



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

[REDACTED]
*Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for
Housing, Communities & Local Government*
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: [REDACTED]

Mr Andrew J. Cox
H. M. Senior Coroner
Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Coroner's Area
[REDACTED]

17 July 2025

Dear Mr Andrew J. Cox,

RESPONSE TO REGULATION 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS - INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF CALLUM JAMES HARGREAVES

Thank you for your letter and investigative report dated 28 May 2025 into the tragic death of Callum James Hargreaves, which was made in accordance with Paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and Regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013. I am grateful to you for bringing this case to my attention, and for your conduct of the inquest.

First, I want to express my sincere condolences to Mr Hargreaves' family and friends. I was distressed to read about his death, and the circumstances that led to him taking his own life.

Providing safe, secure and affordable housing for those in need is of vital importance to this government. We are committed to delivering a substantial increase in good quality social housing.

In your report, you raise concerns about the failure to provide stable housing and adequate mental health support for Mr Hargreaves, despite clear indicators of vulnerability, addiction, and risk of self-harm. This response will focus on the steps I have taken, and will take, to support people out of homelessness and increase the supply of social housing to meet demand, helping vulnerable people to access it whilst tackling rogue practices such as cuckooing.

Matter of concern: The shortage of social housing and consequential homelessness

Social housing supply

It is distressing to learn that Mr Hargreaves' mental health deterioration was exacerbated by his housing situation. As indicated in the matter of concern, the number of households registered on the Cornwall local authority waiting list (25,625 as of 31 March 2024) far exceeds the number of available properties. This is something regrettably replicated across the country and can only be described as a housing crisis, with over 1.3 million households on waiting lists in total.

Although the number of households on the waiting list is not the same as the number of households waiting for social housing (due to factors such as households appearing on multiple local authority housing registers), this data highlights that there is a high demand for social housing in Cornwall,

and across England. Unfortunately, even those with priority for social housing may have to wait for some time before a home that meets their needs becomes available.

The government has committed to addressing this problem by delivering the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation. We are working urgently to increase supply so that those in society who are most vulnerable, such as Mr Hargreaves, are provided with safe and secure social housing to help them build their lives.

That is why at the Spending Review on 11 June, the Chancellor confirmed a new £39 billion Social and Affordable Homes Programme, running from 2026 to 2036. For the first time in living memory, we are giving providers a decade-long funding settlement, providing the certainty they need to scale up the building of the social homes we urgently require to meet demand.

Alongside this, we are providing a ten-year rent settlement so that social housing providers have the certainty to invest in their current homes and build new ones.

The government also made a manifesto commitment to protect existing social rented stock, and we have already taken action to achieve this - in November 2024, maximum Right to Buy cash discounts were returned to pre-2012 levels which we estimate will reduce sales from around 7,000 to 1,600 a year. On 2 July, we announced further details about other aspects of our reform programme, including regulations on quality and safety and Right to Buy, so that there is the clarity and certainty needed to quickly ramp up investment in existing and new social housing stock.

We are also determined to ensure social housing stock is being used effectively to support those most in need. Local authorities must have an allocation scheme to manage housing supply fairly, often using waiting lists to fulfil this. By law, certain people, such as those that are homeless or those needing to move for medical or welfare reasons, are given priority. Local authorities can also give higher priority to those in urgent need, such as those who are homeless or with medical needs, which mean they require urgent re-housing. Allocation schemes must also include policies on offering choice or preferences for accommodation and applicants can request information and reviews of decisions made about their housing applications.

Homelessness and rough sleeping

The government recognises that homelessness levels are far too high. This can have a devastating impact on those affected, as tragically seen in Mr Hargreaves' case. Your report specifically raises concerns about Cornwall Council's ability to accommodate people who are homeless. The government has increased funding for homelessness and rough sleeping services by £233 million to a total of £1 billion in 2025/26, including over £10.7 million for Cornwall Council. At the recent Spending Review, we protected this record level of investment.

This £1 billion investment includes £633 million funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant for local authorities to provide homelessness support. It can be used flexibly according to local need, including to provide accommodation for people who are homeless and to prevent homelessness. In 2025/26, Cornwall Council was allocated £4.2 million in funding for these purposes.

