



Craig Whittaker MP

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Response to Private renting solutions for homeless and vulnerable people – February 2016

Thank you for contacting me about private renting solutions for homeless and vulnerable people.

I share your concern with this issue, and I am encouraged by steps the Government is taking to both tackle homelessness and make the private rented sector more affordable and secure.

The £1 billion Build to Rent fund, for example, has contracted investment worth over £636 million to deliver more than 5,600 high-quality homes specifically for private rent. This has been supported through the £3.5 billion Private Rented Sector Housing Guarantee Scheme, which will increase the stream of investment in new private rented sector housing. I am encouraged that the recent Housing White Paper contained measures to support further Build to Rent developments.

As you may know, Ministers made a significant investment of £14 million from 2010 to 2016, working with Crisis, to develop a programme for single people to access private rented accommodation. It is to be welcomed that 9,000 people were helped, and 90 per cent of those maintained a tenancy for more than six months.

In addition, £100 million is being invested to deliver low-cost accommodation for those ready to move on from a homelessness crisis, including rough sleepers leaving hostel accommodation. Details of the bidding process outside London will be announced by the Homes and Communities Agency in the spring.

You may also be interested to know that the Government has established a private rented sector affordability and security working group, which includes Shelter, Crisis, Generation Rent and landlord and letting agent representatives. Policy proposals to help vulnerable people and low income households to access and maintain tenancies in the sector were discussed at recent meetings of this group, and it is now finalising its report.

I was pleased to be able to attend the debate you mention, and was encouraged by the Minister's commitment to address this issue.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP