

**Date:** 16 February 11  
**Consultation:** Draft Budget Proposals Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

## Introduction

The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) represents registered and non-registered housing associations in Northern Ireland. Collectively, our members provide 34,000 good quality, affordable homes for renting or equity sharing. Further information is available at [www.nifha.org](http://www.nifha.org)

## Background

Our members within the Housing Association movement recognise that there are undoubted links between good housing and good health. Our members provide a diverse range of housing and housing services in Northern Ireland which aim to provide significant benefits to their tenants and the communities they are located within. The Housing Association movement in Northern Ireland currently has around 5,000 supported housing units which provide a range of services including housing which are usually tailored to meet the needs of individual tenants or groups of tenants.

## General Comments

NIFHA welcomes the opportunity to respond to these draft budget proposals and we recognise that the proposed reductions have been brought about as a result of the reduction in the grant for Northern Ireland. The DSD draft budget allows for some additional investment in the “Supporting People” programme. This important programme ensures that vulnerable people, with a range of support needs, can remain living independently in the housing of their choice. Our members, in many cases working with their Joint Management Agents, ensure through this programme that housing and housing services are provided which are appropriate to the needs of their individual tenants.

However, the success of implementing this programme relies also on a range of care services being delivered to these vulnerable tenants. These care services are normally provided through the DHSSPSNI budget. The draft budget does not “drill down” into this level of detail to mention that finance will be provided to support the range care services that are provided. NIFHA are therefore asking that the finance for the care services that are provided that enable people to live independently in their own homes or in supported housing is not reduced and is protected in the same way that DSD are protecting the “Supporting People” programme.

I hope you find our comments useful please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification on any of the points raised in this consultation response.

**Submitted on behalf of NIFHA by:**

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*NIFHA – Working Together for Better Housing*

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