

Social Housing Providers and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group 2010 Action Plan

26 February 2010

The Social Landlord and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group included contributions from the following organisations:



UK **onlinecentres**

As Managing Director of UK online centres for the past three years, I have had the privilege of meeting hundreds of people who have taken advantage of the opportunity to learn about computers and the internet. In every case, they've found something new, interesting or of benefit to their lives. For most, ICT has opened up aspirations, doors, and new worlds. For many, it has literally changed lives.

In policy terms, the last 12 months have seen digital inclusion grow exponentially. For instance, the recent *Smarter Government* report saw the potential of technology to improve services and save money, but it also recognised that 100% online services demands 100% online citizens, and pledged £30m to support one million to get online for 2012. Leading up to that commitment were several key milestones, including the *Informal Adult Learning* consultation and subsequent *Learning Revolution White Paper*, which re-established the value of informal learning, while Estelle Morris' *Review of ICT Skills* recommended making 'digital life skills' available and accessible to all. Meanwhile, the *Action Plan for Digital Inclusion* saw the appointment of a new Champion for Digital Inclusion, and fed into the wider *Digital Britain* interim and final reports, putting digital participation at the core of economic and social development.

Those of us working in the policy-field for digital inclusion may easily be able to see its social impact, but counting up the value of so-called 'soft' outcomes into a business case for funders and stakeholders has always been a tough task. It is one as a sector we have spent significant time and effort scoping. As a result, we know a lot more about digital exclusion and more importantly about the digitally excluded. This body of research undoubtedly played its part in shaping policy-thinking over the last year, and sowing the seed of digital exclusion as a factor in and cause of social exclusion.

If the research helped plough the field for digital inclusion, the Social Landlords Strategy Group behind this paper was grown from a single statistical seed: 70% of people who live in social housing aren't online. In context, that's nearly a third of all the UK's 10 million digitally excluded adults.

The fact is, if you're at a social or financial disadvantage, you are far more likely to be at a digital disadvantage too. That single statistic eloquently highlights the inequality of the digital divide, and also gives us the information we need to do something about it. If we know where the people at most risk of exclusion live, we can target them, reach them and work with them to tailor digital inclusion provision to their needs.

There is a real opportunity available to social housing providers to reach some of the people most at risk from digital and social exclusion, supporting the former and by doing so improving the latter. This unique prospect was identified by Baroness Kay Andrews in her Ministerial role at the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). I was delighted to accept her invitation to chair a Social Landlords Digital Inclusion Strategy Group back in April, and I'm delighted to be able to present this very practical and practicable plan now. It's the result of just four meetings, a common goal, and simply having the right people in the same room at the same time.

With continued support from government, the digital inclusion sector, the housing sector, third sector and industry, I'm confident the momentum which has seen the creation of this paper can continue to build. What's more, I look forward to meeting many more people whose lives have been personally transformed as a result of the ideas it contains.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Milner". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Helen Milner
Managing Director, UK online centres and
Chair, Social Landlord and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group

2 Introduction

Research shows 70%¹ of people who live in social housing do not use the internet. That means they're missing out on all the benefits, opportunities and conveniences computers and the internet can provide – essential public services, instant communication, commercial comparisons and online bargains, job searches and applications.

People living in social housing in England account for 28%² of all those that are not online - the largest group in the digitally excluded population. As a result the Department of Communities and Local Government was keen to seek high level support for a small number of priority actions to address digital exclusion.

Social housing providers are on the front line, and are often the first official channel through which social problems are identified. As such, they provide a vital link between the tenant and a host of public services. Having access to technology-based solutions could have a significant impact on the important work social landlords provide. It follows that if a tenant has the access, skills and motivation to engage with ICT, landlords will be able to provide an inclusive range of services in a more cohesive way that better tackles important community issues such as anti-social behaviour and environmental crime.

Indeed, case studies already exist about social housing landlords who have devised technical solutions to tackle digital exclusion, resulting in innovative schemes like choice-based lettings, tenant forums and online reporting of repairs and maintenance via interactive televisions and mobile phones. Other examples include the provision of concierge services via CCTV, recycled computer schemes, and the creation of UK online centres.

