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*Dear Dr Wilkins,*

Thank you for your letter of 10 April to Rishi Sunak MP about supported housing. I have been asked to reply as this matter falls within my ministerial responsibilities.

I absolutely recognise that supported housing helps some of our country's most vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse. From April 2020, short-term supported housing (including domestic abuse refuges) will be funded and commissioned by local authorities through a grant from central government. We are ring-fencing this grant indefinitely. The amount of short-term supported housing grant funding will continue to take account of the cost of provision and our current understanding of future need.

We are also bringing in a new oversight regime. The short-term grant will have grant conditions attached ensuring funding goes where it is needed. Alongside the grant conditions will be a National Statement of Expectation which will set out our expectations for the sector. We expect local authorities to produce Supported Housing Strategic Plans and undertake needs assessments which plan for clients across all vulnerable groups, including victims of domestic abuse.

As stated in the consultation document, under this model tenants will no longer pay rent; however, their entitlement for help with their housing costs (through Housing Benefit or the housing cost element of Universal Credit) will remain unchanged. We are removing the liability to pay rent for vulnerable people at a difficult point in their life. Individuals who will have their rent paid by the short-term grant will also continue to manage and claim other benefits to which they are entitled.

We recognise that refuge provision, is critical to the safety of victims and their families. We committed to review the locally led approach to refuge provision in our Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. This review will cover funding for refuges, including critical care and support costs, and will take place by summer 2018.


We will be carrying out a detailed audit of local authority commissioning of domestic abuse services. The audit will conclude this spring. It will give a robust picture of domestic abuse

service provision for all victims across England and will enable us to assess the impact of the Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services and identify any gaps in provision. We are committed to working closely with the domestic abuse sector, and will draw on their expertise and knowledge.

It is our aim through making these changes to provide funding security to the sector, incentivising long-term investment and securing future supply. It will also ensure value for money for the taxpayer and enable councils to have a stronger role in providing appropriately for their local areas. Most importantly, it will support positive outcomes for some of the most vulnerable people in this country.

We continue to engage closely with the sector and with local government. The consultation on the short-term model closed on 23 January and we are now considering the responses.

I would like to thank you for raising this important matter.

*Yours ever,*  


**NIGEL ADAMS MP**