

Response ID ANON-YZRU-Z1WQ-D

Submitted to A New Deal for Tenants - draft Rented Sector Strategy consultation
Submitted on 2022-04-14 14:20:37

Questions

Ensuring tenants' voices are heard with an equalities led approach

1. What particular barriers do people with protected characteristics face in their experience of the rented sector?

Please give us your views:

Vulnerable and single parent families are an increasing concern for the PRS in the light of changes to various benefit Regulations and the continuing pressure on the supply of housing. Some of our members have suggested the identification and provision of additional support functions for people with protected characteristics. This issue is not of course unique to the PRS and needs to be set irrespective of tenure. The one additional factor for PRS could be the need to ensure liaison between the appropriate support services for people with protected characteristics and the landlord/agent

2. Do you have any suggestions for how we can better meaningfully embed tenant participation within the private rented sector, including for people with protected characteristics, in national and local policy/decision making?

Please provide your views:

Our members would be very happy to participate in any workshops with tenant groups. The build to rent sector encourages feedback from tenants via an independent verified resident review portal as stated above for new build homes across the UK. There are also anecdotal reviews on Google. Tenant feedback on such sites is much more powerful than in the Social Rented sector where residents have little choice, or in the owner occupier sector where owners are tied in once they have made a purchase.

Most large BTR schemes have visible and accessible onsite staff that tenants are able to give feedback to in real-time. BTR schemes thrive when there is a happy community so engaging with tenants is in the landlord's interest.

Some of our members have also suggested that Local Tenant Forums could be established in individual blocks or with some of the BTR landlords.

We are concerned that this consultation is narrowly focused and does not allow for any wider issues that impact on tenants in both the Private and Social rented sectors to be considered. For example, in the vision and aims of the strategy 'It is acknowledged in this draft Strategy that the private rented sector has further to travel than the social sector and therefore the weight of policy proposals where views are being sought, are for the private rented sector.' There is no evidence to support this assertion. Our members are puzzled by this assumption because the Scottish Housing Survey shows greater satisfaction by residents in the Private Rented Sector than in the Social Rented Sector. The independent verifier Homeviews - <https://www.homeviews.com/> also published a report - <https://www.homeviews.com/2021-national-build-to-rent-report/>, which shows that tenants rated the BTR tenant experience higher than build to sell in every category.

3. What are your views on the future role tenants' unions could have in supporting tenants to actively participate in decision-making at a national and local level in Scotland?

Please provide your views:

As previously stated, it has been suggested that Tenant Forums could be established to support tenants to actively participate in decision making at national and local level. However, it may be difficult to establish and keep these Forums going as most tend to be established and run by volunteers (eg tenants & owners associations). It may be necessary to make these more formal organisations, which may necessitate funding by government or via tenant contributions.

The rental market covers a very wide spectrum, and it would be very challenging to appoint members that would be in a position to speak for all areas of the market.

Our members are of the view that the case has not been made for tenant unions because we are not persuaded that any evidence has been put forward in the consultation to suggest that tenants are on a broad basis dissatisfied. In the build to rent sector a strong case has been made of good levels of satisfaction by HomeView. Indeed, the research pointed to by the government's consultation paper suggests good levels of satisfaction among mid-market renters. There should be a much more substantial analysis of the sector at large before any such conclusion is made, or legislation and policy introduced to create tenant unions. Policy by campaign headline is not appropriate for such a broad and large sector.

4. How best can we ensure people are aware of their rights and how to exercise them in:

Please provide your views:

This could form part of the PRS Model Tenancy Agreement (MTA). It is unlikely that both tenants and landlords will have read the 2016 Act or any proposed new legislation in detail and it would therefore be helpful if the MTA referenced and linked to key legislation where appropriate and relevant. It should, however, be highlighted that amendments to legislation may occur in future and that it is the responsibility of tenants, landlords and managing agents to refer to legislation.gov.uk to stay up to date regarding changes. While it should be clear that nothing in the MTA can override the provisions of legislation any changes in legislation should not require the reissuing of a new MTA.

Our members are firmly of the view that a simple and robust MTA will also be important in attracting investment to the sector. They are also of the view that this would have the benefit of supporting the consistency of application and practice in the sector which is going to be important in establishing a positive reputation for the PRS under the new regime for tenants, landlords, investors, and professional advisers collectively. Inconsistency and a lack of enforcement of existing regulations has bedevilled the operation of the PRS and it will be important to improve upon this with any new regime.

Please provide your views:

Enhancing rights within the existing tenancy framework

5. After 4 years of the Private Residential Tenancy being in place, how well do you think the 18 grounds for eviction are working? Is there anything that you would like to see changed?

Please provide your views:

We recognise that this question relates to eviction grounds. However, we have taken the opportunity to identify other key parts of the 2016 Act that have not worked as anticipated and have impacted on tenants and the supply of tenancies.

Minimum Term

A key part that did not work as anticipated was the minimum term, opening the market to exploitation by short stay tenants who had no intention of creating a home, preventing a legitimate tenant from being able to take that unit. Our members recommend that this should be considered.

Eviction Grounds

We note that there are provisions in the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill to remove the mandatory eviction grounds. Our members are firmly of the view that the inclusion of these provisions is premature and does not take account of the wider Private Rented Sector (PRS) and unintended consequences they bring. If all the grounds become discretionary, many more cases will inevitably go to the First Tier Tribunal, which would not have the resources to cope with the expected additional workload and cases.

Any increase in the number of referrals (relative to current volumes going to court) and any increase in the time involved (relative to cases going through court) will also increase costs in time and effort for landlords, their agents and/or managers. The government should remember that at times landlords will be acting subject to concerns raised by other tenants. By making it harder for landlords to address situations of anti-social behaviour by a tenant, the government is in effect undermining the interests of other, concerned tenants. The consultation resolutely ignores these situations, which are a fact of life in reality.

There is also a risk that some tenants may abuse the process and landlords who are reasonably seeking repossession will experience further delays. This scenario clearly indicates additional and unacceptable levels of risk for investors.

Our members have raised concerns about how the tenant can assess properly whether landlord is being genuine in a case of repossession for a family member. It seems likely that this would lead to many cases being challenged, and because it is going to Tribunal, the landlord would be required to make clear their intent to house a family member meaning that the tenant has very little risk.

PRS property owners who have a mortgage and rely on the rental for paying the mortgage or as their personal pension or income, could also be adversely affected if there is a long delay in evicting a tenant for non-payment of rent. This could lead to undue hardship for the landlord, and it is therefore important in any changes to the legislation that any non-payment of rental is dealt with quickly and as a priority. Without adequate protection for landlords in these circumstances a lot of individual investors could exit the PRS market leading to a reduction of supply in the number of homes being available for rent and increasing the burden on the Affordable & Social Housing Sector.

6. Are there any additional specific grounds for ending a tenancy that you think should be added?

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

7. Do you have any views on our proposal to clarify the original policy intention in relation to the use of ground 6 for ending a tenancy ('Landlord intends to use for non-residential purpose') - to make clear that this eviction ground cannot be used to evict a tenant in order to use the property as a short term holiday let?

Please provide your views:

Our members would welcome clarification in relation to short-term lets. The regulation of short-term lets is now subject to planning controls as well.

8. What further refinements could be made to either the private rented or social rented sector pre-action requirements in order to further protect and support tenants?

Please provide your views:

We regret that a balance has not been achieved in the relationship between landlords and tenants. The application of lengthy periods of rent arrears before repossession action can be initiated by a landlord will further transfer the balance of risk heavily onto the landlord. This is likely to make landlords

more cautious about their potential tenants with additional due diligence on potential tenants ahead of letting agreements.

Where a tenant is responsible for antisocial behaviour, and while the case takes time to go through the Tribunal, it is other tenants who are mostly affected and this is detrimental to the community within a BTR scheme as a whole. This can have knock on effects to the reputation of the development, managing agent and landlord, devalue the asset, and ultimately increase risk for investors.

