



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

**Department for Communities and Local
Government**

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Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 1 November regarding a petition signed by a number of your constituents on the Housing and Planning Act and their concerns regarding social housing.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 supports delivery of the Government's aim to take forward proposals to build more homes that people can afford, to give more people the chance to own their own home and to ensure the way housing is managed is improved. The Act enables the voluntary Right to Buy agreement with housing associations helping tenants achieve their aspiration for home ownership. It also includes measures such as banning orders to crackdown on unscrupulous landlords and property agents who exploit their tenants by renting out unsafe and substandard accommodation.

The Act also supports investment in new housing and will help ensure the homes this country needs are built. Building more homes is central to this Government's vision of a country that works for everyone. We will publish a Housing White Paper, setting out measures to help us deliver this ambition. In addition, as part of the Autumn Statement the Chancellor has announced an expansion of the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) 2016-21. The Government has allocated an additional £1.4bn to the programme for a further 40,000 housing starts by 2021, increasing the overall capital budget to £7bn up to 2021. The expanded programme now also allows a wider range of products to help people on a pathway to home ownership and provide support for those that need it. This includes Shared Ownership, Rent to Buy and Affordable Rent.

Although we have decided not to proceed with a compulsory approach on income based social rents (see link to my Written Ministerial Statement of 21 November for further details <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-11-21/HCWS274/>), the Government remains committed to delivering its social housing objectives as set out in the Housing and Planning Act and to ensuring more efficient use of the social housing stock, prioritised on those in most housing need. Crucially, it provides a framework for ensuring that we make the best use of social housing and ensure that we continue to protect those who are most vulnerable.