



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

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Private Renting and Homelessness (CRISIS campaign)

Thank you for contacting me about private renting and measures to ensure it is more readily available to homeless and vulnerable people.

I share your concern about 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 Autumn Budget 2017 provided £20 million of funding for schemes to support people at risk of homelessness to access and sustain tenancies in the private rented sector. Furthermore, the Budget has financed three Housing First pilots in Manchester, Liverpool and the West Midlands, with a £28 million investment to support rough sleepers in turning their lives around.

Help to rent projects play an important role in enabling homeless people to access the private rented sector. Between 2010 and 2016, the Government invested £14 million, working with Crisis to develop a programme for single people to access private rented accommodation. This helped 9,000 people: 90 per cent of these maintained a tenancy for more than six months.

More generally, local authorities have been allocated £315 million for homelessness prevention funding until 2020 and £402 million of Flexible Homelessness Support Grant up to 2019. This can be used to pay for rent deposit schemes and other strategies to support access to the private rented sector.

The Government has also been working hard to improve the private rented sector. For example, a Tenant Fees Bill has been published which will ban unfair letting fees to tenants and cap tenancy deposits, helping millions of renters to avoid costly upfront payments and renewal fees.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP