

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

House of Commons, London SW1P 0AA

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The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
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SW1P 4DF

9 March 2020

Dear Robert,

Follow-up to Predecessor Committee's work

The Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee met for the first time on 4 March and agreed its future programme of work. The Committee decided to relaunch our predecessor's incomplete inquiries into the Progress of devolution in England and the Long-term delivery of social and affordable rented housing. The Committee has also agreed to undertake an inquiry into the Progress of Remediation of Cladding. We look forward to taking evidence from Ministers on these issues in due course.

The new Committee is keen to follow-up on the recommendations of the predecessor Committee. We have noted that several reports are still awaiting formal Government responses or clear timetables for promised legislation, including:

Adult Social Care

The HCLG and Health & Social Care Committees published a joint report in June 2018 into the long-term funding of adult social care. The Government has not yet responded to our report or set out its plans in a Green Paper, despite the Prime Minister's commitment on taking office that the new Government would, "*fix the crisis in social care once and for all with a clear plan we have prepared to give every older person the dignity and security they deserve.*" In the [Queen's Speech](#), the Government set out its intention to seek cross-party consensus on proposals for long-term reform of social care—we suggest a good starting place would be the conclusions of two cross-party select committees.

Planning Guidance on Fracking

The predecessor Committee published a report into Planning Guidance on Fracking in July 2018. In correspondence from [May 2019](#), the then-Housing Minister committed to respond to the Committee's report once the Government had considered the High Court's final judgement in a judicial review of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In your letter of 12 February, you updated the Committee on recent developments and committed to providing a response to our report shortly. A formal Government response to this report remains outstanding.

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Leasehold Reform

Our predecessor Committee's report into the leasehold sector made several recommendations for reform and received cross-party support in the House. In its response to the report, the Government accepted many of the Committee's recommendations. However, there has been no clear progress in implementing these in the subsequent nine months. The [Queen's Speech](#) confirmed that the Government will be "*taking forward a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market*". Can you update us on when the Government expects to publish the draft Bill?

Implications of the Waste Strategy for Local Authorities

The predecessor Committee published its report into the Waste Strategy in September 2019, expressing concerns that the Government was seeking to dictate processes that would be better determined by local decision makers. The Government has not yet responded to our report.

I would be grateful if you could respond to this letter, setting out when the Committee should expect to receive responses in each of these policy areas.

The Committee also wishes to highlight its concern that, in recent years, the Ministry has published a large number of consultations and calls for evidence which have had significantly delayed responses and/or do not progress beyond this initial stage.

Shortly before the election, I raised the issue of delayed consultation responses in a Written Question ([287464](#)). I was informed that, as of 8 October 2019, there were 25 consultations and calls for evidence that were awaiting a Government response.

I would be grateful if you could now update the Committee on the number of consultations that continue to await a formal response and the proportion of these closed more than two months ago.

Because of the reference to the inquiry into Adult Social Care, I am copying this letter to Rt Hon Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt, the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee.



Clive Betts MP

Chair, Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee