



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Please use this form to submit written submissions in relation to the Housing (Amendment) Bill. Return to committee.socialdevelopment@niassembly.gov.uk by Friday 4th September 2015.

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Organisation: (if applicable) NI Rural Residents' Forum

Date:

02.09.15

(where possible, please structure your response to the specific clauses of the Bill and, if appropriate, suggest alternative or additional wording to clauses, which may assist the Committee's consideration of the need for any amendments to the Bill)

Sharing of information relating to empty properties

RRF is supportive of the clauses to make provision for better sharing of information relating to empty homes to enable the identification of vacant dwellings and to facilitate bringing vacant dwellings back into use.

Disclosure of information relating to anti-social behaviour

RRF members acknowledge the misery caused to tenants and residents across NI by anti-social behaviour. However we are concerned that the Housing Amendment Bill should contain a reference to the need for potential tenants to be made aware of

the allegations and information housing providers have used in making a decision which prejudices their interests. Furthermore the bill should state that housing providers must have due regard to verifying allegations of ASB as these can, on occasion, turn out to be neighbour disputes.

RRF suggest that a consistent definition of ASB is needed across agencies. The variations in ASB definitions between agencies (for example Council, Police and NIHE) can lead to confusion as to expected standards of behaviour and tolerating behaviours between different residents. The definition of ASB becomes important when disputes arise between individuals of differing tenures i.e. NIHE tenants, those in private rented accommodation and owner occupiers.

Date received: _____

Ref Number: _____