[Your address]

[Full name of your MP, followed by ‘MP’

and contact details of constituency office.

Check if they are a ‘Rt Hon’ or not]

[date]

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms [surname of MP] MP

**Community Housing Fund**

I am writing to ask you to press the Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Gavin Barwell MP, to back the community-led housing sector’s proposal for the Community Housing Fund.

I am involved with one of 80+ Cohousing groups across the country, which have recently received much media attention and public interest, as a choice for

Together with housing co-operatives, community land trusts, collective self-builders and self-help groups, we represent the community-led housing sector which the Fund is designed to help. We provide new and refurbished homes that meet local needs and with high levels of local support.

We were thrilled when the Government announced this £300 million investment in the sector over five years.

The first few months of the Community Housing Fund have created a lot of excitement in the sector and among many of the 148 local authorities that received money. The sector worked hard to try to provide advice and coordination so that this money is well used. Where this has worked well it has created a refreshing opportunity to develop locally-appropriate approaches to deliver the Government's objectives. [Include any local info if you would like to do so, but if there have been problems try to mention them without being overly negative about the Fund overall.]

Since the Fund’s launch, the UK Cohousing Network (UKCN), of which we are a member, along with the Confederation of Cooperative Housing (CCH) and the National CLT Network (NCLTN) have been working with officials to design a proposal for the Fund in future years, building on this groundwork. Together these sector organisations represent nearly all the community-led organisations that own homes in England. They have now submitted a proposal to Government.

The key principle behind this sector proposal is that the Government invests in growing the sector, rather than creating a new layer of bureaucracy. It includes:

1. Investment in the sector’s local and national infrastructure, including in local enablers to provide hands-on technical support to groups, and to create a one-stop-shop for community-led housing nationally;
2. A revenue fund to cover the cost of professional services and fees required to get projects to planning and on site;
3. A capital fund to enable the delivery of genuinely affordable housing;
4. Independent monitoring and evaluation review, test and evaluate the success of the Fund’s interventions.

The UK Cohousing Network and their partners is concerned that the Government move swiftly to put this programme in place. It also urges that the Government looks to co-invest in the sector’s national infrastructure, rather than created an additional layer of bureaucracy, when NCLTN, CCH and UKCN represent the sole source capable of delivering that infrastructure.

We therefore call on the Government to adopt this proposal and work with the sector on its implementation, in order to accelerate the supply of community-led homes.

I hope you will add your support to this call by raising the matter with the Minister.

[Include this if you would like to do so] We would also welcome an opportunity meet with you to discuss this issue.

I look forward to your reply.  
  
Yours sincerely

[Your name   
Your position and name of your Cohousing group]