

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING  
BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 20th JANUARY 2015**

**Question**

Does the Minister have a timescale for the introduction of appropriate and more stringent regulation of all providers of social (affordable) rental housing following the incorporation of Andium Homes and the adoption of the Housing Transformation Programme, and, if so, will the Minister inform members when such regulations are expected to be brought to the Assembly?

In the meantime, will the Minister inform members what policies Andium Homes and the Housing Trusts have concerning the tendering for planned and unplanned repairs, internal and structural maintenance, and decoration to ensure that professional standards and safety as well as value for money are met?

Will the Minister further examine what policies exist across housing providers on recharges for cleaning, decoration and repair costs between the provider, incoming new tenants, housing transfers/exchanges and departing tenants and, in particular, state whether there are agreed standards across providers for assessing the degree of “fair wear and tear” involved and, if not, will the Minister agree to achieve such agreed standards?

**Answer**

**Regulation**

Regulation of social (affordable) housing providers will be brought forward before the end of 2015. This timeframe takes into account the need to develop an appropriate regulatory framework and to consult on proposals with stakeholders, including the social housing providers and tenants. Work is underway with social housing providers to enable this.

**Tendering policies for repairs and maintenance**

All social housing providers have policies in place for the tendering of repair and maintenance works.

For major items of work above a certain value, providers will conduct a competitive tender that is subject to a full due diligence process by senior officers and/or the provider’s board of directors or trustees as is necessary.

For minor or urgent repair works, providers will obtain services from a number of approved contractors. The standard of their work and rates will be assessed to ensure that the services represent value for money and satisfy professional standards of maintenance and repair.

**Recharges for cleaning, decoration and repair at the end of a tenancy**

All social housing providers have clear and closely aligned policies in respect of recharging tenants for cleaning, decoration and repair costs when they give notice to vacate their property.

The responsibilities tenants have to return their home in a reasonable state of repair and cleanliness will be set out in their tenancy agreement, and additional guidance is available from providers in respect of tenants’ obligations for the condition and maintenance of their property.

Where a property is not in a satisfactory condition at the end of a tenancy, and its condition could not be attributed to fair wear and tear, providers will require tenants to undertake remedial works to improve the condition of their property. If a tenant does not return his/her property in a satisfactory condition, the provider will carry out the work itself and seek payment from the tenant to meet its costs.

In the case of the Housing Trusts, the costs of such works will be deducted from a tenant's deposit if there are outstanding obligations, in addition to a further sum if the amount is not sufficient to meet the costs of remedial works. It should be noted that Andium Homes does not require tenants to pay a deposit, and thus operates a system of recharges where a tenant fails to return a property in an acceptable condition.

There are no precise rules on what constitutes "fair wear and tear" which is the case for all types of rental tenancy, although social housing providers will take a professional approach to determining how such matters are dealt with. It should be noted that all the providers use condition reports on new tenancies as required by law since October 2014, which provides a comparative record of the condition of a property at the beginning and at the end of a tenancy.