

ForHousing Limited grading under review

Press release

Providers being investigated for an issue regarding their compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard are added to the regulator's GUR list.



The Regulator of Social Housing reports that ForHousing Limited has been placed on its gradings under review list today (26 October 2022).

The provider's current published grades are G2/V1. The regulator notifies that a provider's grading is under review when its compliant grade (G1 and G2 for governance, V1 or V2 for viability) is being investigated in relation to an issue which may result in a downgrade to a non-compliant grade (G3 or G4 for governance, V3 or V4 for viability).

The regulator is currently investigating a matter which may impact on ForHousing's compliance with the governance element of the Governance and Financial Viability Standard. The outcome of the investigation will be confirmed in a regulatory judgement, once completed.

The regulator's [gradings under review list](#) is available on its website.

Notes to editors

1. The GUR lists providers where we are investigating a matter that might result in them being assessed as non-compliant in relation to the regulator's Governance and Financial Viability Standard.
2. The [regulatory standards](#) can be found on the RSH website.
3. For press office contact details, see our [Media enquiries page](#). For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.
4. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver and maintain homes of appropriate quality that meet a range of needs. It does this by

undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.

Published 26 October 2022

[RSH publishes regulatory notice for Great Yarmouth Borough Council](#)

Press release

Great Yarmouth Borough Council has been issued with a regulatory notice by RSH following a breach of the consumer standards.



In a regulatory notice published today (Wednesday 26 October), the Regulator of Social Housing has concluded that Great Yarmouth Borough Council has breached the Home Standard and, as a result, there was potential for serious detriment to tenants.

Following a self-referral, RSH concluded that the council failed to meet statutory requirements for fire, gas, electrical, asbestos and water safety. The council has put in place a programme to rectify these issues.

Angela Holden, Assistant Director of Consumer Regulation at RSH, said:

We welcome Great Yarmouth Borough Council's self-referral to us, which recognises that it failed to meet requirements for fire, gas, electrical, asbestos and water safety.

Our investigation confirms that the council breached our standards and put tenants at potential risk. We expect the council to correct

these failings and we will monitor them closely as they put things right for tenants.

More information about the regulator's findings in this case are available in its [regulatory notice](#).

Notes to editors

1. RSH promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver and maintain homes of appropriate quality that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.
2. More information about how RSH regulates against its [standards](#) is available in [Regulating the Standards](#).
3. For press office contact details, see our [Media enquiries page](#). For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

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[PCA works with pub companies to improve the new tenant experience](#)

The Pubs Code places duties on pub companies when dealing with new and prospective tied tenants. It requires the pub company to provide a range of information, so tenants are fully aware what the agreement involves and their obligations. The pub company must advise a tenant to take independent advice on this information, including the rent proposal, before preparing their sustainable business plan. It must also advise new tenants to complete pre-entry training (unless they are experienced).

The Government's last statutory review of the Pubs Code (2016-2019) identified some concerns about whether tenants were receiving and fully understanding information from their pub company as required by the Code. The Government also recognised the importance of new tied tenants accessing good

advice and fully understanding their Code rights.

The PCA initiated ongoing discussions with the pub company code compliance officers to review the experience of new and prospective tenants and where improvements can be made.

Working with the code compliance officers of all six regulated pub companies since then, the following work has been underway:

New tenant information and training

Tenants are provided with a wealth of information when taking on a tenancy. Much of this will be required by the Code (under Schedule 1) and while our recent annual tenant survey showed 83% found the information useful, it may be difficult to digest.

The Code also requires that new entrants complete pubs entry training, designed to raise awareness of the matters involved in operating a pub and entering into product ties and other agreements with landlords. Training is currently provided by British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) through their Pre-Entry Awareness Training (PEAT) course.

Code compliance officers in agreement with the PCA have reviewed how they provide information to new tenants, including about the Code, and how they will measure how well it is working. This includes ensuring pubs entry training is appropriate, where provided by a third party as well as their own training for inducting new tenants.

Professional advice

The BII has facilitated the creation of industry expert panels (Chartered Surveyors, Solicitors and Accountants). The panels have been established to support members of the BII with major lifecycle events around agreements, investment and business cases by directing them to independently accredited advisors. Following engagement with the PCA, the BII supported the effectiveness of the Code by ensuring that its new panels of accredited advisers for new tenants of all the regulated pub companies are also available to prospective tenants, who have rights to information under the Code when negotiating their tenancy. Most pub companies also pay for ongoing BII membership for their tied tenants. The PCA is pleased to see this delivered, recognising the importance of quality advice for tenants.

Steven Alton, CEO of the British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) commented, 'Access to independent expert support is business critical to both new and existing tenants. Through our accredited advisors and wider professional services we are able to fully support our members with access to the highest level of professional, independent support to tenants, be that prospective tenants ahead of a formal agreement or existing tenants when changes to agreements occur. This will ensure they secure the very best commercial platform on which they can grow their business.'

