

dti

the department for Enterprise

John Redwood MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for  
Corporate Affairs

Mrs Virginia Bottomley MP  
Minister for Health  
Department of Health  
Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2MS

Department of  
Trade and Industry

1-19 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0ET

Enquiries  
071-215 5000

Telex 8811074/5 DTHQ G  
Fax 071-222 2629

Direct line 071-215 4417

Our ref

Your ref

Date 11 May 1990

*Dear Minister*

**REGISTRATION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES: PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL**

Thank you for your copy of your letter <sup>will request if required</sup> to Geoffrey Howe of May 9 inviting colleagues' comments on your proposal to block the Harriet Harmon Bill but signal the government's own intention to legislate in relation to small homes at some future date. I am replying on the Secretary of State's behalf since he is away in the Far East.

As custodian of the government's deregulation policy, I would prefer a voluntary registration and code of conduct in the entire sector to be administered by say the National Confederation of Residential Care Associations. If backed up by suitable publicity and registration symbols this could well turn out to be more efficient and effective than that administered by local authorities. We heard at first hand about the difficulties and frustrations faced by residential care businesses in the course of the recent case studies exercise carried out by the Deregulation Unit here, about which I wrote to Roger Freeman on April 11. I am also worried about placing further burdens on Local Authorities when we want them to control their spending and when they are already demand substantial extra resources to implement the Griffiths measures.

Such a radical change at this stage in a Parliament may be difficult and, given the political pressures you are presently under, you may find resisting extending regulation in this sector awkward. The self regulatory approach is one that might be considered in the longer term, especially as the sector grows and inevitably takes up more local authority resources.



Recycled Paper



# dti

the department for Enterprise

Your present proposals should entail a regulatory regime as 'light' as possible, confining it essentially to the fitness of the managers or proprietors. It would be a pity to impose excessive regulations at a time when growing demand requires a major expansion in homes provisions. Nor should you take for granted the fact that more regulation will necessarily produce better quality provision or necessarily reduce the amount of concern. Could you also take the opportunity of assessing whether this more limited regulatory regime could extend further up the size range to homes with more than 4 residents? This would have a useful deregulatory effect by lessening the present burdens on the businesses involved and on the local authorities. It would create fairness between different sizes of home. I suggest this very much in the light of the delays, difficulties and frustrations which businesses in this sector currently experience with the existing registration and inspection regime, as documented in the Deregulation Unit's report. The relationship between costs and charges of homes in some parts of the country implies we are short of provision and should not impede more. Copies of this letter go to the recipients of yours and deregulation colleagues.

*Yours sincerely*

*Strat fill*

*PP* JOHN REDWOOD

*(Approved by the Minister  
and signed in his  
absence)*



Recycled Paper