



SCRAP ESTATE CHARGES

STOP THE ROT ! ADOPT THE LOT!

The State of HorNet Affairs in Spring 2025 Call to Action!

We have many requests to know our current position, so where are we now?
After 9 years campaigning we are now at a stage we couldn't have envisaged at the start.
We have learned so much from each other:-

- The huge variation between estates, and it's not just a freehold problem
- That its not only the unjustified charges but the loss in value of the homes long term
- The unfairness of residents paying for the upkeep of Public Open Spaces
- The low standards of construction
- That lack of adoption is the underlying problem – backed up by the CMA's findings

Our supporters have tirelessly written to their MPs and the CMA. They have engaged with government consultations and formed residents groups. Many have taken over their estates for self management and a supporter has produced a very useful guide/howto on this.

As a result we have in the Leasehold and Freehold reform Act 2024 (LAFRA) from the last government a framework for regulation and redress around private estate management in England and Wales. The framework has yet to be populated by secondary legislation with detailed rules, and this will be the subject of consultation in the summer.

We had all thought that the measures in the LAFRA to remove the disproportionate remedies for non payment of a rent charge were to be applied to estate rent charges – we had submitted plenty of evidence about this being used to bully people and mortgage lenders into paying unreasonable charges, but somehow (accidentally on purpose??) estate rent charges were excluded. We are lobbying hard for this to be rectified.

Currently this means is that although policies have changed and will probably change further to implement more adoption as recommended by the CMA, residents are still in the same position as before and becoming increasingly frustrated.

The government will also be doing a consultation on adoption in the summer and the department are talking to us. They are keen to hear from other residents to understand how the imposition of estate charges and the lack of adoption has impacted their lives. This would be in the form of a video conference round table discussion which they may

then share with ministers. We suspect this approach has a good deal more effect than piles of emails which are dealt with by civil servants.

Please email us at hornets@homeownersrights.net if you would like to join in. We are not sure yet exactly when it will be but if you can contact us to agree in principle that would be great.

The other thing the department want to hear about in a separate discussion would be any experiences of residents taking over and getting their estate adopted, whether it be parish, town or district. They are very well aware of avoiding a two tier system leaving existing estates behind whilst new ones may be adopted and are investigating what might work towards universal adoption.

Let's not lose the will to live now they are listening! Two more consultations and some direct access are on offer – we need to engage with this if things are going to change for the better!

We have fought long and hard for the opportunity to be heard by government and now we have the chance. This one off opportunity is unlikely to happen again. If you can't engage with the round table discussion, or haven't any experience of adoption from private management, then please don't let consultation fatigue stop you in the summer. We will keep you posted and provide guidance when the consultations are announced.

Actions now

1) Round table video discussion – not just escalating fees and unaccountable managing agents but other aspects like selling/remortgaging DoVs, delays, loss of purchasers etc. Land management difficulties – are residents qualified? Should they have to take this on? Fundamental unfairness of this model, poor quality infrastructure.

2) Any one who has been involved with trying to get their estate adopted? Successful or not although the dept are particularly keen to hear of successes and how these were achieved – what were the obstacles and how were they overcome?

Action Later in the year

Consultation on Adoption

Consultation on the detail of the LAFRA regulations.

We are informed they will be in the order above. Limited resources mean only one can be done at a time. Could be done the other way round – let us know if you have strong feelings either way.

Contact us at hornets@homeownersrights.net

or via our contact form at <https://www.homeownersrights.net/contact/>