Code awareness

All new and prospective tenants now receive a letter from the PCA, via their pub company, introducing them to their Code rights. Tied tenants told us in our [independent research](#) that they want personal contact from the PCA at the start of their tenancy. Our aim is to continue to improve tenant awareness of the Pubs Code with 79% of tenants now aware, up 7% from 2019 when the survey was last carried out.

Use of the sustainable business plan

The PCA is in ongoing discussions with the code compliance officers who have agreed to review their arrangements for regular reviews of the sustainable business plan, which the tied tenant is required to produce, relying on professional advice, before they take the tenancy. This is to ensure that it is updated as necessary and remains a useful basis for discussion and decision-making. Work is ongoing to ensure the quality of that review.

Further information

To find out about pub company duties to their new tenants see the PCA's factsheet available on our website [here](#).

The full PCA tied tenant survey results can be found on our website [here](#).

[CMA clears LSEG / Quantile merger](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) referred the merger between London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG) and Quantile Group Limited (Quantile) for an in-depth Phase 2 inquiry by a group of independent CMA Panel members in May 2022, after identifying competition concerns during an initial Phase 1 review that warranted further investigation.

Following that Phase 2 investigation, the CMA has concluded that the deal does not raise substantial competition concerns in the UK. The Phase 2 investigation considered the deal against a higher threshold than Phase 1, and included consultation on provisional Phase 2 findings, published in September 2022.

LSEG is an international financial markets infrastructure and data business which holds a majority shareholding in the LCH clearing house group (LCH). A clearing house helps reduce the costs and risk of a contract between a buyer and a seller in a financial market by acting as a central counterparty between the parties to a transaction.

Quantile helps financial institutions trading in derivative instruments to

reduce their capital requirements, along with their overall regulatory costs, through services such as multilateral compression. Multilateral compression service providers for interest rate derivatives, cleared through LCH, depend on LCH to be able to provide these services.

The CMA's Phase 1 review raised concerns that, after the acquisition of Quantile, LCH could potentially disadvantage third party compression providers who are in competition with Quantile, leading to reduced competition.

During the in-depth Phase 2 investigation, the CMA engaged extensively with customers of LSEG and Quantile, and with third party compression providers, and conducted a more detailed analysis of the anticipated acquisition. Although the evidence showed that LSEG may have the ability to disadvantage Quantile's rivals post-merger, the investigation found LSEG would not have the commercial incentive to do so as its customers were clear they could take steps to stop such efforts.

In light of all the evidence, including responses to its consultation on the provisional Phase 2 findings, the CMA considers that the anticipated acquisition will not lead to a substantial lessening of competition between Quantile and its rivals and, therefore, has cleared the deal.

Martin Coleman, chair of the CMA independent inquiry group said:

The in-depth investigation and consultation allowed us to engage extensively with LSEG, Quantile, and their customers and competitors, enabling us to better understand the impact of the transaction on those businesses and the market. On the basis of that engagement, and other evidence we have gathered, we are satisfied that this deal will not worsen the options available to businesses and consumers. As such, the transaction can go ahead.

For more information, visit the [LSEG/Quantile inquiry page](#).

1. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 0203 738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.
2. A Phase 1 inquiry determines whether there is a realistic prospect that the merger could substantially lessen competition. A Phase 2 inquiry has a different statutory test to Phase 1. Phase 2 determines whether it is more likely than not that a substantial lessening of competition will occur because of the merger – a higher threshold than Phase 1. For this reason, and because phase 2 decisions are taken by a different group of independent decision-makers following a further in-depth review, some transactions will ultimately be cleared at Phase 2 that are not cleared at Phase 1.

England Coast Path takes a step forward in north Kent

- The 29 mile continuous walking route is the fourth section in Kent to open, bringing the total in the county to 173 miles.
- The north Kent Coast has some of the richest habitat in the UK; the salt marsh and mud flats supporting huge colonies of over wintering birds.
- This new section will form part of the 2,700 mile long England Coast Path, which will become the longest managed coastal walking route in the world.

This autumn sees another new walking trail for north Kent residents and visitors to enjoy. The newest section of the England Coast Path will help connect people with nature and provide a wealth of health and wellbeing opportunities. And as it is half term, many can take the opportunity to enjoy the new path this week.

This easy to follow walking route along the north Kent coast, through spectacular landscapes. From saltmarshes and mud flats teeming with birds, to sea forts, and historic towns with their nautical heritage, has been opened by Natural England today.

This route will eventually help connect the country's entire coastline into 1 long National Trail. The walk will take people through some of the finest landscapes in England. As well as the many coastal towns, cities and ports that have shaped this island nation.

Excitingly, for the first time in the history of public access, legal rights of public access will be secured to typical coastal land including beaches, dunes and cliffs. This allows walkers to access some places they've never been before.

Jim Seymour, Natural England Area Manager said:

This new trail has a spectacular landscape and captures how important the north Kent coastline has been over the ages with many interesting and historic sites.

At a time when the benefits of connecting with nature are clearer than ever, it's fabulous that we are opening up this 29-mile walking route on the north Kent coast for people to enjoy.

