

ALEP Directors' Report – December 2025

As you know, this year has proved to be challenging for our sector and the leaseholder and freeholder clients for whom we act.

Shortly before last year's AGM, the Housing Minister, Matthew Pennycook, acknowledged the scale of the task ahead - a far cry from the hype of getting radical reform through in 100 days.

We have seen LAFRA languishing on the statute book with most reforms to be implemented.

In March, we saw the abolition of the two-year ownership rule for lease extensions - something which was on the ALEP wish list for reform- and some changes to RTM which widen the scope of the premises that qualify and to amend the prescribed articles of association.

We had numerous consultations which affect the sector on topics such as insurance commissions, consumer protections and management reforms (including reforms to the s20 process), service charges and legal costs. Individual member firms were encouraged to contribute.

Yet, the consultation on changes to valuation methodology have been kicked down the road whilst the government faced a judicial review challenge on human rights grounds by six freeholders. The government won on all counts and the freeholders are seeking permission to appeal.

This year also saw the publication of the Commonhold White Paper which sets out a framework for reform and an intention to make Commonhold a default form of tenure.

ALEP have engaged with the consultation on Commonhold and will continue to advocate for it to be implemented in a way which is workable.

We also await the Draft Leasehold & Commonhold Reform Bill.

Through all this, ALEP and its members have continued to express a wide range of views on the reforms – what they mean, how they might be implemented and how they might work in practice.

The year ahead promises yet more consultations, technical discussions and implementation milestones.

ALEP will continue to monitor developments closely, maintain regular dialogue with the leasehold reform team at MHCLG and offer technical expertise and sector insight as required.

ALEP's CPD events and learning opportunities, whether through our regular webinars or attended events, continue to be highly popular, with the Lecture in March and the Conference in October both reaching full capacity.

For the coming year, we plan to hold the 2026 Lecture online, ensuring all members – including those regionally - can participate, and to select an alternative venue for the October 2026 Conference that better suits the higher expected attendance.

We also plan more online learning opportunities. The first of these events will take place in January and, reflecting the government's commitment to reinvigorating commonhold, will be a training series designed to help members understand its practical implications.

This also affirms our intention to make commonhold a central focus of ALEP's future strategy. So that we are not just at the forefront of leasehold enfranchisement but Commonhold too.

Membership has held steady over the past year, with expected movement due to firm mergers and retirements. At the same time, we have been pleased to welcome a number of new organisations into the Association so that our membership remains steady at around the 255-260 mark.

Given the amount of work around reforms, our PR Working Group has played a particularly active role this year, responding quickly to policy developments and ensuring ALEP's voice is heard. This has ensured wide coverage in national and trade media. Our thanks go to the Working Group so ably and enthusiastically chaired by Mark Wilson and to our PR guru, Penny Norton.

We would also like to thank those who have participated in the regional working groups and to Ridhwan Omar of Blake's for setting up ALEP Connect, a forum for early career enfranchisement professionals to network and learn together which held its first online forum in November.

We remain deeply grateful to Kerry London for their generous and steadfast support, as we celebrate a milestone 15th year of sponsorship. Their backing, alongside that of other members and partner organisations, continues to strengthen our events programme and helps with the work we do.

A highlight this year was the ALEP-Kerry London Golf Day in May, which welcomed a golfers and novices to a windy Woldingham Golf Club. We are looking at a number of events and initiatives to celebrate this anniversary in 2026.

As always, we extend our thanks to our Advisory Committee for their invaluable guidance throughout the year.

We have updated our constitution to account for the appointment of a non-executive director, the extra places on the AC for solicitor and valuer members and the creation of a new place for an enfranchisement intermediary/ project manager.

So, we formally welcome Henrietta as a non-executive director who will add a valuation perspective and additional insight to the leadership team.

We are also delighted to welcome the new members recently elected for 2026, whose expertise will further strengthen the Committee.

We are equally grateful to Clare, Elle and Lucy for their work managing operations, membership and events throughout the year. Our thanks also extend to Lisa Carter for her expert financial management.

Ultimately, the progress ALEP has made in 2025 is the result of our members' ongoing support and engagement. Whether participating in consultations, attending events, or contributing your expertise, you have ensured that ALEP remains a respected and authoritative voice at this critical time for our sector.

As we look ahead to 2026, with all the opportunities and challenges it will undoubtedly bring, we wish you continued health and happiness.

On behalf of the ALEP Directors:

John Midgley

Mark Chick