

Invitation to Tender: Learning Partner Impact on Urban Health and Justice for Tenants

Background

At Impact on Urban Health we know that our homes and our health are intertwined. Homes are often a household's highest financial outgoing, and where people spend a large part of their personal time, making housing one of the most important building blocks of health.

Poor quality, insecure housing is therefore accepted as a key driver of poor health outcomes. 21% of homes in the private rented sector are non-decent, with most of these containing serious hazards to health. Better enforcement of housing regulation has the potential to improve housing conditions and ensure that local authorities are able to recoup resources for housing budgets through penalties on non-compliant landlords. We are working with Justice for Tenants to support local authorities to better enforce regulation in the private rented sector.

Summary

[Justice For Tenants \(JFT\)](#) and [Impact on Urban Health](#) are seeking a learning partner to evaluate the impact of Justice For Tenants' service that supports local authorities to effectively use Civil Financial Penalties. We want to put together a compelling business case for Justice for Tenants' local authority support offer demonstrating its value for money and showing how effective enforcement stacks up for councils financially. We are also interested in understanding the indirect impacts of JFT's services on tenants' health and wellbeing.

In addition to expertise in mixed methods, including economic evaluations, candidates should have prior experience of working with or influencing Local Authorities. We are also looking for expert skills in communication and storytelling to help us effectively disseminate the learning to local authorities and other audience groups.

We expect the learning partnership to run for 18 months (January 2025 - June 2026).

We invite interested individuals or organisations to submit a short application by email to rose.davidson@urbanhealth.org.uk by 9.00am on Monday 4th of November.

Why we want to evaluate

Justice For Tenants is a non-profit organisation that has received over £450,000 of initial funding from the health charity Impact on Urban Health to support local authorities in effectively using Civil Financial Penalties.

We want to evaluate the impact of Justice for Tenants' local authority support offer, putting together a compelling business case demonstrating its value for money and showing how effective enforcement stacks up for councils financially. We also want to learn more about how improved enforcement of housing regulation can improve tenant's health, in the short and longer term.

Justice For Tenants has provided training on new enforcement powers conferred by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to government and council staff across the country. Justice For Tenants provides examples of best practice and templates to enable these new powers to be used to protect tenants. Local authorities that use Justice For Tenants' services have policies, processes and procedures that support officers to enforce housing law in the private rented sector, allowing for effective and efficient

action via Civil Financial Penalties. Revenue from these penalties are ring fenced, only being used to carry out further enforcement work to improve the private rented sector.

Local authorities who effectively use Civil Financial Penalty have larger teams and are able to do more proactive and supportive work – identifying substandard properties with vulnerable tenants that other local authorities without the same resources are unlikely to uncover. Furthermore, local authorities that generate revenue from enforcing against criminal landlords and agents are better resourced to spend money on data to support proactive work and to assist vulnerable tenants facing unlawful eviction and harassment.

As of 20 August 2024, 39 local authorities in England are using Justice for Tenants to help with their Civil Financial Penalties. This number is expected to climb for 160 by the end of 2025 – 50% of all local authorities in the country.

It is hoped that in due course this approach will extend to using excess resource to tackle some underlying issues faced by this vulnerable tenant population, with revenue from Civil Financial Penalties being used to support tenants via methods such as assistance with accessing benefits they are entitled to or registering with a local GP.

The recent change of government is likely to strengthen private rented sector legislation via the Renters Rights Bill, which will impose statutory duties on every local authority to carry out a massive number of Civil Financial Penalties for a range of new breaches and offences.

What we want to evaluate about

We are looking for a partner to evaluate the impact of Justice for Tenants' offer, answering the following questions:

- What is the impact of Justice for Tenants' offer on Local Authority costs and savings? (economic evaluation)
- What can we understand about the potential impact of improved enforcement on residents' health and wellbeing?
- How can JFT offer help prepare Local Authorities for the Renters Rights Act?
- What else will local authorities need support within the future beyond this service?

Expected tasks and deliverables from the evaluation partnership

We are looking for a partner able to answer our research questions and produce a series of compelling evaluation outputs which combine insights from JFT as well as other key stakeholders and speak directly to Local Authorities. Key activities will include:

- Regular meetings with Justice for Tenants and Impact on Urban Health teams
- Co-development of a project plan with Justice for Tenants and Impact on Urban Health.
- Development of a project timeline
- Qualitative research with members of Local Authority teams and key stakeholders such as thought leaders in the PRS
- Quantitative analysis of cost-benefit data held by Justice for Tenants.
- Development of an Interim report with analysis data gathered so far
- Development of a final report with final data analysis
- Dissemination and communication activities with key audiences in partnership with Justice for Tenants and IoUH.

