



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Minister for Welfare Delivery
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Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

30 June 2022

Dear Clive,

Thank you for your letter of 17th May to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions regarding data on exempt accommodation. You asked for:

‘Data on exempt accommodation for each year from December 2015 to December 2021, for each English local authority. This would be an expansion of the information previously provided to the Perry Barr Housing Action Group as a freedom of information request in February 2019, which focused on seven English cities.’

As per our previous response to the committee, we have identified an issue with the way supported housing is recorded on Local Authority systems which leads to an undercount in the Specified Accommodation caseload. Our view is that the information we hold on exempt accommodation only paints a partial picture, and so is not of a sufficient quality to support publication, and could be potentially misleading.

For this reason, we are unable to provide the information requested.

DWP have recently made investments to deliver improvements to Local Authority systems, which are designed to give us better Housing Benefit data on exempt accommodation. The roll out of these systems by Local Authority IT providers began in April 2022. It should be noted that they are targeted at new claims and so will take some time before data quality improvements will be seen for the entire stock of exempt accommodation.

I look forward to discussing issues concerning exempt accommodation in more detail together with the Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing at your hearing on 4th July.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Rutley', with a horizontal line underneath.

David Rutley MP

Minister for Welfare Delivery