



PO Box 66701 London E11 9FB
shac.action@gmail.com
www.shaction.org

23 September 2020

Mr Arthur Merchant
Chair of the Board
Southern Housing Group
By email

Dear Mr Merchant

Re: The End of the Evictions Moratorium

Please share this letter with the full membership of the Board and all shareholders.

We write to ask that Southern Housing Group agrees to take action to avoid adding to the homelessness crisis.

The government's moratorium on evictions has ended and a wave of evictions are set to follow, with a significant deepening of the housing crisis as a consequence. We have reviewed the policies of the housing association sector and accept that some landlords have tolerated greater rent and service charge debt levels. There are also services to help tenants and residents to maintain tenancies. However, none of the G15 associations have yet waived rents and service charges, writing off debt accrued as a direct result of Covid-19.

As far as we are aware, only Clwyd Alyn in Wales, considerably smaller and less wealthy than the G15, has taken this step.

The Social Housing Action Campaign (SHAC), like many other organisations, is concerned that housing associations have not yet done enough to support tenants during the pandemic. Southern Housing Group has operating margins of approximately 23% according to your latest accounts, and operating surpluses of over £72 million. We therefore believe that you can afford to show leadership on this issue.

SHAC is now asking Southern Housing Group to waive rents and service charges for those suffering economic hardship due to the pandemic. We previously wrote to Alan Townshend with our request but he has declined to reply.

We hope that the Board will give this request serious consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne

Suzanne Muna
Social Housing Action Campaign

Email: shac.action@gmail.com

Website www.shaction.org

Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/145158149342578/

Twitter SHAC @HAWRNet