Expected participants and audiences for evaluation learning

The following stakeholder groups can be considered both participants and key audiences for the evaluation:

- **Justice for Tenants** – The learning partner will work closely with Justice for Tenants. They are a key audience as the evaluation outputs will be used for their business development.
- **Impact on Urban Health** – Impact on Urban Health will be providing support to the evaluation project. They will help to disseminate and amplify the learning from the project.
- **Thought-leaders on the private rented sector** – Leading academics and thinkers should be included in the qualitative research. They are also a key audience for the outputs.
- **Local authorities** – There is an opportunity to include the experiences of team leaders and managers relating to the difficulties that Civil Financial Penalties bring, and how working with JFT has changed the landscape. Local authorities not already in receipt of JFT support will be a key audience.
- **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government** – There is an opportunity to include the perspectives of those working on enforcement and Civil Financial Penalties within the central government, and their perspective on JFTs input. Central government will also be a key audience for the evaluation outputs.

Who we want to partner with

We are looking for applicants able to demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- Expertise in economic evaluations including cost benefit analysis
- Expertise in qualitative research methods including semi structured interviews and focus groups.
- Expertise in mixed methods research and ability to build a compelling narrative from quantitative and qualitative data
- Previous experience working with or influencing Local Authorities and knowledge of current Local Authority context and priorities.
- Expert skills in communication and storytelling to help us effectively disseminate the learning to local authorities and other audience groups.
- Expertise in communicating findings in an accessible and usable way to help facilitate learning and improvement
- Understands and shares the principles of this project – wanting to raise the profile of the effect of poor housing on health and understanding the structural factors that feed into this

Budget and time

The total budget for this learning contract is £50,000, including expenses and VAT. The duration of the learning partnership is 18 months (January 2025-June 2026).

How to apply

We invite interested individuals or organisations who match the knowledge, skills and attributes above to submit a short application (maximum 8 pages including CVs and budgets) by email to rose.davidson@urbanhealth.org.uk. Please send your application no later than Monday 4th of November at 9.00am

The application must include the following:

- A short, written statement outlining the relevant knowledge, skills, and personal attributes which you/your team possess and how you envision using these to fulfil the brief and answer our research questions
- A short, written summary providing details of two initiatives or projects you/your team have been directly involved in which showcases your previous experience with mixed methods research,

working with Local Authorities as key stakeholder and carrying out an economic cost benefit analysis.

- Details should describe your/your team's role, the purpose or aim of each initiative/project and the major contributions you/your team personally made
- A CV or biography for each member of the team. CVs or biographies may be written in the application below 1 and 2 above, or attached as separate documents, or hyperlinked under a "CVs and Biographies" heading in the application from your website
- A budget summarising each team member's daily rate of pay and your anticipated expenses for undertaking the proposed work (up to a maximum of £50,000 including VAT)

After you apply

Applications will be assessed by a team from Justice for Tenants and Impact on Urban Health based on the following:

- Relevant knowledge, skills, and personal attributes
- Demonstrated understanding and expertise based on previous work
- Affordability of the individual partner or proposed team

We will invite preferred candidates to meet with a panel of staff members for an interview online lasting up to 45 minutes. This discussion will focus on giving candidates more information about the evaluation project, unpacking information from candidates' applications, and creating space for candidates and the panel to start getting to know each other. At the end of the discussion, we will ask for the names and contact details of two references who candidates have worked with previously.

We expect screening to take place between 4th and 8th November 2024. Online interviews will take place on Wednesday 18th November and the following week on Tuesday 26th November 2024.

For more information

If you have any questions about this brief, please email rose.davidson@urbanhealth.org.uk

Partners

[Impact on Urban Health](#)

Impact on Urban Health is part of Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation, a charitable foundation based in South London. We address health inequalities by focusing on a few complex health issues that disproportionately impact people living in cities – children's health and food, multiple long term conditions, the health effects of air pollution, and children's mental health. Most of this work is specifically focused on the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark, but we share what we learn both nationally and internationally to influence urban health around the world.

[Justice for Tenants](#)

Justice for Tenants is a non-profit organisation which works with both tenants and the statutory sector. They aim to improve standards in the private rented sector, educate tenants about their rights so they are empowered and can share this knowledge with other tenants and provide training to advice services and council staff to allow for more effective enforcement of rogue landlords and agents to protect tenants.