

4 December 2023

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

OPEN LETTER

Dear Secretary of State,

The proposed National Landlords Register

Yesterday, 3 December, the UN celebrated **World Disability Day**, a chance for us to remember that in England, there are 9.8 million Disabled people. They aspire and have a right to an accessible home that they can afford.

Advice for Renters has written to you previously about our support for the National Landlords Register proposed in the Renters (Reform) Bill, and recently gave oral evidence to the RRB Committee about its potential to transform the experience of private renting.

We have also been in discussion with organisations which promote Disability rights and provide services by and for Disabled people. We believe that, among its other benefits, the National Landlords Register could play an important role in recording the accessibility of private rented homes.

As Sallie Stone-Bearne, Founder and Director of Branch Properties and leading property specialist in meeting the needs of disabled people, told us, *“There is a huge shortage of accessible homes, and we have a long waiting list of clients who are living in unsuitable housing and unable to live independently. We work with many individuals and families to help them to find accessible homes to rent, but this is so challenging. Most landlords are reluctant to adapt their properties and have no support to help them to do so. Landlords need to be encouraged to consider the accessibility of their homes and any potential to improve accessibility, having the register would most certainly assist with that”*

In a submission to the GLA Planning and Regeneration Committee on 28 November, Inclusion London, an organisation run by and for Disabled Londoners, states,

“Housing is a fundamental part of independent living, a cornerstone for Deaf and Disabled people who, like our non-Disabled counterparts, want autonomy, choice and control over our lives. However, the reality is that many of us reside in homes which fall short of meeting our accessibility needs and being able to live in a truly accessible and affordable home is often a

postcode lottery. We believe that all Deaf and Disabled people should have the right to live in a home that is accessible to us."

We applaud your belief that everyone has a right to a decent home, and your commitment to measures to ensure that private renters can enjoy that right. We are therefore confident that you would wish to mark World Disability Day by agreeing that the National Landlords Register should play its part in encouraging private landlords to consider the accessibility of their homes and any potential to improve accessibility, and for the Register to place on record information about the accessibility of properties on the Register, to ease the current difficulties faced by Disabled private renters and those searching for a suitable home.

We would be delighted to work with your officers in devising the detail, including how types of accessibility would be identified, using a simple questionnaire, and what information the portal could make available to guide landlords in how to increase accessibility.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Jacky Peacock, OBE
Acting Chair
Advice for Renters

On behalf of
Advice for Renters
Branch Properties
Inclusion London
Disability Rights UK

*The International Day of Disabled Persons, hosted by the United Nations, recognises visible and invisible disabilities, promotes the importance of inclusion in life and the workplace and values the unique contribution of disabled people.