



The Year Ahead

Reviewing the non-priorities

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The Rogers criteria

- Represent potentially high levels of risk, distributed throughout society
- Local authorities are effective in reducing that risk
- Require a national control system with all parts of the enforcement regime in place
- A nationally important political priority

The ones that got away

- Housing conditions
- Contaminated Land
- Noise

Housing conditions

- Original sift identified two areas of housing as potential priorities
- “CLG found it difficult to supply evidence on the extent of the problem.”

Housing conditions

- “Housing conditions...impact hugely on people’s lives and well-being.”

Housing conditions

- “..at the next refresh of the priorities it is hoped that evidence from the enforcement of the regime will allow this area to be reconsidered for national enforcement priority status.”

Housing conditions

- “It appeared...that little enforcement activity was occurring.”
- “This may be an area where further work should be undertaken given the number of people potentially affected.”

Housing conditions

- President of the Residential Property Tribunal service – number of appeals probably indicates a low level of enforcement.

Housing conditions

- CIEH has taken up the challenge!
- CIEH survey of local authority regulatory activity under the Housing Act 2004

Headline results

- Slight increase in regulatory activity
- More prohibition orders than closing orders
- Most respondents expect an increase in regulatory activity

Headline results

- 'Better Regulation' – more dwellings improved by informal means than formal procedures
- Low number of prosecutions – EHCS 'private rented sector contains some of the worst housing conditions'.

Headline results

- Nearly one quarter had no published enforcement policy
- Reasonable to make public factors taken into account when discretion is being used

Conclusions

- No evidence that regulatory activity has fallen as a result of the 2004 Housing Act
- HHSRS not had a noticeable effect on interventions

Conclusions

- More regulation is necessary due to reductions in financial assistance (grants etc)
- Need for LAs to use new powers more strategically to address greatest health and safety risks in homes to reduce health inequalities

Conclusions

- Thermal comfort is the most common failure in the private rented sector where there are 1.003 million non decent homes
- 25,700 excess winter deaths in England and Wales in 05/06

Conclusions

- Acton needs to be focussed on properties which pose the greatest risk to health and safety
- CIEH is looking at strategies to achieve that

Contaminated Land

- “CL can...cause death, injury, serious illness including cancer and reproductive disorder”
- “The problem...is widespread”

Contaminated Land

- Government has set a 30 year NATIONAL target and should consider the consequences in national terms of not dealing with the issue
- 60% of new housing to be built on brownfield land (protection of the green belt)

Contaminated Land

- Consequence of missing out on national priorities - some LAs now questioning the need for resourcing this key issue

Noise Pollution

- Unwanted noise the biggest source of complaint to LAs (300,000 in 04/05)
- "...noise should be considered...as a local priority"

Noise Pollution

- Many complaints linked to poor sound insulation but what about anti-social behaviour?
- National priority or what?

Noise pollution

- Defra producing a NATIONAL noise strategy
- National priority or what?

Where next?

- LBRO review should:
- properly reflect national priorities
- align national and local priorities
- consider fundamental issues like climate change