Our members have raised concerns about the lengthy process of initiating repossession grounds based on rent arrears, whereby it may be up to 3 months before these grounds can be initiated. This lengthy and uncertain processes for landlord repossession will add unacceptable risk for existing and prospective investors, as well as a decrease in asset value. The reality is that it is not in the interest of most landlords to evict tenants and thus reduce their own income. This is why eviction rates in the professionally managed PRS are very low and the vast majority of those are due to rent arrears or antisocial behaviour. Indeed, the vast majority of tenancies are ended by tenants themselves.

The Summary of Work of the Housing and Property Chamber 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 indicates that that the emergency arrangements have not actually protected tenants to any degree greater than the existing provisions of the PRT. The statistics show that 86% of evictions progressed, which is in line with previous years without the emergency legislation. The proposed Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill tenancy provisions do, however, provide a means for certain tenants to exploit it. This is a likely to lead to hardship for some unfortunate landlords and a risk that landlords would leave the market through fear of the negative impacts of the changes.

It is also worth noting that the Housing and Property Chamber's role generally ends with the tribunal issuing a final determination and /or an order, unless a review request, application for recall or permission to appeal request is then received. As with the courts, the Housing and Property Chamber has no role in enforcement of payment or eviction orders, which would be the responsibility of the landlord.

Our members have strong concerns that the system might be exploited by tenants who wish to draw out their tenancy despite having no reasonable chance of winning. This could place a significant burden on a vital housing tenure by potentially denying other tenants the chance of a home. The current proposals would mean that 'rogue' tenants have nothing to lose by referring their case to the Housing and Property Chamber. The statistics mentioned above show that of the 2720 applications closed during the year, a total of 381 (14%) were rejected. A breakdown of the reasons why the applications were rejected is as follows:

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Total 381

In total, 23% of applications closed during the year were withdrawn by the applicant at some stage of the proceedings, mostly after they were referred to a tribunal. There is no requirement to state the reason for withdrawing an application.

Our members are concerned about the system being overloaded and the potential for lengthy waits before a ruling is made, which could also further incentivise 'rogue' tenants as mentioned above. This could significantly affect a landlord's financial position by being unable to remove a tenant who has defaulted on rental payments, meanwhile also incurring legal costs. In addition to the possibility of significant costs to the PRS sector in Scotland, members are also concerned about the demand on Scottish Government resources that tenuous claims could have. It also has the potential to add significantly to the backlogs in the delivery of public services.

Our members are also concerned that Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament accompanying Policy and Financial Memorandum fails to appreciate that a tenant in possession of a property, but not contributing rental payments, is not just an issue for the landlord. Other tenants may have to subsume other associated costs and services. We are also firmly of the view that the inclusion of these provisions in the Bill is premature and does not take account of the wider Private Rented Sector (PRS) and unintended consequences they bring.

9. Can you provide any examples/case studies of where the pre-action requirements have worked well in practice?

Please provide your views:

10. What measures could be implemented to support people involved in sex work, including women subject to commercial sexual exploitation in the rented sector?

Please provide your views:

Our members have suggested the identification and provision of additional support functions for such groups should occur aside from the Tenancy Regime. This is however a matter for the professional social and police services rather than the wider landlord or agent community, who will not generally have the expertise to make judgements in these matters.

11. Do you agree with our proposal to amend the 2016 Act to ensure that all joint tenants can end their interest in a private residential tenancy without the agreement of other joint tenant(s)?

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

The SPF highlighted the issue of Joint and Several Liability in our response to the consultations ahead of the 2016 legislation. One issue here is that if the higher income householder unilaterally ends their joint liability, then this could put immediate hardship upon the remaining householder. This could lead to situations, such as when a couple break up (potentially with children) and one individual can then end the tenancy making the other homeless?

12. In the social rented sector, the notice period required for a joint tenant to end their interest is four weeks.

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

The minimum notice period is already 4 weeks in the private rented sector. This was added at a late stage of the passage of the 2016 Act to address cases of abuse in joint tenancies.

No

Please provide your views:

We see no need for longer notice periods specifically for cases where there are joint tenants.

