Q12c that can provide as much flexibility for DCLG in analysing proposals and monitoring the use of residency test guidance.

6. Question 13 (Immediately prior to this letting, was this household...?)

Change Type: Additional question

Proposal: to add a new question 13a after question 13 to ask:

13a: In the past five years, how many separate occurrences of homelessness has this household experienced?

Rationale for Change: As for proposal number 3 above.

7. Question 14b - Reasonable preference

Change Type: Additional question category

Proposed change: To add a "Don't know" category to question 14b

Rationale for Change: We get a lot of providers answering "Don't know" to Q14a, and we thought this may be because they can't answer Q14b. We would like to add a "Don't know" category to Q14b – we hope this may allow more providers to answer "Yes" to Q14a where applicable.

8. Question 16 - Source of referral validation.

Change Type: Validation change in on-line form

Proposed Change: To highlight the Source of referral box in red when this is part of an error query.

Rationale for Change: To make this more consistent with other validations.

9. Question 20 - How many times has this unit previously been offered

Change Type: Change of wording to existing question

Proposed Change: "since becoming available for re-let or as a first let"

Also to improve the guidance to make sure that users understand that this refers to number of offers since the property became vacant (or available as a first let)

Rationale for Change: Some users have said that they are confused by Q20 – a number of housing officers tend to take this as the number of offers since the property was first let from new, not from when the last tenancy ended.

20. How many times has this unit been previously offered since becoming available for **relet since the last tenancy ended or as a first let?**

For an Affordable Rent Letting, only include number of offers as an Affordable Rent property.

(for a property let at the first attempt enter '0')

DO NOT LEAVE BLANK

10. Question 27 – Reason for vacancy

Change Type: Additional question category

Proposed change: To add a new category:

Relet - renewal of fixed-term tenancy

Rationale for Change: To provide a better way to record renewals of fixed-term tenancies for General Needs (currently renewals will be recorded as category 2. 'Relet – Internal transfer'. The guidance will still recommend recording other information in the form for these lettings as follows:

A CORE log should be submitted when a fixed-term tenancy is renewed to the same tenant at the same property. In these situations, please ensure that you respond in the CORE log as follows:

- The tenancy start date (Question 1) and the Void date (Question 19) should be same date – the date at which the renewed tenancy commences.
- The response to Question 9a ('In the tenant's view what was the main reason the household left their last settled home') must be '5. End of assured shorthold or fixed term tenancy'.
- The response to Question 11 ('The housing situation for this household immediately before this letting') must be same tenancy type as the new letting – either '1. Local

Authority general needs tenancy', '2. Private Registered Provider general needs tenancy', '6. Supported housing', or '8. Housing for older people'.

- The location of previous accommodation questions (Question 12) should use the location information of the property that the tenancy is being renewed at. No reference to the previous location of the household prior to the initial letting of that property is required in this instance.
- The response to source of referral for the letting (Question 16) should be '1. Internal transfer'.

The additional category will make it easier for analysts to identify renewals by avoiding complex filtering based on the responses as outlined above.

Sales Form

11. Question 8: Which organisation(s) were the purchaser(s) registered with for re-housing?

Change Type: Change of question wording

Proposed change: To reword this question as 'Which relevant organisation(s) were the purchaser(s) registered with? Tick ALL that apply.'

Rationale for Change: 'Re-housing' is not an appropriate phrase to use for social housing sales.

12. Question 16: Type of Sale

Change Type: Removal of Sale type

Proposed change: Remove Rent to HomeBuy as an option

Rationale for change: Rent to HomeBuy is no longer a grant funded housing product and hasn't been for some years. Rent to Buy is the new form of grant funded 'try before you buy' style product. It would seem to us that in order to reduce any potential for confusion, we should limit options for providers to the current set of funded products rather than retain any arcane housing products on the sales form.

13. Question 16: Type of Sale

Change Type: Improved guidance

Proposed change: Guidance in question 16 (sales) should be updated to remove reference to 'Do it yourself shared ownership (DIYSO).' This hasn't been a funded scheme since the early 2000's.

14. Question 16 and 38: Type of Sale

Change Type: Addition of Sale type

Proposed change: Include Rent to Buy under question 16 (if selling on shared ownership basis) and 38 if selling outright on the open market.

Rationale for change: Rent to Buy is the new government funded 'try before you buy' home ownership product. The scheme allows working households, who are deposit constrained, the opportunity to rent for a period of up to 5 years at which point if they are then able, they can then proceed to purchase or continue to rent according to circumstances. This scheme is being introduced as part of the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016 to 2021. We would like to start to record these types of sales.

15. After Questions 24 and 34: Mortgage Lender

New Question – Name of lender

Proposal: To ask for details of the name of the lender as a subset of questions 24 and 34. To assist with coding we may be able to provide users with a drop down list of larger known organisations to choose from, plus an open text field to capture any not included on the list.

Rationale for change: Capturing this information would go a long way to demonstrating which lenders are active in these markets and be very helpful for policy colleagues in the Department in their work to expand lending in the shared ownership sector.

16. Question 30: Type of Sale (Full ownership)

Change Type: Addition of Sale type

Proposal: Add category to record Voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB) at Q30 - place new category above 'Right to Buy (RTB)' which should be moved below 'Preserved Right to Buy' as there should be very few RtB purchases recorded.

30. TYPE OF SALE	(✓ one only)
Right to Acquire (RTA)	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Preserved Right to Buy (PRTB)	<input type="checkbox"/> 14
Voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB)	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Right to Buy (RTB)	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Social HomeBuy for outright purchase	<input type="checkbox"/> 21
Any other Equity loan scheme	<input type="checkbox"/> 22

Rationale for change: Voluntary Right to Buy is currently being piloted and the Government has plans to extend Right to Buy to more housing association tenants that are not listed as part of the Voluntary Right to Buy pilot. The change of response categories will capture all future VRTB sales. See here for more information:

<https://righttobuy.gov.uk/am-i-eligible/housing-association-tenants/>

17. Questions 32 & 33 : Loan/Discount

Change Type: Change question text to include new sale type

Proposal: Include VRTB as well as RTB & PRTB in questions 30 & 33 in the brackets.
So these would be:

32. Loan / grant / discount / subsidy given (all schemes apart from RTB, PRTB & VRTB)

33. Enter % discount given (RTB, PRTB & VRTB) (if discount capped, enter capped %)

On sales form add category to record voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB) at Q30 - place new category above 'Right to Buy (RTB)' which should be moved below 'Preserved Right to Buy' as there should be very few RtB purchases recorded (we currently believe we are recording too many of these)