

**MHCLG Call for evidence: Strategy for the built environment professions, trades and occupations –**

**England and across the UK**

**Response from Propertymark**

**August 2026**

**Background**

1. Propertymark is the UK's leading professional body of property agents, with 19,000 members representing over 12,500 branches. We are member-led with a Board which is made up of practicing agents and we work closely with our members to set professional standards through regulation, accredited and recognised qualifications, an industry-leading training programme and mandatory Continuing Professional Development.

**Consultation – overview**

2. In December 2025, the UK Government announced that it will publish a new Strategy for the built environment professions, trades and occupations by 2027. This is to support the UK Government's goals to improve the trust in the building system, both through higher quality buildings and the professionals who develop and maintain them. The purpose of this call for evidence is to allow the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to collect the information it needs to design the strategy based on the current experiences of individuals and businesses involved in the Built Environment.
3. For brevity, when we say, "built environment professionals", we are referring to all individuals working in the built environment.

**Propertymark response – summary**

4. Propertymark welcomes the opportunity to respond to MHCLG's Call for Evidence on the Strategy for the Building Environment Professions, Trades and Occupations. While Propertymark's members are not directly covered by the consultation, property agents do work alongside built environment professionals to ensure that properties are well maintained during the occupation phase of a building. In doing so, property agents rely on the high standards of professionals in the built environment to ensure they can provide a good service for their clients, whether this is to ensure that a property is ready for a sale, or to respond to concerns from landlords and tenants

to organise repairs. In either case, it is essential that any new standards for the Built Environment better enhance the ability for property professionals to facilitate their work and ensure that any new standards can be easily interpreted so that necessary works can be more accurately identified and arranged.

5. In contrast to how we would typically respond to this kind of consultation, we have taken a holistic approach and summarised how the proposed reforms could support a property agent as they aim to provide a better experience for landlords, tenants and homeowners. We have split our response into three sections:

- **Qualifications for property agents:** Ensuring that any new standards for the built environment fit well with and complement new requirements and standards for property agents.
- **Preparing properties for sale before listing on the market:** Ensuring that the built environment strategy helps to improve the quality of buildings and gives confidence that any works done support a quick transaction.
- **Better clarity of standards:** Help landlords and agents identify issues and have confidence they will be fixed to a high standard.

## Propertymark – response

### Qualifications for Property Agents

6. In the UK Government’s road map to reform the home buying and selling process it includes proposals for a non-statutory Code of Practice for all property agents and a consultation on mandatory qualifications for estate agents working across the UK and letting agents working in England.<sup>1</sup> MHCLG has already consulted on mandatory qualifications for Managing Agents in the leasehold sector.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, senior housing executives and managers in England must complete professional qualifications.<sup>3</sup> These changes

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/home-buying-and-selling-reform/outcome/home-buying-and-selling-reform-roadmap>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-leaseholder-protections-over-charges-and-services-consultation/strengthening-leaseholder-protections-over-charges-and-services-consultation>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/36>

will bring a more consistent and higher standards for the sector, so they can better meet the needs of their clients, but the UK Government must ensure there is consistency across housing tenures and professionals are qualified and can be held to account. Where built environment professionals are concerned, this will largely involve responding to individual maintenance requests from tenants or landlords, working with estate agents to ensure homes are prepared for sales (although this requires its own section) and supporting the maintenance of entire blocks of flats. As property agents become more qualified, they will be expected to respond more quickly to maintenance requests and be more accountable to leaseholders when organising the maintenance of communal areas in blocks of flats.

7. As a consequence, any kind of behaviour, cultural change and expectations for the built environment must align with the new standards for property agents. Clients will expect higher quality repairs and for action to be taken sooner, which needs to be reflected in the Strategy for the Built Environment. Expectations for property agents and the built environment must be aligned so that both professionals can better work together to respond to the needs of their clients, ensuring that buildings can be more properly maintained and kept to a higher standard.

## Home Buying and Selling Reforms

8. Under the proposed new Home Buying and Selling Reforms, estate agents will play a greater role in ensuring the property is ready before listing a property for sale. The aim of which is to ensure that there is little need for the buyer to pay for further investigatory works to ensure that the property is in good condition and they will not have to incur substantial costs once they move into the property. This may include recommending that the seller organises a survey or other works.
9. The New Strategy for the Built Environment can support the new Reforms in three ways:
  - **Firstly, the Strategy can help to improve the quality and consistent standards of newly built homes as well as how they are sold.** There are some independent bodies that set standards for new homes, particularly the customer experience during and after the sale has been completed<sup>4</sup>. MHCLG should consider embedding some of the requirements of the New Homes Quality Board into the Strategy for the Built Environment to improve the build quality of homes and improve the buyer's experience during the sale, preventing fall throughs and

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nhqb.org.uk/>

challenges for buyers after they have purchased the property. This will complement reforms to the Home Buying and Selling process by making it easier and quicker to purchase new homes, especially if a developer is directly selling the property. If a developer is directly selling the property, then the Strategy must enforce that the developer needs to be qualified to the same level and meet the same standards that are set for estate agents.

