



**Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP**

Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Cllr Joanne Sexton  
Spelthorne Borough Council  
Knowle Green  
Staines upon Thames  
TW18 1XB

17 April 2026

Dear Shabana Mahmood MP,

**RE: Safeguarding concerns arising from Home Office placement of an individual at [REDACTED], Laleham**

I am writing to you regarding a matter of acute concern to both myself and the Council, arising from the recent arrest of an occupant of [REDACTED], Laleham, on suspicion of serious child sexual offences.

I fully appreciate that the case is now subject to an active police investigation, and I do not wish to comment on, or prejudice, those proceedings. However, the circumstances surrounding the individual's placement in this property raise significant safeguarding questions which I believe warrant urgent attention at a ministerial level.

The individual concerned was residing in a House in Multiple Occupation at [REDACTED] that, at the time of the arrest, had not yet been granted a licence. An application for a six-person HMO licence was submitted to the Council on 4 February 2026 and remains under consideration. It has since become apparent that the Home Office placed this individual in the property without any prior communication with, or notification to, the Council.

Of particular concern is the proximity of the property to Laleham Primary School, within approximately 250 metres and the allegation that the individual was arrested outside the school after reportedly approaching young boys and encouraging them to travel into Staines-upon-Thames. While these matters will rightly be assessed through the criminal justice system, they underline the very real safeguarding sensitivities associated with accommodation placements in residential communities, especially near schools.

I am extremely troubled by reports that the individual may have been known to have a previous criminal record for similar offences at the point of placement. If correct, this raises fundamental questions about risk assessment, information-sharing, and the safeguards in place when individuals with complex or high-risk backgrounds are housed within local neighbourhoods.

Local authorities carry statutory responsibilities in respect of housing standards, licensing, and critically, the safeguarding of children and vulnerable residents. These responsibilities cannot be effectively discharged if councils are not informed when placements present potential safeguarding risks, or when accommodation is used prior to the conclusion of a licensing process.

I would therefore be grateful if you could provide:

- clarity on the Home Office's policies and procedures for risk assessment when placing individuals in HMOs, particularly those close to schools or youth facilities;
- assurance as to how information relevant to safeguarding is shared with local authorities;
- confirmation of what steps will be taken to prevent similar situations arising in the future; and
- an indication of how the Home Office intends to engage with councils to ensure alignment between placement decisions, licensing regimes and local safeguarding duties.

This incident has understandably caused significant distress within the local community. While recognising the pressures on the Home Office accommodation system, safeguarding must remain paramount, and effective partnership with local government is essential to maintaining public confidence.

I would welcome the opportunity for officers from the Home Office to engage directly with the Council on this matter as a matter of urgency.

Thank you for your attention to this serious issue. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Joanne Sexton  
Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council