Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health Committee. To watch Sarah speak, click here

I welcome the Minister's confirmation that housing associations in rural areas will continue to have an exemption. However, can he reassure those small communities in rural areas with very high housing costs, such as those in my constituency, that if the housing associations choose not to avail themselves of the exemption, any like-for-like replacement will be provided in the same area? If such replacement were provided in a distant town, our rural communities would be depleted.

Brandon Lewis Minister of State (Communities and Local Government)

My hon. Friend makes a good point, and I thank her and her colleagues for the time that they put in over the summer to talk to their local housing associations about the deal that the associations were working towards putting to us. It is important that people recognise that the rural exemptions will continue. We are extending right to buy and the rural exemptions are in right to buy. She will also be able to look at the portable option that the housing associations are putting forward.

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