



MINISTER PLEDGES FUNDING TO HELP PROVIDE GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN LEASEHOLD

Approved: Thursday 2nd February 2017

MINISTER of State for Housing and Planning, Gavin Barwell, announced yesterday at the Leasehold Annual Conference in London that the government will be providing substantial investment to ensure a greater transparency in leasehold tenure. By offering funding to LEASE, a service that provides free support and advice to leaseholders and industry professionals, it is hoped that a more transparent, fairer and unbiased system is put in place.

At the leasehold event, held at County Hall, Mr Barwell also commended housebuilder Taylor Wimpey on its recent announcement to pledge to stop building leasehold properties moving forward and has encouraged other housebuilders to follow suite. He reminded housebuilders that they are building the homes of the future and not simply investment vehicles.

Housing and Planning Minister Gavin Barwell said: “We are determined to create a housing market that works for everyone. Millions of people own leasehold homes and I am determined to stamp out unfair, unjust and unacceptable abuse of the leasehold system.

“I want to see transparency and fairness for leaseholders - and I am pleased to announce ongoing support for LEASE, who provide free, valuable advice for existing and prospective leaseholders.”

Tony Essien CEO of LEASE said: “This welcome investment shows how committed the Government is to ensuring greater transparency when it comes to buying and selling leasehold homes. By allocating sufficient funding to our resources which helps guide and educate the industry means that we can continue to offer reliable and free advice to those who need it. This will lead the way for even better working practices for everyone involved, right from the start of the homebuying process.”

Discussions at the LEASE event suggest that leasehold tenure is set to considerably increase this year as the Government aims to increase the number of new homes built in order to meet the demands of the current housing shortage in the UK. Land Registry

figures show that leasehold made up 43% of all new-build registrations in England and Wales in 2015, compared with 22% in 1996. As many as 9000 new homes last year were built and sold under leasehold tenure.

Tony continues: "With an increase in leasehold properties expected, it is essential that this type of tenure becomes more widely understood. Naturally, many buyers can get so caught up in the excitement of buying their new home, and they may fail to look or understand the terms of the leasehold. England's leasehold system is unique, so it is vitally important that buyers understand what they are purchasing so that their financial investment is protected in the future. We look forward to the outcome of the forthcoming White Paper and to help play a part in the future of leasehold tenure"

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For further press details about this event by LEASE, please contact Rachel Colgan at rachel@building-relations.co.uk or call 07886 873747.

Notes to editors

LEASE was set up in 1994 to provide free information, initial advice and guidance to members of the public about residential leasehold and park homes law. They have been providing this valuable service for more than 20 years.

Leasehold Enfranchisement refers to the process of buying the freehold of a house, a process which is enshrined in the Leasehold Reform Act 1967. If you own a flat, you are not entitled to buy the freehold, but are entitled to **extend your lease** by a further 90 years, or to cooperate with your neighbours to purchase the freehold of your block [under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993](#). www.lease-advice.org