- **Secondly, we would recommend that the Strategy should support the cultural change for sellers to prepare their home, through built environment professionals, including surveyors, structural engineers, electrical engineers and others.** This would encourage more sellers to work with built environment professionals to prepare their home before it is listed on the market. By doing so, sellers avoid longer transaction times and scenarios where a buyer has identified issues and pulls out of the transaction, at a considerable cost for the seller. Furthermore, improving the quality and standards of work can help provide additional confidence to the buyer that any kind of works were conducted well and can be evidenced – foregoing the need for them to organise their own survey and subsequent works.
- **Thirdly, one significant barrier to completing sales is when works have been completed on a home but there is little to no documentation recorded that details the standard or nature of the works.** This can cause buyers to reconsider a transaction as a lack of a completion certificate or similar documents can be evidence of malpractice. We recommend that any built environment Strategy must include new standards on maintaining records and how built environment professionals can best work with their clients to ensure that they emphasise the need for storing any needed documents.

## **New Standards – Clarity and Enforcement**

10. Lastly, property agents play a large role in determining if properties require maintenance. This can range from periodic requirements such as the need for an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) every five years or an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) when building, selling or renting a property, to assessing the severity of mould and potential building safety defects. Property agents are the first point of contact with their clients, so they need to be somewhat aware of these requirements and what could require a built environment professional to inspect an issue further. When setting new standards, considering a property agents' ability to recognise what these new standards or requirements are and when professionals are required to rectify any issues. For the Strategy to achieve this, it must ensure that any new standards and the expectations for property

agents, landlords or residents are clearly understood. Not only will this help to ensure that standards are maintained, but a greater understanding of what the standards are provides substantial benefits to built environment professionals as they will have more confidence that there will be fewer jobs that they will be called for where no or little action is required. Furthermore, greater knowledge of any new standards by those who hire built environment professionals can help the sector to self-regulate by avoiding firms or individuals who do a poor job.

11. The need for greater clarity and enforcement of new standards will be particularly beneficial when maintenance is organised for blocks of flats. New Leasehold and Commonhold Reforms<sup>5</sup> are slowly being introduced, which includes new powers for leaseholders to challenge service charge and the ability to request more information from their managing agent. As costs for leaseholders continue to rise, managing agents and built environment professionals must be able to demonstrate the true cost and value for money for their services. Otherwise, costs will be challenged and potentially firms will be replaced (be they the managing agent or the firm hired to maintain the block). If the new Strategy can better enable built environment professionals to demonstrate the need for their works and costs, then leaseholders will have greater confidence in the quality of the work carried out and will not seek alternative firms.
12. As a final comment, the new Strategy for the Built Environment must address the continuing prevalence of building safety risks in buildings over 11 metres in height. Building safety risks are defined by the Building Safety Act 2022 as “a risk to the safety of people in or about a building arising from... the spread of fire, structural failure, any other prescribed matter<sup>6</sup>.” Under the Act, anything that would cause a building safety risk is considered a “building safety defect”. Typically, this is usually but not limited to the type of flammable cladding that led to the Grenfell Tower Fire in 2017. Currently, it is estimated that between 1,400 and 2,800 buildings are yet to have the presence of defects identified, with a further 2,090 identified but where works are yet to start<sup>7</sup>. This is potentially a low estimate of the total number of buildings that require remediation, as it only includes buildings eligible for MHCLG’s remediation programmes. The ongoing prevalence of building safety defects causes great risk to life and property damage, as well as making it very difficult for people to sell their home where building safety defects are present. To support the

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2024/22/contents>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/30/part/4/crossheading/meaning-of-building-safety-risk>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-safety-remediation-monthly-data-release-june-2026/building-safety-remediation-monthly-data-release-june-2026>

acceleration of building safety defect remediation, the Strategy for the built environment must establish clear rules and requirements for the remediation of building safety defects, including how responsibility should be assigned, so that firms and individuals can be held accountable for failing to remediate the buildings they are responsible for.

#### **Closing remarks**

13. We would be pleased to engage further with MHCLG working alongside our members to support development of the Strategy.