



Will Quince MP  
Minister for Welfare Delivery  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9DA

31 May 2021

Dear Mr Quince,

I am writing to thank you for your response dated 21<sup>st</sup> April to our letter of 18<sup>th</sup> February regarding social security support for renters. I appreciate you taking the time to address each of our points and provide details of the existing support and government plans. As Chair of the PRS Resilience Group for Scotland, I have shared and discussed your response with members of the group.

I remain concerned about the ability of tenants in the private rented sector to fully engage in the recovery if their income is to drop again and they risk eviction and homelessness. Considering much of the economy has not yet opened up to its typical capacity, the job market remains subdued and there is still the risk of a third wave in coming months, much of the support you refer to is due to come to an end too soon. Twinned with the end of protections against evictions, it's possible that we will see a wave of evictions, many into homelessness, which could have been prevented.

While only a small proportion of households are affected by the benefit cap, this still translates to 180,000 households struggling as a result. Households with children are more likely to be affected and given the upheaval endured over the past year with the pandemic, especially for children who have had to miss significant amounts of school, the further risk of losing their home must be avoided. While households can apply for DHP, there is no guarantee that every affected household will be awarded the payment, or even know to apply.



Housing support is a complex area, but it can be made simpler for struggling renters by making the £20 uplift permanent, keeping LHA in line with rents and lifting the benefit cap. This will likely also be more cost-effective, compared to the cost of mitigating through schemes such as DHP or indeed the cost of homelessness.

I look forward to continuing to engage with the Government on these issues.

Sincerely,

Nina Ballantyne

Strategic Lead for Social Justice  
Citizens Advice Scotland