



Work and Pensions Committee Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

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From the Chairs

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

1 June 2021

Dear Robert,

Covid-19 related rent arrears

Evictions from privately rented accommodation have been paused in the majority of cases across the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic. In England this is set to end from today, 1 June. Research shows that 9% of private renters in England have built up rent arrears since lockdown measures started in March 2020. This will also have had a consequential impact on the income of private landlords. The issue of Covid-19 related rent arrears has been raised in evidence to both of our Committees, and was addressed in the recent report of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on *Protecting the homeless and the private rented sector: MHCLG's response to Covid-19*.

We would be grateful if you could set out in response to this letter:

- the Government's rationale for lifting the evictions ban from the particular date of 1 June;
- the Government's assessment of the impact of the ending of the evictions ban on levels of homelessness and what additional assistance will be offered to local authorities to deal with this;
- a summary of the guidance and support that will be provided for private renters and landlords following the ending of the ban on evictions, and the ways in which the Government is planning to ensure it reaches tenants and landlords;
- the Government's assessment of the impact of lifting the ban on evictions on benefits take-up and on other public expenditure; and
- any steps the Government plans to take to provide transitional financial support for the those impacted by the ending of the ban, for example through Discretionary Housing Payments, and how the sufficiency of the sums available will be monitored; in addition what if any lessons can be learnt from the schemes in Wales and Scotland.

We would be grateful for a response by 15 June.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Timms'.

Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP

Chair, Work and Pensions Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Betts'.

Clive Betts MP

Chair, Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee