



A Fairer Private Rented Sector

A Guide for Landlords

Full white paper can be read here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-fairer-private-rented-sector>

The government has released a white paper 'A Fairer Private Rented Sector' detailing its plans for the private rented sector. It builds on the vision of the Levelling Up White Paper and sets out the plans to fundamentally reform the Private Rented Sector and level up housing quality.

There are 12 main action points proposed:

1. **Meet the Decent Homes Standard and halve the number of non-decent rented homes by 2030.** *The Decent Homes Standard includes free of serious hazards, reasonable state or repair, modern facilities including kitchen and bathroom and updating heating and insulation.*
2. **Accelerating quality improvements in the areas that need it most.** The areas are yet to be announced but pilot schemes with local councils will be explored.
3. **Abolish Section 21 - 'no fault' evictions.** A tenancy will only end if the tenant ends it or if the landlord has a valid ground for possession. All tenancies will be moved away from assured shorthold tenancies and will become periodic so weekly or monthly rolling tenancies.
4. **Reform grounds for possession so landlords have effective means to gain possessions.** *Details of some of the new grounds are included below.*
5. **Only allow rent increases once per year.**
6. **Ombudsman that all private landlords must join.** Providing fair, impartial and binding resolution to many issues.
7. **Targeting unacceptable delays in court proceedings.**
8. **Introducing a new Property Portal.** It will hold the information about landlord's compliance at properties and is intended to assist landlords in understanding your responsibilities. It will be mandatory to join.
9. **Strengthening local councils' enforcement powers and ability to crack down on criminal landlords.**
10. **Legislation to make it illegal for landlords or agents to have blanket bans on renting to families with children or those in receipt of benefits.**
11. **Tenants right to request a pet, which landlords must consider and cannot unreasonably refuse.**
12. **Monitoring development of solutions to passport deposits.** This is aimed at helping tenants who struggle to raise a second deposit to move around the PRS more easily.

Grounds for possession and notice periods:

With the abolishing of Section 21, there is a detailed list provided for grounds for possessions. These include:

- 2 months' rent arrears
- Anti-social behaviour
- Landlord selling or allowing family to move in
- Repeated serious rent arrears – at least 2 months 3 times in a three year period.

Part of the grounds for possession reform also includes reducing some notice periods to speed up any potential eviction. There is an extensive list and we can assist in discussing these.

If you would like to discuss anything further or have questions, please contact Next Step Lets at Stevenage Borough Council nextsteplets@stevenage.gov.uk or 01438 242909.