



NGB

17 November 2009

Rt. Hon. John Healey MP
Minister for Housing and Planning
Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU

Dear Mr Healey

I would like to introduce myself as the CEO of Britain's largest private residential Property Management business and to set out what I believe to be a pressing need for regulatory control of the companies that operate in this sector.

I am responsible for a range of property management and associated service support companies which operate under the Peverel Group. In total we look after 140,067 leasehold units in the general flats sector and 72,060 in the specialist field of private retirement housing. By volume alone this number of properties under management gives Peverel a significant share of the private sector market and one in which we have worked for three decades.

For many years my colleagues and I have been closely involved in a drive to improve standards across the sector through trade associations and by our own direct efforts within our own business. However, in my view, there is an ever growing need - and customer appetite - to regulate or possibly license operators in order to improve standards of operation and to protect our customers' most valuable asset. After all there is no other industry where the management of millions of pounds of other people's money is controlled by unregulated parties.

One of the most important things that consumers should consider, when buying a property with shared common areas and facilities, is how the upkeep of that building will be managed and yet I think it is low on the agenda of purchasing decision factors. Quite simply, it is my experience that when you live in a flat, the quality and performance of the managing agent looking after the building can make or break the ownership and occupation experience.

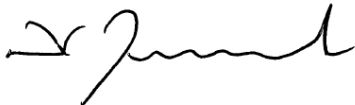
The sector as a whole benefits from a whole raft of legislative protection and stringent codes of practice, built up over many years for the benefit of consumers by the trade associations such as the Association of Residential Managing Agents (ARMA) and the Association of Retirement Housing Managers (ARHM). However, to date, the Government's focus from a regulatory perspective has been to legislate outcomes by providing the means for lessees to challenge wrongdoing after the fact.

It would be far more effective for the consumer to regulate managing agents in the first place, thereby bringing real sanction against those agents that fail to act properly.

In conclusion I would encourage your Government to urgently consider and support the growing need for the statutory regulation of property management companies to give consumers clarity about how their money is being spent on their properties and confidence in the protection of that asset.

I would welcome the chance to meet with you to see what can be achieved.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Bannister', written in a cursive style.

Nigel Bannister
Chief Executive Officer
Peverel Group

cc: Mark Field Esq MP – House of Commons