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Attention: Alan Sutherland, Chief Executive

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Re. STUDENT HOUSING

Dear Alan

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this issue.

I totally recognise the issues that surround student housing in Guildford, it is extremely expensive and is often shared accommodation of a very low standard - demand outstrips supply and it's a landlords' market. Surrey University provides more housing on campus than many other universities, and has planning permission to build more, but this is still not enough for the combined student population across the whole borough. I support the need for more housing, and that the need is for smaller more affordable homes, not executive style large homes. The government needs to introduce a new rent act with tighter rent controls and more tenant security, as well as reviewing the issues around Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). Currently the inevitable rogue landlords are ruling our housing market.

There are developers who are building student only accommodation, but while these may have a higher living standard, they are often expensive. I will continue to push for more housing in areas where it's needed and of a size that is needed, plus in government I will be pushing for new legislation to allow all tenants greater security. HMOs must have much tighter regulation, and it must be quicker and easier to hold landlords to account for any accommodation that is not up to standard. Many of the issues which cause housing problems for students are not within the gift of local authorities to change, but these decisions must be made by the government. I will be fighting for better housing for all students in Guildford.

Yours sincerely