



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Lord Khan of Burnley
*Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State*

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2nd August 2024

Baroness Hamwee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear Baroness Hamwee,

Thank you for your contribution to the debate on Tuesday 23 July on The Constitution and Devolution. In the debate, you raised some points around local communities, funding and the integration of refugees which I have provided responses to below.

In the debate, you said that budgets have become divorced from local decisions. This Government is committed to resetting the relationship between local and central government and working in partnership in the interests of working people. We recognise councils know their communities best, and with greater stability they will be in a better position to enhance local services and facilities and we understand that improving how local government is funded is crucial to enabling councils to deliver for local residents and ensuring we can deliver our missions. We want to hear from councils over the coming months about the financial challenges they are facing and improvements the Government can make. We are committed to improving the local government finance landscape in this Parliament.

You also spoke about mandatory targets and the provision of social housing. Housing targets are an important tool to ensure housing is delivered in the right places – this is critical in tackling the chronic shortage that the country is facing that means owning a home is a distant reality for much of the public. Housing targets will be mandatory, and local planning authorities will only be able to plan for lower numbers if there are hard constraints, like significant floods plains and National Parks. We expect local authorities to explore all options to deliver the homes their communities need – maximising brownfield land, working with neighbouring authorities, and, where necessary, reviewing Green Belt.

In addition, the Government has launched a consultation to reform the existing National Planning Policy Framework. This consults on reversing the set of damaging changes that the last Government made to national planning policy last December. It also introduces a wider set of growth-focused interventions that will help us build more homes in the places that people want to live in, supported by the right infrastructure.

Finally, you said that local authorities should have a leading role in the integration of refugees into the local community. The Government is committed to working in partnership with local authorities to understand the housing and integration needs of new arrivals and how we can work together to ensure positive integration outcomes in local communities. We know that safe and stable accommodation is a key first step to integration into communities and that local authorities are

facing significant housing pressures. We will deliver the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation and deliver 1.5 million new homes over the next parliament.

I will place a copy of this letter in the House Library.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Khan', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Lord Khan of Burnley
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State