



Defence Committee

Chair of the Sub-Committee on Service Accommodation, Robert Courts
Committee Office, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
020 7219 3113 / 6168 defcom@parliament.uk www.parliament.uk/defcom

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
SW1A 2HB

21 September 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

Service Accommodation: Request for dispensation denied

On behalf of the Defence Sub-Committee, I am writing to express our extreme disappointment and frustration over your decision not to allow serving personnel to contribute to our inquiry into Service Accommodation.

This decision does not make sense, when serving personnel know the most about what it's like to live in that accommodation and have been and will continue to be most affected by MOD policy such as the FDIS contracts and the New Accommodation Model. It does not seem right or democratic that our inquiry should miss out on their lived experience.

It also appears that the MOD has misunderstood our inquiry. We recognise that serving personnel already have routes to escalate their views. Our inquiry cannot resolve individual cases. Instead, we were hoping to benefit from the views of those on the ground to make better informed strategic and policy recommendations. It is a shame that the MOD was not able to recognise the wider benefits of lifting the restriction.

We would also like to formally invite the responsible Minister and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to give evidence to the Sub-Committee on Service Accommodation. I hope that MOD officials and Committee staff can liaise to find a mutually appropriate time.

In addition to a Ministerial session, the Sub-Committee would like to visit some bases across the three Services to meet those responsible for housing and discuss the practical implementation of the Defence Accommodation strategy on the ground. We will be in touch with the relevant officials to discuss this possibility and arrange suitable dates.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Courts MP
Chair of the Defence Sub-Committee on Service Accommodation