In July 2009, Baroness Kay Andrews, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), wrote to a number of key organisations in the social housing and digital inclusion sectors to invite them to meet together to progress work in this area. Her letter of invitation made clear CLG's strong interest in promoting the use of technology to improve social outcomes for communities. Further, she identified a need to explore the evidence on digital inclusion, highlight and document the specific issues experienced by people living in social housing, and discuss the benefits to social landlords, tenants and society for increasing use of the internet.

This document represents the participants' collected contributions across the four meetings held by the Group³. It lists recommended actions to address social inequality and digital exclusion - for the social housing sector, digital inclusion practitioners, the private sector and national and local government. It is aimed at all organisations which

¹ Office of National Statistics, 2008

² Office of National Statistics, 2008

³ The four meetings were held in London on 22 July 2009, 3 September 2009, 13 October 2009 and 25 November 2009

contribute to the social, environmental and economic well-being of residents in social housing. Examples of organisations that should read this report include:

- Housing associations
- ALMOs
- Local authorities
- Policy-makers interested in the welfare of social housing residents
- Technology providers
- Training and support providers
- Third sector organisations interested in working with social housing residents.

It should be noted that the recommendations in this report will continue to evolve, as technologies continue to evolve. The Group welcomes additional suggestions and offers of help to make positive social mobility a reality for all.

For further information or to feedback on anything in this report, please contact us at ukonlinecentres@ufi.com.

3 | Context and definitions

It is important at the outset to define what is meant by 'digital inclusion' and why it should be addressed.

1. Factors of digital exclusion

Firstly, we must acknowledge that there is no single measure that currently exists which determines 'digital inclusion'. However it is generally accepted the following factors contribute to the digital divide:

- **Access to equipment or connections.** This can be considered as ownership of technology or having a connection at home, availability of a connection at convenient locations in everyday life, or having access to the internet anywhere, including at public access points. Examples of barriers which inhibit take-up include affordability, lack of time, or lack of training and support.
- **Skills, confidence and capability** to use information technologies. Unmet primary needs may present barriers to effective use. Literacy difficulties, for example, make use of the internet problematic, and some disabilities may present challenges – for example visual impairments or dyslexia can make it difficult to read text on an ordinary screen. Low confidence is relevant particularly for those without supportive family members or friends they are able to learn from.
- **Attitude** – including perceptions of the relevance of ICT to individuals' lives and expectations of what sort of interaction is possible. People need to be able to understand what the internet can do, and how that can be relevant to their everyday lives.
- **Use of technologies.** What people do with technology, how much of the functionality they use or understand, and how confident they feel using it. Functional capability is arguably even more significant than functional access in considering levels or depths of inclusion and exclusion.

2. Factors of social exclusion

Second, it is important to acknowledge the close relationship between social exclusion and digital exclusion. The connection has been explored in numerous research studies. One of the first was a FreshMinds/UK online centres' report in 2007⁴ which discovered socially excluded people are at least three times more likely to be non-users of the internet than they are to be internet users. Updates from Communities and Local Government put the figure at seven times more likely, and beyond. The government's

⁴ 'Understanding Digital Inclusion – a research summary', 2007, (www.ukonlinecentres.com/images/stories/downloads/uk_online_digitalinclusion.pdf)

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) defines individuals as being socially excluded if they are subject to three or more of the following forms of deprivation:

- **Income deprivation** – living in social housing or in a workless household
- **Employment deprivation** – never worked, economically inactive, unemployed, in routine or manual work, in part-time work only, or in a workless household
- **Health deprivation** – not working because of poor health
- **Education deprivation** – no qualifications
- **Barriers to services** – living alone, without access to a car, or a lone parent
- **Living deprivation** – living alone, or living in crowded housing.

3. Social housing factors

The National Housing Federation's *Digital Exclusion and Social Housing* report⁵ argues persistent digital exclusion produces a series of issues which cross over with social landlords' wider social welfare role. These issues can contribute to and intensify persistent social immobility, and are based around access to public and commercial services, access to information, and ability to participate in community activities, discussions and decision making. In essence, the report argued that:

- Social housing providers have the chance to intervene in digital exclusion because:
 - Existing tenants tend to be digitally excluded
 - The process of inclusion often involves provision of technology and/or connections within the home.
- An intervention in digital inclusion is in line with social housing providers work to:
 - Administrate estates – from rent collection to essential maintenance
 - Support social welfare and encourage social mobility
 - Engage communities and communicate with residents.
- An intervention in digital exclusion has the potential to tackle social issues at an individual and community level, and is a strategic response to the Hills report's call to create 21st Century social housing.⁶

⁵www.housing.org.uk/Uploads/File/Policy%20briefings/Research%20Futures/DigitalExclusion2009.pdf

⁶ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/strategiesandreviews/hillsreport/>

4 | *Terms of Reference*

The Terms of Reference were agreed by the Social Landlords and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group at its first meeting held on 22 July 2009. The Group agreed that they would:

- Bring together key senior figures from the worlds of social housing and digital inclusion to see if more could be done to help people who live in social housing get online and use the internet to help them in their lives.
- Conduct a total of four meetings involving senior staff from the public, private and third sectors.⁷
- Discuss the following:
 - Evidence of successful digital inclusion projects
 - Levels of digital inclusion amongst social housing tenants
 - Specific issues and barriers to technology experienced by people living in social housing
 - Benefits to social landlords, tenants and society for increased internet use and understanding.
- Ensure good practice, research findings and areas of commonality are shared within and beyond the Group.
- Agree an Action Plan (this document) for implementation by cross sector partners, to be led by the Champion for Digital Inclusion (Martha Lane Fox) and presented to the Minister for Housing and Planning (Rt. Hon. John Healey MP).
- Assume there is no new money for the implementation of actions planned.
- View that all members of the Group were equal and all opinions and all views mattered.
- Agree all discussions which took place in the meetings would be confidential unless expressly stated otherwise.
- Agree actions were likely to work most effectively when delivered in partnership between all sectors.
- Be supported by Communities and Local Government (CLG), but remain independent of it.

⁷ It was agreed at the 25 November 2009 meeting that this Strategy Group would continue to meet during 2010 and evolve its remit from developing the Action Plan to delivering components of the recommendations within it.

- Agree to be chaired by Helen Milner, Managing Director of UK online centres, who would report to both Martha Lane Fox and the Rt. Hon. John Healey MP.

A list of contributors to each of the four meetings is shown in Appendix B.

5 | *About this Action Plan*

This Action Plan recognises that tenants, landlords, the social housing sector, digital inclusion experts, Local Authorities and central government all need to play their part in addressing digital exclusion, which effects millions of social housing tenants in the UK. The Plan makes proposals across the board by addressing how the various audiences can be **motivated** to take action, how to improve **access** to technology and also how to improve the **skills** and confidence to use it effectively.

The Strategy Group identified three strands under which their recommendations were made:

- A. **Participation and Consultation** in scoping the issues
- B. Relevant and timely **Communication**, and
- C. An effective and comprehensive **Digital Inclusion Toolkit**.

6 | Summary of Actions

- 1. A social housing 'Get Online' campaign**
Lead: UK online centres
Delivery: During 2010
- 2. A communications plan**
Lead: Social Landlords and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group
Delivery: Early 2010
- 3. Support national delivery organisations to target social tenants, including active promotion of the Home Access Programme**
Lead: CLG and DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families)
Delivery: During 2010
- 4. Awards schemes to celebrate digital inclusion achievements**
 - 4.1 A social housing awards scheme to celebrate good practice**
Lead: National Housing Forum
Delivery: To be announced during National Housing Week (14-19 June, 2010)
 - 4.2 Chartered Institute for Housing Awards**
Lead: Chartered Institute for Housing
Delivery: Awards will be opened in April 2010 with the ceremony taking place in November 2010
- 5. Digital inclusion toolkit repository**
Lead: UK online centres
Delivery: During 2010
- 6. Model Business Case(s) for social housing providers**
Lead: Chartered Institute for Housing
Delivery: Proposal to incorporate an 'inclusion' category. Awards will be opened in April 2010 with the ceremony in November 2010.
- 7. Showcase social housing providers' digital inclusion pathfinder projects and aggregate the sharing of good practice**
Lead: Delivered by a consortium of contributors led by the Social Landlords and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group, Chartered Institute for Housing and CLG
Delivery: During 2010
- 8. Promote the use of UK online centres and myguide to social housing providers**
Lead: CLG and UK online centres
Delivery: During 2010
- 9. Widen the role of Local Improvement Advisors (LIAs)**
Lead: CLG
Delivery: For consultation to start by early 2010

7 | *The Action Plan in more detail*

A. Participation and Consultation

The Action Plan in its current form has been developed through the collaborative efforts of 35 people working in 16 organisations. The Strategy Group members will use their influence and contacts to ensure that a greater number of organisations can contribute to the delivery of the Action Plan.

