



Rt Hon Caroline Flint MP
Minister for Housing
Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU

27 February 2008

Dear Minister

LIFETIME HOMES

I am writing on behalf of the Federation's members to express the industry's real concern and dismay about the Government's announcement on Monday that it wishes to see the adoption of the Lifetime Homes standard for all new homes from 2013.

Our concern is twofold. First, we are extremely disappointed that there was no discussion with the Federation about the timing and content of Monday's announcement so that we were only alerted to the impending statement by the BBC seeking our comment on the Department's advance publicity. This represents a most unwelcome failure of process and communication on a significant policy issue affecting our industry and so is, in itself, damaging to relations.

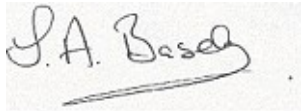
Second, Monday's announcement amounts to yet another proposed regulatory burden on the industry at a time when it is already struggling to see how it can deliver the housing target, also while achieving zero carbon, navigating a way through fragmentary Merton rule style policies, working out the detail of the Community Infrastructure Levy so that it does not undermine viability, and facing an ever-growing demand from local authorities for higher of subsidies for affordable housing.

Given the potent combination of process and policy concerns that the Lifetime Homes issue has raised, there is now real anger in the industry with government's constant regulatory intervention and it is imperative that we address this with you at the earliest opportunity.

My wish is to ensure that we can focus successfully with Government on the vital longer-term need to improve housing supply. To do so, we must address the cost impact of the current regulatory burden, which I believe poses a serious threat to achievement of the Government's housing targets. Lifetime Homes is just the latest in a lengthening list of policies which undermine development viability. We must also address our concerns that have arisen over the Lifetime Homes announcement itself and find means of preventing a recurrence of this situation with future policy issues.

As we are meeting on 6 March, I wanted to bring these concerns to your attention beforehand and I very much hope we can take that opportunity to try to resolve this important set of issues.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "S.A. Baseley" with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Stewart Baseley
Executive Chairman