The nation wide promotion of the England Coast Path should also benefit the local economy. It will achieve this by bringing walkers past the many local businesses on this route, to shop, for refreshments and to stay.

This new stretch starts in Whitstable, a popular seaside town and famous for its oysters since the Roman times. Walking from Whitstable Harbour, you'll see fishing vessels and market stalls as you head west along beach boardwalk and quiet roads towards Seasalter. On route you pass old Whitstable fishing huts, a mix of houses and modern beach huts looking over the wide shingle beach.

Whitstable Harbour is the starting point

At Seasalter, you can clearly see the Isle of Sheppey to the north, which sits in the Thames Estuary just off the Kent coast. Continuing your walk you enter the Swale, a strip of tidal waters between the Isle of Sheppey and the Kent mainland. Where the shingle beaches start to give way to saltmarsh and mudflats. The Swale estuary teems with wildlife, and in the winter months is swarming with thousands of wintering birds. Such as dark-bellied brent geese and dunlin, oyster catchers, curlew and ringed plover.

Walking inland along Faversham Creek, some 3 miles, you arrive at the historic town of Faversham. It is the oldest market town in Kent with hundreds of listed buildings and maritime history. The path takes you through boatyards, passing Standard Quay filled with historic barges and an array of shops before crossing the creek on the swing bridge.

Walking along the seawalls between Faversham and Oare, sailing barges and boats using the narrow creeks and the distant Swale estuary can be spotted. These settlements have a long history of boat building, and this tradition is reflected in the 17th century Shipwright's Arms, a pub perched on the seawall.

Walking north from Oare, you pass through Kent Wildlife Trust's Oare Marshes Nature Reserve. From the sea wall you can see grazing marsh with freshwater dykes, open water scrapes, reedbed and saltmarsh – another haven for wildlife. The area has a long history as part of the gunpowder industry, and you can see signs of this in remains of buildings and boats.

Iron Wharf, Faversham

As you continue on the path you enter Conyer Creek and pass a former 19th century brickworks site, a great place to spot wintering birds on the adjacent mudflats. The site is now all grown over and in spring you can hear nightingales singing in the scrub.

Once you have followed the creek back to the Swale estuary, large freight carriers and barges can often be seen. They are travelling to and from the industrial docks at nearby Ridham and further west in the Medway Estuary. You are now less than 1 mile away, across the Swale channel, from the Isle of Sheppey. Here you pass the remains of the old ferry terminal for the island, long disused, before reaching and crossing Milton Creek, near Sittingbourne.

The trail leaves the coast around the industrial complex and port at Ridham. Before returning to the seawall towards Kingsferry Bridge near Iwade, close to Swale rail station where the trail ends.

Mike Hill, Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services said:

The opening of this section of the England Coast Path provides further opportunities for Kent residents and visitors to access the outdoors. And, connect with the wealth of nature and the heritage on their doorstep.

The north Kent Coast has some of the richest habitat in the UK; the salt marsh and mud flats supporting huge colonies of over wintering birds. It is a coast with a rich history in trade that supported the growth of towns such as Faversham and Whitstable. Now firm favourites with visitors to the area.

The commencement of access rights offers the chance to explore new areas of the coast. It boosts the local economy and contributes to the health and well-being of residents.

The 29 mile (45 Kilometres) route will become part of the [England Coast Path](#), the 2,700 mile long distance walking route and England's newest National Trail currently being developed around the entire English coast by Natural England. It is the fourth stretch in Kent to open, after Ramsgate to Folkestone, Folkestone to Camber, and Isle of Grain to Woolwich. Isle of Grain to Otterham Creek is due to open in April 2023, followed by Ramsgate to Whitstable.

Natural England worked on the stretch with a number of partners including Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Bird Wise North Kent and the Ramblers.

The route is easily accessed via public transport and there are plenty of locations along the trail for refreshments and with accommodation. See the [National Trails website map](#) to find out more:

Walkers can access maps of the route and any local diversions on the [National Trails Website](#) and check for any restrictions to access at [Natural England – Open Access maps](#)

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 places a duty on the Secretary of State and Natural England to secure a long distance walking trail around the open coast of England. Together with public access rights to a wider area of land along the way for people to enjoy. Natural England is working on the entire coastal route. [See the map showing a timetable for the work.](#)

As well as new sections of the trail, there are improvements to existing access along the coastline which:

- identify a clear and continuous way marked walking route along this part of the coast. Bringing some sections of the existing coastal footpath closer to the sea and linking some places together for the first time.
- allow the route to 'roll back' if the coastline erodes, shifts or slips, solving the long-standing difficulties of maintaining a continuous route along the coast.

For more information, see [England Coast Path: improving public access to the coast](#) and the [National Trails website](#).

The government announced in February 2022 that the England Coast Path will be fully walkable by the end of this Parliament – connecting communities from Northumberland to Cornwall.

The [Countryside Code](#), recently updated, is the official guide on how to enjoy nature and treat both it, and the people who live and work there, with respect.

Find out more about the this stretch of the England Coast Path and Natural England on our [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) pages. Search: #EnglandCoastPath