CORNWALL COUNCIL
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Mr R Guy Davies
Assistant Coroner
HM Coroners Court
Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
Pydar House
Pydar Street
Truro
TR1 2AY

Date: 05 October 2026
Ref: [redacted]

Dear Mr Davies

Re Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths Letter
William George Rice

Following the recent inquest into the death of Mr William George Rice and your correspondence regarding the report to prevent future deaths, I am writing in response on behalf of both Cornwall Housing and Cornwall Council.

Both organisations are concerned that the coroners court felt that there was a need to produce such a report and have taken action to review the issues that were raised. This has been completed in the spirit of openness between the teams involved and as you would expect with the intention to ensure that the range of issues raised are addressed appropriately. They do reflect a range of complex issues that bring to the fore how best to support individuals as they age and ensure that options proposed truly support those individuals to live safely and with dignity within a home, whether that is the home they have lived in for a number of years or within a more suitable environment, always a difficult judgement to make.

In responding to the concerns raised and developing enhanced ways of working, both services have accepted changes in their working practices. They have also reinforced the principle that joint working and finding solutions together are the most appropriate manner in driving forward support to individuals living in homes across Cornwall that may need adaptation. The review has included looking at the specific recommendations made in your report but also looking further to address any wider systemic issues identified. The activities identified address the issues you have identified but also commit the teams to further working to enhance processes above and beyond these recommendations.

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Over the past 2 months the current Cornwall Housing policy has been reviewed and confirmed to be in line with that offered by other councils from within the funding streams (housing revenue account) identified. Noting that however, the teams confirmed that there are opportunities to look further and while the policy held by Cornwall Housing is in line with that offered elsewhere there are options to support adaptations from the Disabled Facilities Grant available to the council and ensure that the offer to CHL tenants meets that offered to all social housing tenants. The appropriateness of this will be considered during the review process of any adaptation that may be refused as well as looking more broadly across all referrals during 2026. The review also confirmed a new mechanism via which to inform the Occupational Therapy team of any refusal and an enhanced monthly review process bringing together all stakeholders in the process.

Going beyond actions that address the specific concerns raised in your report are wider measures to support a wider understanding of the Cornwall Housing policy within the occupational therapy service. There will also be earlier interventions to discuss options between services where approaches cannot be supported by Cornwall Housing and regular review points so that discussions with households reflect achievable aims, ensuring expectations are managed effectively.

Both services are committed to getting this correct going forward and senior management colleagues will retain the oversight as these changes are embedded. As a means of assurance attached are a summary of the current actions agreed as well as the areas where discussion is ongoing. In some of those areas there is broad agreement that the direction of travel is agreed but further work is required on how this will be implemented. All of which is being picked up by the ongoing work between the teams.

It is anticipated that this provides sufficient assurance that actions are underway and that new ways of working are in place that would reduce the risk of future preventable deaths.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Interim Deputy Chief Executive
Cornwall Council

Managing Director
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