

## Letter to Justice Select Committee (JSC)



**Lord (David) Wolfson  
of Tredegar, QC**  
Parliamentary Under-  
Secretary of State

Sir Robert Neill MP  
Chair of the Justice Select Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

**MoJ ref: 88792**  
24 June 2021

Dear Sir Bob,

### **LEGAL SUPPORT ONLINE SIGNPOSTING PILOT FOR HOUSING DISREPAIR**

The Legal Support Action Plan, published in February 2019, set out our vision for helping people to resolve their legal problems earlier by ensuring that they can access the right legal support services at the right time, and in the right way for them. Legal aid will always be central to access to justice, but we also recognise that it is only one part of a broader picture. This is why we are committed to exploring a number of changes across the full breadth of legal support, focusing on what works for the people who need it.

Access to early legal support is vital to ensure that legal problems are resolved as early as possible, minimising the use of courts and tribunals when a legal problem could be resolved prior to this point. This is particularly pertinent in the current coronavirus context. I believe that improved signposting services will be a key part of enabling early access to such support. I am therefore pleased to announce that as part of our commitment to coordinate and signpost people better to the right legal support, we have developed an online (guided pathway) signposting pilot intervention that provides people with support and signposting for housing disrepair problems. Housing continues to be one of the most common areas searched for online and through this pilot we hope to build up an evidence base of what works to help inform future policy decisions.

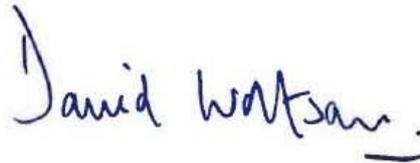
The Ministry of Justice has collaborated with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to develop this online intervention, and third sector advice organisations such as Shelter, Citizens Advice and the Law Centres Network to validate it through feedback. User testing and engagement with the legal advice sector has ensured that users remain at the

heart of its design. This is why the online intervention does more than signposting, it also offers tailored guidance and information about an individual's rights and responsibilities, with the aim that users will be able to 'self-serve' to resolve their issues before they escalate.

The housing disrepair tool is accessible via the 'How to Rent' guidance on the MHCLG's GOV.UK page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent>, entitled 'Check how to get repairs done in your rented home'.

We also hope that this can be a useful resource for trusted intermediaries such as Members of Parliament, who may be identifying legal need and connecting individuals to sources of advice and support they may otherwise not have been able to access themselves. We will continue to monitor the interventions progress and welcome feedback on how this could be further improved.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Wolfson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small horizontal line at the end.

**LORD (DAVID) WOLFSON OF TREDEGAR, QC**