



# Sutton Federation of Tenant and Resident Associations



The Right Honourable Grant Shapps MP  
Communities and Local Government  
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30<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Dear Minister

## **Fair Funding for Sutton Residents**

Firstly I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister for Housing and Local Government. As the resident Chair of a group that represents nearly 8,000 tenants and leaseholders in Sutton, your role is one that deals with some of the most important issues we are facing.

On behalf of local residents I have met with the last two housing ministers and delivered a petition to the previous Prime Minister. This was necessary to ensure the desperately needed funding to make our homes decent was firstly awarded and then partially reinstated when it was taken away last year to build new homes but not in our borough.

I fully appreciate, as do all residents, the great pressure that public finances are under. However, my residents are some of the poorest and vulnerable in Sutton. Despite this each year we see almost a third of our rents taken away from us in negative subsidy, during which time our homes deteriorate.

In response to the government's wishes we voted for the Council to set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO). We supported the ALMO to achieve the required two stars and we are now left to wait to see whether the £5m we have received this year will be all that we get out of the £112.5m promised.

We have jointly responded with the Council and Sutton Housing Partnership in welcoming the consultation paper on reforming the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This reform is long overdue, but it is of no use to us if it doesn't provide enough money for us to get the services we need and includes the funding to address the improvements we need to our homes. We know that this money is there, because we pay it every week in rent. We also know that the rent tenants pay throughout the country is now more than is being spent on our homes.

As Minister for Housing, please can you commit to ensuring our rent is spent on our homes and when your government has to make difficult choices, council tenant rents are not used to subsidise those who are better off.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and tell you in person the difficulties we face as tenants either at Westminster or by showing you our homes here in Sutton.

Yours sincerely  
Jean Crosby (Mrs)

Chair  
Sutton Federation of Tenant & Resident Associations (SFTRA)

Cc Paul Burstow MP  
Tom Brake MP  
Councillor Sean Brennan – Leader of the Council  
Councillor Jayne McCoy – Lead Councillor for Housing  
Paul Martin – Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton  
Adi Cooper – Strategic Director - Adult Social Services and Housing  
Simon Latham – Executive Head for Community Living  
Andrew Taylor – Chief Executive, Sutton Housing Partnership