



## CATHERINE WEST MP

*Member of Parliament for Hornsey and Wood Green*

Helen Stephenson  
Chief Executive  
Charity Commission  
102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ

18 March 2021  
Our Ref: ZA10346

Dear Helen,

**Re: Mary Feilding Guild Care Home, 107 North Hill, Highgate, London, N6 4DP  
Charity Registration no. 205563**

I hope this finds you well.

I am writing to you following a meeting I held with residents of the above care home in my constituency last week. I was extremely concerned to learn from the residents that they had been told during a meeting last Monday with the new owners of the care home, Highgate Care Ltd, that it will be closed at the end of May, leaving them with just 12 weeks to find alternative housing. Staff were also advised that their contracts would be ending on 31<sup>st</sup> of May.

I understand that Mary Feilding Guild was previously run by a Board of Trustees as a charitable, non-profit organisation. It has been explained to me that due to financial difficulties, the Board felt it was necessary to find new owners for the care home as they could no longer continue to run it. I understand that residents were informed of the sale in June 2020 and the company purchasing the home was named in November 2020. The sale was completed on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and residents met with the new owners on 8<sup>th</sup> March. During this meeting, residents were told about the closure of the Guild and the name of the care home has subsequently been changed to Highgate House Care Home.

This news was extremely shocking to the residents of Mary Feilding Guild, some of whom are over 100 years old. None of the residents have left the grounds of the Guild since March 2020, and the prospect of finding new housing during the middle of a pandemic is understandably causing much anxiety and distress.

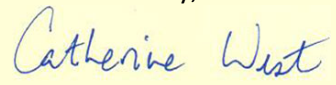
During the meeting I held with residents last week, it was explained to me that several of them and their family members had contacted the Board of Trustees to raise concerns they had between June 2020 and March 2021. Many felt that there had been a lack of consultation by the Board of Trustees and their concerns were not properly engaged with. Residents were repeatedly assured that the new owners had agreed to take the Guild on as a going concern, and this was also reiterated to me by the Board of Trustees in December 2020 following a letter highlighting concerns brought to my attention by worried relatives. The response stated that there was no reason to believe that the new owners would want to do anything against the interests of the residents.

Concerns have been raised about whether the Board of Trustees followed due diligence procedures prior to the sale, particularly in seeking stipulations from the new owners that the Guild would remain open to current residents. Queries about the Guild's financial reserves have also been raised, including what will happen to the bequests left by former residents in the belief that this would go towards maintaining the Guild.

I would be grateful for the Charity Commission's help as a regulatory body in reviewing this to ensure due diligence has been carried out at every stage prior to and after the sale of the property, and addressing the concerns Mary Feilding Guild care home residents have raised.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catherine West". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Catherine West

**Member of Parliament for Hornsey & Wood Green**