Other organisations working in the area of social housing and digital inclusion will have the opportunity to debate the work of this Strategy Group and Action Plan at the National Digital Inclusion Conference on 10th and 11th March 2010.

B. Communication

One of the key barriers preventing individuals from taking up digital opportunities is the fact they often do not understand the benefits the online world has to offer. The following action is designed to help tenants to be motivated to use the internet.

1. A social housing 'Get Online' Campaign

Designed to be delivered by social housing providers, the campaign would be supported by a 'Campaign in a Box' of marketing materials, and run by social housing providers including Peabody Trust, Poplar HARCA, and Southern Housing, in 2010.

Lead: UK online centres

Delivery: During 2010

Peabody Trust, Poplar HARCA, Affinity Sutton and Southern Housing have already agreed to run a 'get online' promotional campaign during 2010. They will receive a series of planning tools, leaflets and 'how to...' guides designed to help them easily and effectively engage residents. The resources will be customised locally to reflect each housing provider's aims and objectives, and will be led locally by each provider. The key to the approach will be to communicate cheaply and effectively (for instance including a simple flyer to accompany residents' rental statements or downloadable posters that can be displayed in public areas). We will invite the Communities and Local Government Housing Minister to launch the campaign by visiting a social housing provider's digital inclusion project, to raise awareness and highlight the government's support of the digital inclusion agenda⁸.

Residents, landlords, policy-makers and the commercial sector all need to understand why it is so important for social housing residents to engage with the internet, and how they can be effective agents for change. The following actions are proposed to address this for these audiences:

⁸ Pending agreement with CLG

2. A Communications plan

Delivered by a consortium of contributors, designed to co-ordinate and amalgamate communications and marketing efforts within the Group.

Lead: Social Landlords and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group

Delivery: Early 2010

The production of a coordinated plan to be disseminated through a wide range of partners, promoting a widespread understanding of the advantages and benefits of getting online, or Passing IT on to others. The plan will publicise key messages aimed at tenants, social housing providers and other supporting organisations in the private and public sector. All communications will have a clear call to action and easy signposting to organisations which can assist people on a digital journey. Existing networks and channels will be used to disseminate communications themes, including social housing sector practitioners, social housing policy makers and the tenants own more informal networks. The plan will also ensure close links with the government's digital participation plan, due for publication in March 2010. It will also ensure that other strategies in development that may have an impact on social housing residents' access to technology or skills (such as the national recycled PC scheme being developed by Ofcom) are incorporated where appropriate.

3. Support national delivery organisations to target social tenants, including active promotion of the Home Access programme

Lead: CLG and DCSF (Department for Children Schools and Families)

Delivery: During 2010

Ensure that all community organisations delivering local digital inclusion activities, including UK online centres, have access to good practice examples, as well as hints and tips for working with social landlords and tenants.

Home Access is the government programme which will help to ensure that more children in state-maintained education in England have access to technology at home to support their learning. The programme will benefit over 270,000 households by March 2011. Initially the programme will target learners aged between 9 and 14 years. CLG and DCSF will work together to ensure social housing providers communicate with eligible families for the Home Access programme so that these benefits can be realised with their tenants.

4. Awards schemes to celebrate digital inclusion achievements

A social housing awards scheme to celebrate good practice

Lead: National Housing Forum

Delivery: to be announced during National Housing Week (14-19 June 2010)

The National Housing Forum will establish an Award Scheme to enable existing best practice delivery models to be widely publicised and celebrate social housing providers that are already demonstrating positive results in their communities. This year's theme is about social housing and digital inclusion and the event to launch the week will profile some good practice examples of what can be done. The members of the Forum will be asking their members to promote this theme and any local examples during the week.

Chartered Institute of Housing Award

Lead: Chartered Institute for Housing

Delivery: Proposal to incorporate an 'inclusion category'. Awards will be opened in April 2010 with the ceremony in November 2010.

It is proposed that a new 'inclusion' category is added to the awards, which will encompass both digital inclusion and financial inclusion best practice. Nominations will be added to the collation of best practice, and the winner or winners will be asked to be ambassadors for their projects, advising and working with other social housing agencies.

