



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Dear Mrs David,

Thank you for contacting me about Asylum Accommodation.

It is very important to ensure the sustainability of asylum accommodation contracts while maintaining a rigorous contract compliance regime. The Government is committed to ensuring the required performance standards of all providers, as set out in the contracts, are met.

I welcome the assurance from the Immigration Minister that the Home Office will continue to collaborate with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in this area. I understand this work includes exploring how central and local Government can work better together. This co-operation, in my view, is important to enable the UK to meet our international commitments and allow service providers, local partners and civil society to contribute effectively for the benefit of those seeking asylum and the wider community.

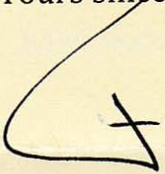
The Home Office shares my determination to improve standards and has been clear in the need for greater standardisation in the initial accommodation estate. I welcome the fact that this greater standardisation includes dedicated areas for woman and families and rooms adapted for those with specific needs, including pregnant woman.

It is also important to look at the ways to help Asylum Accommodation service users access local services and live in their communities. A key part of this will be securing and improving support for vulnerable service users. The introduction of standardised health checks to identify those with physical and mental health needs is a positive step forward.

The Government has also confirmed that the new contracts will require the accommodation provider to collaborate with other organisations, including the NHS, voluntary sector, local authorities and the police. These changes will move the focus to service users and ensure their interests are best served.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a cross-like mark.

Rt Hon Julian Smith MP