

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Andrew Boff AM**

Chair of the London Assembly  
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**Our ref:** MGLA200323-3063

**Date:** 7 June 2023

Dear Andrew,

## **London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 16 March - Motions**

Thank you for the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 16 March. My reply to each motion excluding motion 1, is set out below. I will reply to the outstanding Motion 1 – Violence Against Women and Girls as soon as possible.

### **Motion 5 – Fair Tax**

I wholeheartedly agree with the Assembly's recognition of the importance of organisations paying the right amount of tax in the right place at the right time in London. The current business rates tax system requires fundamental reform underpinned by a fairer system to redistribute resources to support the most deprived communities. Fiscal devolution would also allow a review of the government's current revaluation arrangements. I am committed to working towards tax equity in London, and my officers will carry out further research into the Fair Tax Declaration. I continue to lead by example by using my Responsible Procurement Policy to promote good practice through our supply chain.

### **Motion 6 – International Transgender Day of Visibility**

On 31 March, International Transgender Day of Visibility, I issued the following statement: 'I stand with trans and gender diverse Londoners. Around the world, trans people's rights are under attack, so it is more important now than ever to stand in solidarity with the trans community and pledge to keep fighting for equality.'

I was also proud to fly the Transgender Pride flag at City Hall.

### **Motion 7 – Damp and Mould in Social Housing**

It is not acceptable for Londoners to put up with damp and mould in their social homes. I am clear that Londoners should expect high standards of social housing immediately and have called for additional funding and reforms to make this a reality. I thank the Assembly for its work to raise the profile of this issue, including through its 2019 report: Keeping out the chill. Londoners must be able to live in homes free of damp and mould. Steps must be taken to achieve this immediately, and I have been using my powers as Mayor to do this.

Without the effective identification of damp and mould, it cannot be fixed. I lobbied the government for the rollout of Tenant Satisfaction Measures, requiring social landlords to collect information from – and face scrutiny by – their tenants. This measure launched on 1 April 2023 and

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will be an important step in requiring social landlords to collect the information that leads to the identification of poor conditions.

I have also lobbied for a Commissioner for social housing residents and a proper Ofsted-style inspection regime, to drive better conditions through proactive inspections. Ultimately, it is a core function of social landlords to understand the condition of the homes they provide and to improve them when they are in disrepair. This responsibility lies with the landlords, and the policing of these standards is the duty of the Regulator of Social Housing.

Much of London's housing stock is over 100 years old and some social homes will require significant investment to rid them of damp and mould. I have called on the government to make an emergency investment of £4bn to ensure all social homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and achieve EPC band C.

Significant progress to improve the condition of homes, through the Decent Homes Standard, was made between 2004 and 2014, demonstrating that capital investment effectively delivers improvements to housing conditions. Government funding was entirely withdrawn in 2016, and the target of 100 per cent compliance with the Decent Homes Standard has resultingly never been met.

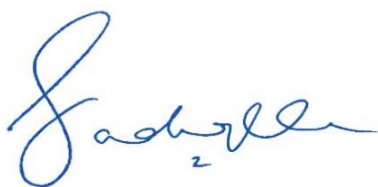
It is not, however, enough to wait for the government to provide the investment needed. I am using my powers as the administrator of housing grant in London to require high standards from social landlords. In September 2022, my Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development wrote to investment partners setting out the actions City Hall would take if the Regulator of Social Housing finds them in breach of regulatory standards. I have since restricted the access of three social landlords to capital grant. In restricting landlords who breach standards, London has led the way and encouraged social landlords to focus on the condition of their homes.

London has led the country on design and sustainability requirements since the Grenfell Fire tragedy. My team has a track record of pushing for high standards through our funding programmes and exceeding the national minimum standards. My Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 has introduced new standards on safety, design, and sustainability, to ensure that Londoners could have confidence and trust in the quality of new social homes.

Last year I submitted evidence to the Parliamentary committees that have amended the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill, highlighting the importance of an appropriate timescale for social landlords to take action when hazards are found and reported. I will work with tenants and social housing providers as to what a reasonable timescale is.

Thank you also for your comments on Motion 2 – London's Railway Services, Motion 3 – Trafalgar Square Fourth Plinth and the Urgent Motion – Illegal Migration Bill, which are noted.

Yours sincerely,



**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London