C. Digital Inclusion Toolkit

The Strategy Group was very clear that providing the right tools to social housing providers and their residents would be fundamental to the success of expanding digital skills and digital up-take in social housing. Much of the information needed is already in existence; it needs aggregation and communication. The following list of items will start to form a '**Digital Inclusion Toolkit**' that should be easily available through a coordinated online resource:

5. Digital Inclusion Toolkit repository

To find a place for aggregating information, advice, tools and resources so that there is a central resource for the social housing and digital inclusion sectors to access guidance for embedding digital inclusion activity in their strategies and plans.

Lead: UK online centres

Delivery: During 2010

The repository would eventually feature:

6. Model business case(s) for social housing providers

To develop a model business case or set of business cases that will identify and quantify the economic, social, and practical reasons for landlords to help social residents become digitally included.

Lead: Delivered by a consortium of contributors led by the Social Landlords and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group

Delivery: By early 2010

To develop a model business case that will identify and quantify the economic, social, and practical reasons for landlords to help social residents become digitally included. The business case will showcase the social return on investment (SROI). In addition a number of case study examples will be included of schemes already in place where financial returns on investment (FROI) have been demonstrated. The document will also attempt to quantify the financial implications of inaction. This should be promoted to all social housing providers, along with this Action Plan, and to John Healey MP, Stephen Timms MP, and Martha Lane Fox (Champion for Digital Inclusion).

7. Showcase social housing providers' digital inclusion pathfinder projects, and aggregate the sharing of good practice:

Lead: Delivered by a consortium of contributors led by the Social Landlords and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group, Chartered Institute for Housing and CLG.

Delivery: during 2010

Aggregate examples of existing projects that have already been delivered (or that are in development) which demonstrate a range of scenarios other social housing providers can learn from when developing their own digital inclusion strategies. Up to ten 'showcase' projects will be chosen. The showcase examples will also show how they map to the Tenant Services Authority Standards for social housing as described in Appendix C.

8 Promote the use of UK online centres and myguide to social housing providers

Lead: CLG and UK online centres

Delivery: During 2010

UK online centres will promote their services to social housing providers using established communications networks to encourage them to set up UK online centres in their housing estates, or to deliver outreach services using existing local UK online centres. Further, UK online centres will seek funding to help social housing providers to set their own UK online centres in their estates, where appropriate and depending on the level of funding secured. UK online centres will develop a communications strategy for the social housing sector to encourage a more widespread adoption of **myguide** (www.myguide.gov.uk) and the **Pass IT On** online resource (www.ukonlinecentres.com/passiton).

9 Widen the role of Local Improvement Advisors (LIAs)

To include the provision of advice to social housing providers.

Lead: CLG

Delivery: for consultation to start by early 2010

The current LIAs only support local authorities and their strategic partners. The Strategy Group has agreed with CLG that their remit can be extended to include social housing organisations which meet predefined criteria, with the view to offering consultancy services at no cost to social housing providers to help them develop their own digital inclusion strategies.

8 | Next Steps

The biggest challenge facing this Action Plan is to ensure the good intentions of the Strategy Group translate into the execution of the ideas themselves. It was agreed therefore that the Strategy Group extends its remit into 2010 in order to refocus its efforts on delivery, and monitoring progress against this Action Plan.

The following timetable indicates the work the Strategy Group would like to see accomplished in 2010:

1. Early 2010

- Present this Action Plan to John Healey MP (Minister for Housing and Planning) and to Martha Lane Fox (Champion for Digital Inclusion)
- Develop a model Business Case or set of cases for social housing providers
- Design a 'campaign in a box' for social housing providers
- Produce a Communications Plan and 'Toolkit' of resources
- Announce the expanded role of Local Improvement Advisors
- Seek funding to help social housing providers create UK online centres in their housing estates, or deliver outreach services as appropriate
- Encourage social housing providers to engage with the Home Access Programme.

2. Mid-2010

- Announce a social housing awards scheme to celebrate good practice in digital inclusion activity
- Aggregate good practice examples through a coordinated and centralised online resource
- Announce the Chartered Institute of Housing award scheme
- Start to aggregate showcase social housing providers' digital inclusion pathfinder projects
- Seek funding for the development of a digital inclusion toolkit repository.

