



**Sian Berry AM  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
LONDON SE1 2AA**

To:

**Property Guardian Providers Association**

and the following property guardian companies:

VPS, Dot Dot Dot, Ad Hoc, Guardians of London,  
Live-in Guardians, Lowe Guardians, Umbrella Guardians,  
Dex Property Management, Camelot, Global Guardians

20 March 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Protections for property guardians during the Covid-19 crisis**

I'm writing on behalf of a number of constituents who are facing an extremely worrying time as property guardians, to understand what actions property guardian companies and building owners will take to help your residents during this unsettled time.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Property Guardian Providers Association, [1] a number of individual property guardian companies, and to Camden Council for their view, because the council owns a number of guarded properties, and I am a councillor there as well as a London Assembly Member.

The Government has announced emergency legislation to suspend new evictions from private rented accommodation during this national emergency, and for no new possession proceedings to be started.[2] This emergency legislation will cover at least a three-month period.

- 1. Is it your understanding that you as landlords are also covered by this legislation and will you also be implementing a ban on evictions of your guardians, as well as not proceeding with any new possessions?**

Your clarity on this point will be extremely helpful to property guardians, especially in London which is currently suffering the highest number of cases. In London, rehousing will be particularly difficult for property guardians on low wages or with insecure income who are likely to suffer worst in the economic situation we are facing.



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- 2. Please can you also tell me what your policies will be in terms of seeking possession in cases where you have already begun proceedings – will these be halted during this crisis?**

I know of at least one constituent who is very concerned as they face an imminent court date for possession.

- 3. I would also like to ask you to communicate to all the property guardians who hold licenses with you to confirm that any terms of their contracts relating to benefits and debts will be suspended during the crisis.**

I understand from a constituent that their license terms include that they cannot apply for housing benefit or income support benefits, or enter into debt repayment schemes. I urge you to write to your guardians to reassure them that these terms, or any similar restrictions, will not be enforced during this crisis.

While a number of properties currently housing property guardians are residential flats, I am aware that others are public buildings that might be required to be returned to public authorities for use in providing services during the crisis.

- 4. Under these kinds of unavoidable circumstances, where property guardians will need to urgently find new homes, will you make a commitment to rehouse all guardians, either in your own buildings, as close to their current homes as possible, or by providing other assistance, for example by working with local authorities to find alternative buildings, and that no-one will be made homeless as a result?**

Further, on a practical level I am aware that many guardian properties do not have hot water in bathrooms and kitchens, although hot water may be available elsewhere in the building or expected to be obtained through other nearby facilities.

- 5. Can you confirm you will now seek to install hot water in all bathrooms and kitchens now, so your guardians can follow the best hygiene and stay at home guidance from the Government and health authorities?**
- 6. Would you also tell me what guidance you are issuing to your property guardians to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus between guardians in properties with shared facilities? As you are aware, limiting the contagious effect of the virus is a key factor in preventing spread, infection and an even more severe health crisis.**
- 7. To help your guardians maintain clean and safe environments, will you be providing suitable disinfectants and equipment to head guardians so they can implement appropriate measures in their homes?**

As the full impact of this crisis has not yet hit, those providing homes for our citizens have time to take measures to protect people from the worst outcomes. Protecting property



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guardians from eviction will remove at least one deeply worrying factor from their lives as they struggle with health worries and possible job insecurities.

Please write to your guardians on the points I have outlined, and to reply to me as soon as possible with a response to the seven key issues I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sian Berry". The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'S' and a long, sweeping underline.

**Sian Berry**  
**Green Party Member of the London Assembly**

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[1] <https://www.propertyguardianproviders.com/>

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/complete-ban-on-evictions-and-additional-protection-for-renters>



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