



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth**  
*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State*

*Department for Communities and Local  
Government*

4th Floor, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3672

Fax: 0303 444 3291

E-Mail: [lord.bourne@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lord.bourne@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/dclg](http://www.gov.uk/dclg)

Baroness Greender MBE  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

7<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Dear Ollie,

During the Second Reading debate on the Homelessness Reduction Bill, on 24 February 2017, you highlighted the concerns you had raised with the UK Statistics Authority about the use of homelessness statistics produced by this Department (DCLG). You also referred to the response you have received from the UK Statistics Authority, which is available on their website.

I would like to begin by apologising on behalf of the Department for – on the occasions you noted – referring to statistics without framing them in the correct context. When referring to the statistic that statutory homelessness acceptances are less than half the 2003 peak, the Department should always make absolutely sure that the words 'statutory' and 'acceptances' are included.

I can assure you the misquotes were not a deliberate attempt to mislead. The UK Statistics Authority acknowledges this point. However, this does not excuse the mistake which could and should have been avoided. The Department has since reviewed its internal processes and is putting in place stronger systems to ensure that the right checks are made and the correct context is always provided when using homelessness statistics in the future.

I hope that this letter assures you that the Department takes this issue very seriously.

I am copying this letter to all Peers who participated in the debate and will place a copy in the House Library.

**LORD BOURNE OF ABERYSTWYTH**