3. Later in 2010

- Source examples of social housing providers that underscore the new housing standard, with specific relation to digital inclusion strategies
- Hold the CIH Award scheme
- Deliver a small number of 'get online' campaigns by social housing providers to test the resources and prove the concept in readiness for a wider rollout to the rest of the social housing provider community.

9 Acknowledgements

I would like to thank and acknowledge the following people and organisations for their valuable contributions without which this Action Plan would not be possible:

- Andrew Mahar, Infoxchange (Australia)
- Anabel Palmer, Southern Housing Group
- Babu Bhattacharjee, Poplar Harca
- Ben Brown, UK online centres
- Bill Guile, Homes and Communities Agency
- Carol Gokce, Dept for Communities and Local Government
- Debbie Larner, Chartered Institute of Housing
- Dinna Tayao, Infoxchange (Australia)
- Dominic Ridley, Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Ewen McKinnon, Digital Inclusion Unit (City of London)
- Fiona Miller, BT Retail
- Garry Miller, Head of Group Policy, BT Group
- Gavin Smart, National Housing Federation
- Graeme Foster, Tenant Services Authority
- Kathy Valdes, Community Innovation UK
- Kirstine Stewart, Tenant Services Authority
- Liz Peel, Commission for Rural Communities
- Lorne Mitchell, Community Broadband Network
- Malcolm Corbett, Community Broadband Network
- Marianne Hood, National Housing Forum
- Matt Cooney, Solihull Community Housing
- Patrick Owen, Dept for Communities and Local Government
- Peter Stean, Dept for Communities and Local Government
- Richard Foggie, Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Richard Turl, Dept for Communities and Local Government
- Roger Mullings, Poplar Harca
- Stephen Burns, Peabody Trust
- Stuart Ropke, Head of Investment Policy and Strategy, National Housing Federation



Helen Milner
Managing Director, UK online centres and
Chair, Social Landlord and Digital Inclusion Strategy Group

Appendix A: Bibliography

- **Assessing the economic benefits of digital inclusion**,
Infoxchange (Australia) and AT Kearney, 2008,
<http://www.digitalinclusion.net.au/sites/www.digitalinclusion.net.au/files/Assessing%20the%20economic%20benefits%20of%20digital%20inclusion.pdf>
- **BT Broadband Enabling Technology, Is BET a viable solution for rural communities?**
Adrian Wooster, Chief Technology Officer, Community Broadband Network, September 2009
<http://www.broadband.coop/Latest/A-BETting-chance.html>
- **Champion for Digital Inclusion: The economic case for digital inclusion**
Race Online 2012/PriceWaterhouseCoopers, October 2009,
http://raceonline2012.org/sites/all/themes/raceonline/files/pwc_report.pdf
- **Digital Inclusion: An analysis of social disadvantage and information society**
OxIS, 2008
<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/microsites/oxis/publications.cfm>
- **Digital Inclusion and Social Housing**,
National Housing Federation, 2009,
<http://www.housing.org.uk/Uploads/File/Policy%20briefings/Research%20Future%20DigitalExclusion2009.pdf>
- **Digital Inclusion, Social Impact: a research study**,
UK online centres and Ipsos-MORI, 2008,
http://www.ukonlinecentres.com/images/stories/downloads/digital_inclusion_research_report.pdf
- **Does the internet improve lives?**
UK online centres and FreshMinds, 2008,
http://www.ukonlinecentres.com/images/stories/downloads/does_the_internet_improve_lives.pdf
- **Economic Benefits of Digital Inclusion: building the evidence**,
UK online centres and FreshMinds, 2008,
<http://www.ukonlinecentres.com/images/stories/downloads/economic%20benefits%20of%20digital%20inclusion%20-%20building%20the%20evidence.pdf>
- **Mind the Gap: Digital England, a rural perspective**
Commission for Rural Communities, June 2009,
<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/files/CRC104%20Digital%20Inclusion%20Report.pdf>

- **The Oxford Internet Institute Survey 2009: The internet in Britain**
OxIS, 2009
<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/microsites/oxis/publications.cfm>
- **Understanding digital inclusion – a research summary**
UK online centres and FreshMinds, 2007,
http://www.ukonlinecentres.com/images/stories/downloads/uk_online_digitalinclusion.pdf

Appendix B: Contributors

The following people contributed to the four sessions of the Strategy Group:

