



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities
www.gov.uk/dluhc

Suzanne Muna
The Social Housing Action Campaign

Date: **14 September 2022**

Dear Suzanne,

Thank you for your letter of 21 July to Minister for Housing, Marcus Jones MP about Clarion's response to a recent cyber attack. Your correspondence has been passed to me to reply on behalf of the Department. I apologise for the delay in this response.

The Department is aware of the issues raised, and the problems they are causing tenants. Clarion must work quickly to resolve these problems, to ensure that tenants are able to access the information and services they require. I note from your letter that you have also contacted the Regulator of Social Housing. The Regulator is aware of the ongoing issues caused by the cyber-attack and is engaging with Clarion to gain assurance on how essential services are being provided during Clarion's recovery period.

Tenants affected by the issues should first pursue any concerns through Clarion's official complaints procedure. If tenants remain dissatisfied after having been through this process, they may be able to seek redress through the Housing Ombudsman Service. They may also want to get in touch with local Citizens' Advice Bureau, who will be able to give free, independent and confidential advice, which may assist tenants with specific issues raised.

On the concerns regarding tenant data raised in your letter, I understand Clarion has notified the Information Commissioner's Office, who are responsible for data protection. As the cyber attack was a criminal act, Clarion is also working with law enforcement agencies. Your letter also notes wider concerns around Clarion's management of their housing, including cases where the Housing Ombudsman has made severe maladministration findings. We have written to Clarion about the Housing Ombudsman's findings; they must provide a much better deal for their tenants without delay.

I would also like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the wider action being taken to improve social housing through the Social Housing Regulation Bill. This legislation will facilitate proactive consumer regulation, including regular inspections of the largest landlords, and strengthen the powers of the Regulator and the Ombudsman, including giving the Regulator powers to issue unlimited fines.

I hope this information is helpful and thank you for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Desbottes