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Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
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London  
SW1P 4DF

The Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP  
Minister of State for Social Security and Disability  
Department for Work and Pensions,  
Caxton House,  
Tothill Street  
Westminster  
London  
SW1H 9NA

11 July 2025

**RE: Ensuring supported housing regulation is effective and proportionate and protects provision for vulnerable residents**

Dear Ministers,

We write on behalf of providers of housing, support, health and care across a range of sectors. We are grateful for your engagement with us on a range of critical issues.

Supported housing is a vital national resource that delivers homes and services to half a million people. It boosts wellbeing, health and employment prospects and enables people to live independently with the right support. Supported housing plays an indispensable role in cutting NHS waiting list backlogs, and reducing pressure on social care, temporary accommodation and other essential public services.

It is therefore extremely welcome that Baroness Taylor has confirmed that the importance of and need for supported housing will feature within the government's Long-Term Housing Strategy. This is a vital opportunity to ensure that a strategic vision for the sector is articulated to ensure funding and regulatory policy align to deliver an improved future for supported housing.

Such a vision is particularly important because, as you will be aware, supported housing providers face a worsening funding crisis and the future of the sector is at risk following years of funding cuts, forcing local authorities to decommission essential services. 1 in 3 supported housing providers had to close schemes last year because of funding pressures. These pressures are set to worsen still, with research from the NHF showing that 60% of providers will have to close supported housing schemes in the future. 1 in 3 providers may be forced to stop providing supported housing altogether.

We support the intention behind the proposed supported housing oversight regime. All supported housing residents deserve a good quality home and services, which we are firmly committed to. It is essential that the government's forthcoming long-term housing and homelessness strategies articulate the vital role that supported housing must play in delivering on the key objectives outlined in those strategies.

However, we are concerned that, without amendments to the current version of the regulations, the proposals in the Supported Housing Act consultation carry significant risk of negative unintended consequences for future provision, with good providers who are not the intended subject of this regulation having no course of action but to reduce their supported housing services as a result.

If supported housing supply diminishes as a result of the proposals, this will place further strain on a range of vital public services, such as the NHS, the care sector, and homelessness services - and in so doing it could undercut the government's ambition for the sector that might be articulated in the Long-Term Housing Strategy.

### **The potential impact of the proposals**

The proposed regulations come at a time when, due to worsening financial challenges, the sector is already struggling to maintain the current supply of supported housing, let alone build more to meet growing need.

It is crucial that the measures introduced through the Supported Housing Act are proportionate, focus on poor-quality provision, reflect the reality of supported housing provision, and do not duplicate existing regulation. The changes also need to be accompanied by funding to ensure the additional costs of meeting these regulations do not further erode the financial capacity of the sector to deliver services.

Without amendments to the current version of the regulations there is a significant risk good providers may be forced out of the sector, as they will not be able to meet the implementation, administration or staff costs, and will face wasteful duplication of reporting on areas where they are already regulated. We are also concerned that devolving licensing and planning decisions to local authorities could lead to crucial services being opposed locally. A lack of clarity on the role of preventative non-commissioned services like sheltered housing could lead to them being driven out of the market.

Ultimately, it is vulnerable residents who will lose out if reforms cause good quality, affordable supported housing to close. Without supported homes, there is often no option for residents but homelessness, moving to an institution or to an unscrupulous or expensive providers, which would undermine the purpose of the Act.

A national framework is needed to ensure geographical consistency and mitigate the risk of negatively impacting on good quality provision. At the same time, the licensing scheme should recognise the person-centred nature of supported housing and avoid arbitrary definitions or thresholds.

**By working together with the sector on the proposals, the government can create a more proportionate and effective regulatory framework that protects good supported housing providers while still taking the robust approach to unscrupulous providers that we all want to see.**

### **Ensuring funding can deliver better standards**

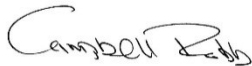
While the financial package outlined at the recent Spending Review offered real hope for the social housing sector, it was also a missed opportunity to give specific guarantees to put the supported housing sector on a sustainable financial footing. Given the worsening financial challenges the sector faces, the impact of which risks being compounded by the proposed version of this regulation, it is vital ministers take steps to resolve this at the earliest opportunity. Without specific funding for supported housing, a further reduction in supported homes would increase the pressure on public services and hinder the government's ability to deliver on its vital missions, like building an NHS fit for the future and developing a national care service.

We would welcome a meeting with you to discuss potential improvements to the regulations, to ensure they are proportionate and deliver on their objectives while safeguarding the future of this vital sector.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Henderson, Chief Executive, National Housing Federation (NHF)




Campbell Robb, Chief Executive, Nacro



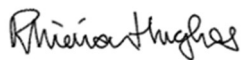
Dr Lade Smith, President, Royal College of Psychiatrists



Gavin Smart, Chief Executive, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)



Liz Jones, Policy Director, National Care Forum (NCF)



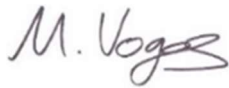
Dr Rhidian Hughes, Chief Executive, Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG)



Rick Henderson, Chief Executive, Homeless Link



Joel Lewis, Chief Executive, Foyer Federation



Michael Voges, Chief Executive, Associated Retirement Community Operators (ARCO)



Mark Winstanley, Chief Executive, Rethink Mental Illness



Vic Rayner, Chair, Care Provider Alliance (CPA)



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Illness

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