

How Renters Reform can *work for all*



A guide to the Renters' Reform Bill and changes the industry would like to see included.

The Government's white paper promises much for tenants but offers little reassurance for the responsible private landlord. Here's a guide to the proposals and changes The Lettings Industry Council believe will be needed to make it fair and effective.

The Renters Reform Bill

The Decent Homes Standard will cover the private sector. Homes must be safe, free from serious hazards and in a good state of repair.



The bill will prevent so-called 'no fault' Section 21 evictions where landlords don't have to give a reason to end a tenancy.



Blanket bans on children or benefit claimants will be outlawed.



Rent review clauses will be banned.



Tenants will be able to request permission to have a pet. Landlords must have a good reason to refuse.



All tenants will be moved to a single system of periodic tenancies, making it easier to move home.



Rent increases will only be allowed once each year and two months' notice must be given.



Councils will be given more power to crack down on rogue landlords, levy fines and enforce improvements.



There will be a new private rental ombudsman.



A new ground will be added to Section 8 for landlords wishing to sell their property or move into it themselves.



A new property portal will help landlords understand and comply with their responsibilities and give councils and tenants the information they need to tackle rogue operators.



The lettings industry's stance

We agree. We'd also like a system of Unique Property Reference Numbers to allow the capture of all relevant property safety records.

Landlords need to be able to regain possession of their property if they have a sound reason.

We suggest a government or local authority bond scheme for tenants on Universal Credit or specified benefits. This could ensure targeted support for the deposit problem.

Such clauses were often closely linked to retail prices and gave landlords some protection in long-term tenancies. It's always been possible to challenge them.

We'd like to be able to insist on pet insurance ... just in case.

We say every tenancy should have a written tenancy agreement or statement of terms. Without either, the Government's model tenancy agreement would apply.

A tribunal system allowing challenge must also protect our legitimate interests.

Good.
Our industry doesn't need or want the rogue element.

We'd like to see a single regulator for the industry with clear signposting for the different users.

Great, but we need to be sure the legal system is effective. A review of the accelerated procedure is necessary.

A property portal could also provide a Landlord Register, making communication on issues like legislation and safety simple.

Let's sort these issues too

The court system isn't working for landlords or tenants right now. We'd like to see:



A route for dealing with abandonment to reduce court cases.



Priority for cases with high or persistent rent arrears.



Mediation to minimise costs and reduce court hearings.



More judges to handle the workload.