Meeting 22 July 2009

Helen Milner	Managing Director, UK online centres (Chair)
Anabel Palmer	Foundation Director, Southern Housing Group
Babu Bhattacharjee	Director Communities and Neighbourhoods, Poplar Harca
Ben Brown	Funding and Partnerships Manager, UK online centres
Bill Guile	E-Communities Manager, Homes and Communities Agency
Carol Gokce	Digital Inclusion Policy Team, CLG
Debbie Larner	Head of Professional Practice, Chartered Institute of Housing
Ewen McKinnon	Digital Inclusion Unit, City of London
Gavin Smart	Assistant Director of Research and Futures, National Housing Federation
Kirstine Stewart	Senior Information Officer, Tenant Services Authority
Malcolm Corbett	Chief Executive Officer, Community Broadband Association
Marianne Hood	Chair, National Housing Forum
Patrick Owen	Housing Management, Communities and Local Government
Stephen Burns	Director Community Services, Peabody Trust
Andrew Mahar	Executive Director, Infoxchange (Australia)
Dinna Tayao	Infoxchange (Australia)
Matt Cooney	Chief Executive, Solihull Community Housing
Martha Lane Fox	Champion for Digital Inclusion
Rebecca King	Director, Champion for Digital Inclusion's team
Thom Waterhouse	Researcher, Champion for Digital Inclusion's team

Meeting 3 September 2009

Helen Milner	Managing Director, UK online centres (Chair)
Anabel Palmer	Foundation Director, Southern Housing Group
Ben Brown	Funding and Partnerships Manager, UK online centres
Bill Guile	E-Communities Manager, Homes and Communities Agency
Dominic Ridley	Digital Inclusion Team, BIS
Ewen McKinnon	Digital Inclusion Unit, City of London
Graeme Foster	Assistant Director Tenant Excellence, Tenant Services Authority
Jeremy Blackburn	Senior Whitehall Advisor, Commission for Rural Communities
Marianne Hood	Chair, National Housing Forum
Peter Stean	Digital Inclusion Policy Team, CLG
Patrick Owen	Housing Management, CLG
Richard Foggie	Assistant Director, Electronics Innovation, BIS
Richard Turl	Local Government and Regeneration Group, CLG
Roger Mullings	Employment and Training Manager, Poplar Harca
Stephen Burns	Director Community Services, Peabody Trust

Meeting 13 October 2009

Helen Milner	Managing Director, UK online centres (Chair)
Anabel Palmer	Foundation Director, Southern Housing Group
Ben Brown	Funding and Partnerships Manager, UK online centres
Debbie Larner	Head of Professional Practice, Chartered Institute of Housing
Fiona Miller	Consumer Affairs Manager, BT Retail
Graeme Foster	Assistant Director Tenant Excellence, Tenant Services Authority
Liz Peel	Senior Policy Advisor, Commission for Rural Communities
Kathy Valdes	Senior Enterprise Development Consultant, Community Innovation UK
Malcolm Corbett	Chief Executive Officer, Community Broadband Association
Lorne Mitchell	Community Broadband Association
Marianne Hood	Chair, National Housing Forum
Peter Stean	Digital Inclusion Policy Team, CLG
Richard Foggie	Assistant Director, Electronics Innovation, BIS

Meeting 25 November 2009

Helen Milner	Managing Director, UK online centres (Chair)
Annabel Palmer	Foundation Director, Southern Housing Group
Ben Brown	Funding and Partnerships Manager, UK online centres
Cordelia Osewa-Ediae	Business Development Manager, UK online centres
Daniel Sage	Intern, Community Innovation UK
Debbie Larner	Head of Professional Practice, Chartered Institute of Housing
Garry Miller	Head of Group Policy, BT
Kathy Valdes	Senior Enterprise Development Consultant, Community Innovation UK
Marianne Hood	Chair, National Housing Forum
Peter Stean	Digital Inclusion Policy Team, CLG
Richard Foggie	Assistant Director, Electronics Innovation, BIS
Richard Turl	Digital Inclusion Policy Team, CLG
Stephen Burns	Director – Community Services, Peabody Trust
Stuart Ropke	Head of Investment Policy & Strategy, National Housing Federation

Appendix C: Tenant Services Authority's standards for social housing⁹

The six standards that will apply from spring 2010

Here you will find details of the six new standards that social housing providers will have to meet from spring 2010. Against each, we have described the outcomes we expect to see delivered.

