Dear Clive,

Thank you for your letter of 13 January requesting an update on some issues arising from the Government's response to your Committee’s 2013 report on the private rented sector.

The discussion document which we published last year, *Review of Property Conditions in the Private Rented Sector*, invited views on what more could be done to improve property standards in the sector and tackle rogue landlords. We received responses from a wide range of organisations and individuals and we will be publishing a response to the consultation in due course.

The guidance for local authorities on tackling rogue landlords that was published in 2012 has been significantly revised and updated. It provides advice on identifying and tackling rogue landlords. In addition, it now covers prosecutions, including how to present evidence effectively and press for the maximum possible penalties for housing offences. I am planning to publish that guidance in the near future.

I have noted your suggestion that local authorities should be allowed to retain fines paid by landlords convicted of property or licensing offences. We do not have any plans at present to make provision for local authorities to retain fines for such offences and fines should not be used as a source of general revenue.

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23 January 2015

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