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Florence Eshalomi MP
Chair – Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

23rd January 2026

Dear Ms Eshalomi MP,

Thank you for your letter dated 13 January 2026 to Joanna Kurowska, regarding the incident at the Holiday Inn Express Manchester CC - Oxford Road (referred to as Holiday Inn Express Manchester City Centre in your letter). I would like to assure you that we take this matter extremely seriously and recognise it should never have occurred. We took steps to address the incident as soon as it was brought to our attention.

I want to be clear that the incident was not a result of any company policy - at national or local level - to refuse accommodation to homeless people. IHG Hotels & Resorts believes in an inclusive environment where everyone is valued. IHG-branded hotels welcome all guests, and our hotels are required to not discriminate in any way, in accordance with applicable law. Our purpose is 'True Hospitality For Good' – striving to make everyone feel welcome and cared for, delivering great service and experiences to guests, giving back to the local community, and doing the right thing for our guests.

We have nearly 370 hotels across the UK and over 6,800 globally - our hotel teams across the world are passionate about giving guests the best possible experience every day, and our hotels are proud to be part of the thousands of communities in which we operate.

By way of background, IHG operates a predominantly franchised business model. We own various hotel brands (including the Holiday Inn Express brand) and license the brand name to independently owned third party hotel owners. Holiday Inn Express Manchester CC - Oxford Road (or "the Hotel") is a franchised hotel. We expect franchisees to uphold the same high standards and principles that we apply to our own business (be that in our reservation centres or hotels that IHG operates), and we provide training and materials to support them to do this.

We recognise that this isolated incident is clearly not in keeping with our expectations and should not have occurred. This has also been acknowledged to us by the owner of the Hotel. Holiday Inn Express Manchester CC - Oxford Road has sincerely apologised to the guest affected and is taking internal steps to strengthen its staff training in accordance with our policies. This has included one-to-one training and team meetings to discuss how the Hotel will deliver 'True Hospitality For Good' and avoid repeating this unfortunate incident.



The Hotel has also spoken directly with both the charity, Two Brews, and the affected guest, covering the cost of the guest's stay at a nearby hotel and arranging accommodation for subsequent nights at an alternative property (at the guest's request). In addition, the Hotel has offered to meet with the charity to discuss potential further support and collaboration opportunities.

With regards to the specific questions you have raised:

- **Did the Holiday Inn Express Manchester City Centre have any formal or informal policies to refuse accommodation to homeless people in place at the time this incident occurred?**

Holiday Inn Express Manchester CC - Oxford Road has confirmed that it **does not, and did not**, have any formal or informal policies to refuse accommodation to homeless people. This was established at the start of our investigation into the incident which commenced as soon as we became aware of it.

- **Has IHG identified any local or national policies which staff may have interpreted as a policy against providing accommodation to homeless people?**

IHG has not issued any local or national policies which staff may have interpreted as a policy against providing accommodation to homeless people. Hotels are expected to make everyone feel welcome and cared for.

- **Is IHG aware of any similar incidents of homeless people being refused accommodation at this hotel, or at other Holiday Inn Express locations?**

We are unaware of any similar incidents of homeless people being refused accommodation at the Hotel, or at other Holiday Inn Express branded hotels.

- **Has Holiday Inn Express Manchester City Centre ever provided, or is it currently providing, temporary accommodation for homeless residents on behalf of local authorities?**

Any contracts for such business are made between the owner of the property and the UK Government/Local Authority, rather than by IHG, and therefore we are unable to disclose specific details without the consent of the parties to the said agreements. Notwithstanding the confidential nature of any such arrangements, the owner of the Hotel has authorised us to confirm that the hotel has previously engaged with homeless organisations to provide accommodation to homeless residents.

For any further questions relating to specific UK Government/Local Authority accommodation contracts, please contact the relevant department or council media team, who will be able to guide you further on this.

- **What training do Holiday Inn Express staff currently receive regarding homeless and vulnerable guests?**

All Holiday Inn Express Hotels undergo IHG's "True Hospitality Service Skills" course, which is wide ranging and includes the importance of delivering service with care and showing all guests that they, and their needs, are important and valued. Colleagues joining a hotel are asked to complete this training within 30 days of the start of their employment. Hotels also have access to training modules which they are encouraged to run with hotel colleagues to refresh the training delivered through True Hospitality Service Skills.

As an independently owned and operated franchised hotel, colleagues joining the Holiday Inn Express Manchester CC - Oxford Road also go through induction training and receive a Staff Handbook issued by the owner. We understand that this training and documentation sets out the Hotel's commitment to upholding the principles of non-discrimination, equality, and inclusion in dealings with employees and guests alike.

Following the incident, the Hotel has reissued this training and held team meetings to ensure that the correct procedures are followed moving forward, with particular emphasis on how the importance of non-discrimination includes homeless people. The Hotel has confirmed its commitment that improving staff awareness as it relates to homelessness and the homeless community will be prioritised on an ongoing basis.

- **What action is IHG taking to ensure such an incident can never happen again, and what is the timeline for implementing any new staff training or policies?**

To mitigate the risk of repetition of an incident of this nature, our Director of Franchised Operations (UK&I) has since communicated with all IHG-branded hotels across the UK to remind them that IHG believes in an inclusive environment where everyone is valued and that hotels should welcome all guests, and must not discriminate in any way, upholding IHG's purpose of 'True Hospitality For Good' and making everyone feel welcomed and cared for. This was reiterated clearly in a recent call to the General Managers of all IHG-branded hotels in the UK and will be covered again in an upcoming call with General Managers in February.

More generally, IHG and our hotels across the UK continue to support a wide range of community initiatives, including organisations that directly support those experiencing homelessness.

As part of IHG's charitable efforts in both 2024 and 2025, we supported Refuge Network International, a homelessness charity in central London providing food and essential services. In Manchester, at a hotel level, many of our properties support local charities tackling homelessness across the city. One such example is the Manchester-based charity Mustard Tree, which various hotel teams have collaborated with, organising donation drives, a fundraising bikeathon and colleague volunteering hours. Our hotels also support Only A Pavement Away, a charity connecting hospitality employers with people facing homelessness, prison leavers and veterans to help them find stable employment. Specifically, Holiday Inn Express Manchester CC – Oxford Road works with Only A Pavement Away, providing employment opportunities to homeless individuals and supporting food banks in various locations.

IHG's Head Office in Windsor works closely with Alma Beacon, who run the Windsor Homeless Project and Windsor Street Angels. Alongside colleagues volunteering regularly, IHG also provides an annual donation, with our most recent funding enabling Alma Beacon to extend their night-shelter provision over winter, offering a warm and safe space for hundreds of individuals.

This isolated incident was deeply regrettable and I hope the above reassures you that we take our responsibilities to provide a welcoming environment for all very seriously. Given the gravity of the situation, I can assure you that we have swiftly taken a wide range of actions available to us, including ensuring that existing training was reiterated, and hotel colleagues reminded of the utmost importance of making all our guests feel welcomed and cared for.

As these measures are now in place, we do not anticipate any further developments before April. However, we remain fully committed to maintaining the standards outlined and would be happy to engage further should any new information arise.

Yours sincerely,



Karin Sheppard
Managing Director Europe
IHG Hotels & Resorts