

E Heneghan

Folks

I have just seen a video clip of the conservative MP Eric Pickles appearing on 'Question Time' attempting to defend his expenses claim for a second home. He went on to say that he lives 37 miles away from Westminster and needs somewhere close to his place of work, as he has to attend a number of meetings outside normal office hours. I too work in Westminster, and live 37 miles away a few miles from Mr Pickles and regularly work outside normal office hours, but like many thousands of others feel very able to travel to and from the office using the excellent public transport services available.

Is it not about time that purpose built accommodation was set aside for those MPs living some distance from Whitehall who need to stay in London for the working week.

The building of such accommodation would be a welcome shot in the arm for the building trade, would be relatively inexpensive in the current economic climate and would in all likelihood increase in value over the coming years. A couple of blocks should be sufficient as I'm sure the numbers requiring a provided flat would be considerably less than the number currently claiming a second home allowance. By building such an accommodation block the taxpayer would see a reduction in overall costs, MPs would be less exposed to criticism and ridicule, security measures could be designed in and this benefit in kind would be far less likely to be abused by those who didn't truly need it.

Regards