

Sandra White MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

9th April 2014

Dear Sandra

Housing for students in the West End of Glasgow

The SRC are contacting you regarding the Evening Times article posted online on the 8th of April 2014 titled 'Too many student flats in west end'.

The SRC were disappointed to see in this article that you were questioning the Housing Minister about how the Scottish Government are planning to stop over provision of student housing to stop communities becoming 'student villages'. It would be useful to understand your reasoning behind this apparently unhelpful question.

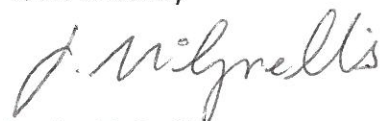
As you'll be fully aware the University of Glasgow is based in the West End and therefore this area is heavily populated by students. Not all of the thousands of students that attend the University choose to live here, however it is regarded as a safe area for students who wish to study in the library until late or use University facilities. Furthermore, the West End thrives as a community because of the number of students who energise the area. Not to mention the positive impact on the local economy having such a large student population has.

We accept that having a high number of students concentrated in one particular area can result in problems such as poor maintenance and security of properties owned by private landlords, and the high numbers of housebreakings students and other have fallen victim to. However, these could be addressed, along with other more pertinent issues facing the local community with positive and decisive action from MSPs and Glasgow City Council. We are for example currently working closely with local police and Glasgow City Council's HMO unit to update their HMO licencing conditions & management standards to include a minimum acceptable level of security in HMO properties to hopefully reduce the number of burglaries these properties experience.

Raising this type of question in such a public manner also risks not only alienating the student voting population but also potentially unfairly stigmatising students and student accommodation in general.

The SRC are concerned to maintain good relationships with our local community and to this end I would be happy to discuss these issues further with you.

Yours sincerely



Jessica McGrellis
Glasgow University SRC President