We believe the best place for the quality of services to be discussed, agreed and scrutinised is locally, between providers and their tenants. So our standards require landlords to set out what they offer to tenants and set local standards that reflect the local priorities.

Our objectives

- Improve standards of service delivery for tenants
- Support decent homes and neighbourhoods
- Promote effective tenant involvement and empowerment
- Ensure providers are well run and deliver value for money
- Promote and protect public and private investment
- Encourage and support a supply of well-managed social housing.

We want to develop a new relationship between landlords and their regulator. We want the main relationship being between landlord and tenant – one where tenants help shape, influence and monitor the service provided. This is what we call co-regulation. This is not a top-down way of regulating. In a clear shift from regulation in the past, there will be less red tape and a clear focus on deregulation and reducing burdens where appropriate. In return, landlords will be expected to make themselves more accountable and to work more closely with their tenants.

What can tenants expect in the future?

- A greater focus on the issues that matter most to them, such as repairs, affordable rents and tackling anti-social behaviour
- More opportunities to have their say, to get involved and to hold their landlord to account
- A greater emphasis on their own priorities, through new local standards agreed by tenants and landlords
- More feedback from their landlord, including an annual report setting out just how well they are doing against local standards and the TSA's national standards.

What can landlords expect in the future?

- More responsibility to work closely with their tenants to drive improvements
- More flexibility about how they deliver their housing services in return for more accountability to their tenants and partners

⁹ <http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/>

- A modern 'co-regulatory' relationship with their tenants and the regulator where many of the activities necessary to regulate outcomes are undertaken by landlords with their tenants
- A fair and proportionate approach if their performance needs to improve.

Tenant involvement and empowerment standard

Customer service and choice

Registered providers must design and deliver housing services that tenants can access easily. Tenants must be offered choices over the services they receive, and be treated with fairness and respect. In relation to all the standards, registered providers must consider equality issues and the diversity of their tenants, including tenants with additional support needs. Registered providers must understand their tenants' needs and use this information to:

- Design and deliver housing services
- Communicate with tenants.

Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers will offer all tenants opportunities to be involved in the management of their housing. This must include opportunities to:

- Influence housing related policies and how housing related services are delivered
- Be involved in scrutinising performance in delivering housing-related services.

Registered providers must offer tenants support so they are more able to be effectively engaged, involved and empowered.

Responding to complaints

Registered providers must have a clear and accessible policy. They must deal with tenants' complaints and any other feedback promptly, politely and fairly. The policy must include how they use complaints and other feedback to:

- Change how they do things
- Improve services.

Home standard

Quality of accommodation

Registered providers must ensure that all homes are warm, weatherproof and have modern facilities.

Repairs and maintenance

Registered providers must provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants. They must meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of tenants in their homes.

Tenancy standard

Allocations

Registered providers must let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They must take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They should demonstrate how their allocations processes:

- Make the best use of available housing
- Contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities.

There should be clear decision making and appeals processes.

Rents

Registered providers will charge rents in accordance with the objectives and framework set out in the Government's direction to the TSA of November 2009.

Tenure

Registered providers must offer and issue the most secure form of tenure compatible with:

- The purpose of the housing
- The sustainability of the community.

They must meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements.

Neighbourhood and community standard

Neighbourhood management

Registered providers will keep the common areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. To achieve this, they will work in partnership with:

- Their tenants
- Other providers and public bodies, where this is the most effective way of achieving this standard.

Local area co-operation

Registered providers will co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well being in the areas where their properties are.

Anti-social behaviour

Registered providers must work in partnership with other public agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

Value for money standard

Value for money

In meeting all national standards and their local standards, registered providers have a comprehensive approach to managing their resources to provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services and homes to meet tenants' and potential tenants' needs.

Governance and financial viability standard

Governance

Registered providers have effective governance arrangements that ensure that they have structures, systems and processes to deliver their aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner. Governance arrangements ensure they:

- Adhere to all relevant legislation
- Comply with their governing documents and all regulatory requirements
- Are accountable to tenants, the TSA and relevant stakeholders
- Safeguard taxpayers' interests and the reputation of the sector.

Financial viability

Registered providers must manage their resources effectively to ensure their viability is maintained.