

17 December 2018

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Housing, Communities and Local Government
Select Committee
House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Betts,

I am writing to thank you for the recent opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on behalf of the National Housing Federation, as part of your inquiry into leasehold reform. I hope you and your fellow Committee members found the Federation's contribution helpful.

In reply to a question from Liz Twist MP, about whether we responded to the Government's inquiry on Strengthening Consumer Redress in the Housing Market, I said that we would write to the Committee with the evidence we submitted. I have enclosed a copy of that evidence for you with this letter.

In our evidence, we support the creation of a Single Housing Ombudsman to cover all residential landlords, both private and social. To ensure that private landlords take part in the ombudsman scheme we outline measures similar to those successfully used to ensure landlords provide their contact details to tenants, as required by section 48 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1990. This will ensure that private landlords subscribe to the scheme. We believe this will be more easily enforced, and much more effective, than the criminal penalties proposed in the consultation paper.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the Federation's view of leasehold reform. We wholeheartedly support reform of leaseholds. The housing association sector supports good practice and closely follows the Government's guidance when we issue service charges. When housing associations are acting as freehold landlords to leaseholders, they have a greater number of routes to find redress when issues do occur. However, we recognise that more transparency may be necessary and are working with our members and tenants to establish a charter on what can be expected from a housing association landlord.

I would like to again thank you and the Committee for inviting the Federation to give evidence. We are always happy to support the Committee with its inquiries and look forward to working with you again in future. We will be submitting evidence to your recently announced inquiry on Modern Methods of Construction. As our Chief Executive, Kate Henderson, mentioned to you when you met last week, we would be very happy to help facilitate any visits for the Committee to some of our members who are leading the way in factory built housing.



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