As part of our spending on homelessness and rough sleeping, the government is also providing funding so that local authorities can support people who are rough sleeping in their area. The 2025/26 Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant provides £185.6 million funding, including over £3.5 million for Cornwall Council so that local authorities can support individuals sleeping rough,

at risk of sleeping rough, or at risk of returning to rough sleeping. Services provided through the grant can include accommodation, outreach staff and specialist support services.

We are also providing £950m capital for the fourth round of the Local Authority Housing Fund - the largest round of the fund to date - to support local authorities in England to increase the supply of better-quality temporary accommodation. This investment aims to drive down the use of Bed and Breakfasts for families with children, improve outcomes for families in temporary accommodation, and to provide more stable, secure housing options for the most vulnerable, including those experiencing homelessness, while they wait for a permanent home.

We know that many people experiencing rough sleeping have substance misuse needs and can struggle to access the necessary support. In 2025/26, we are providing £58.7 million to local authorities, including £1,516,587 to Cornwall Council, through the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG). RSDATG funding delivers substance misuse services for people at risk of or already sleeping rough in 83 local authorities and 4 pan-London projects. The grant funds evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment and wraparound support to improve access to treatment, including for those with co-occurring mental health needs, as shown in the case of Mr Hargreaves. The funding is also used to reduce the numbers sleeping rough or experiencing homelessness as a result of substance misuse and reduce deaths from drug and alcohol poisoning.

Response to wider factors in the case

Tenancy sustainment

I will now turn to the Notice Seeking Possession which was issued to Mr Hargreaves in early 2024 in regard to his social housing at Silverdale Court.

Social landlords may take action when there has been a breach of the terms of their tenancy. Whilst the report is not clear on whether Mr Hargreaves was no longer living in the property at the time of the eviction, this may have been the case. However, social landlords will generally try to work with the tenant to resolve difficulties and seek to sustain the tenancy, only pursuing eviction as a last resort. In doing so, they must ensure they follow procedures set out in the Regulator for [Social Housing's Tenancy Standard](#) around supporting tenants.

Where a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, landlords may seek a possession order from the courts on the basis that there has been a breach of a term in the tenancy agreement or one of the other statutory grounds for possession has been made out. As soon as a landlord gives a tenant notice that they are seeking to possess their home, free legal advice and representation is available from the [Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service](#).

It is regrettable that following Mr Hargreaves' distressing experience and complex housing situation that he was not supported in accessing accommodation more appropriate to his needs.

Cuckooing

The report highlights concern that Mr Hargreaves was a victim of cuckooing. The government recognises the appalling harm that cuckooing can cause to victims. When a person's home is taken over against their will and used for criminal purposes, it is a serious violation that robs them of their safety and security with devastating long-term impacts. As Mr Hargreaves' case highlights, in some cases cuckooing can force the victim to leave their home and become homeless.

The government is taking action to tackle cuckooing by introducing a new offence in the Crime and Policing Bill. This offence will criminalise the act of taking over another person's dwelling without their consent in connection with criminal activity. The offence will be supported by statutory guidance for police and non-statutory guidance for other agencies, including local authorities, housing, health and social care. This will include guidance on how agencies should work together to identify individuals at risk of cuckooing, with the aim of improving multi-agency safeguarding and support for victims. Introduction of the new offence and guidance will increase awareness, strengthening enforcement against perpetrators and helping to improve support and protection for victims.

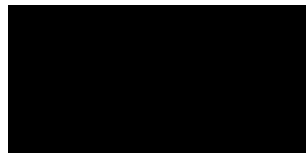
My department is also working to publish good practice case studies to support landlords to deal more effectively with antisocial behaviour where victims or perpetrators have mental health issues and/or drug or alcohol addiction.

Mental health support

Mr Hargreaves' mental health is a consistent theme in the report. The government recognises that too many people with mental health issues, like Mr Hargreaves, are not getting the support or care they need. Our mission is to improve mental health care across the whole spectrum of need from poor mental wellbeing to common mental health disorders to severe mental illness. Therefore, we are focusing on ensuring the NHS is providing the right support to the right people at the right time.

I hope that this information is helpful, and I wish again to express my deep condolences to Mr Hargreaves' family and friends.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government