Accommodation is a key consideration for students in deciding which academic institution to attend. Any uncertainty around the availability of accommodation for student occupation could deter students and particularly the key overseas/rest of the UK student sector from choosing to study in Scotland. This will clearly have a detrimental impact on providers of higher education in Scotland, and indeed the Scottish economy.

To safeguard the rights of all student residents, whether they are in the final stages of a PhD or their first week of freshers' term, certainty over accommodation choices is vital.

13. Should this proposal that a joint tenant can end their interest in a tenancy without the other joint tenant's agreement be taken forward, are there any additional safeguards that should be put in place for remaining joint tenants in the private rented sector?

Not Answered

Please add your views:

Please see our response to question 12.

14. Should we introduce a similar ground to that in the social sector to enable private landlords to initiate eviction proceedings to end a perpetrator's interest in a joint tenancy and transfer the tenancy to a tenant who was subject to domestic abuse, allowing the victim/survivor to remain in the family home where they wish to do so?

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

Any such proceedings should be subject to decisions taken by the appropriate authorities, who should support landlords in taking any such action where appropriate. It is not for landlords and property managers to be perceived as decision-makers in such circumstances.

Consideration would also need to be given to the risk that the remaining tenant may not be able to afford the passing rent and meet all of the leasing criteria.

15. Unlike the social rented sector, private rented sector housing cases are heard by the Tribunal. What are your views on the Tribunal's role being expanded to consider transfer of tenancy in relation to cases of domestic abuse?

Please provide your views:

Our members have strong concerns about any increase in the number of referrals (relative to current volumes going to court) and any increase in the time involved (relative to cases going through court) will also increase costs in time and effort for landlords, their agents and/or managers. As previously suggested, it is not for landlords and property managers to be perceived as decision-makers in such circumstances.

16. Should we streamline the eviction process (remove the discretion of the Tribunal), where there has been a criminal conviction punishable by imprisonment in the previous 12 months relating to abuse of another person living with them in the let property (joint tenant or co-habitee)?

Yes

Please provide your views:

Possibly only with agreement of the existing tenant or co-habitee. However, our members have noted that the perpetrator may be in jail.

17. How can we help improve the immediate and longer term housing outcomes of domestic abuse victims living in the private rented sector?

Please provide your views:

This must be subject to an integrated policy approach with local authorities, health, and social services. We would look for landlords to be understanding and supportive as individual circumstances allow.

18. If unclaimed tenancy deposits were to be reinvested, do you agree that the period after which the funds would be available for reinvestment should be: i. after all avenues to reunite deposits with their tenants have been exhausted, and ii. after a period of 5 years?

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

If unclaimed tenancy deposits are to be reinvested, then it should only be after a significant period of time and subject to clear guidance. Some of our members have suggested that five years could be considered appropriate. However, the Scheme providers should be required to respect individual circumstances that may have prevented the individual reclaiming tenancy deposit schemes. For example, if proceedings are ongoing in relation to the deposit.

"All avenues" must be defined, i.e., the tenant must have been contacted 3 times, each one month apart. There may be issues with tenants claiming they didn't receive such correspondence and getting a correct forwarding address for mail contact can be difficult. Our members have also suggested that statistics on the timeframe in which tenants actually claim deposits should be considered if available.

Greater flexibility to personalise a rented home

19. How could a right to keep pets be most effectively introduced for the private sector, for example by the introduction of a statutory right or by amendment to the Model Tenancy Agreement, and should exceptions be allowed?

Please provide your views:

Our members are of the view that this should not be a statutory right within the Model Tenancy Agreement, apart from possibly service animals. Pets should be on a separate licence with a clear corresponding pet policy. They should not cause any antisocial issues whether that be noise, smell, or intimidation - otherwise the lease may need to be revoked.

Consideration needs to be given to which pets are allowed, as different pets cause different issues, and the size of the pet needs to be commensurate with the size and type of the residence. Consideration may also need to be given to the provision of a greater deposit.

It should also be borne in mind that the landlord or manager may have a responsibility beyond one tenant. The landlord will in many cases, need to bear in mind the interests and concerns of other tenants regarding both surrounding residents' quiet enjoyment of their homes and to the welfare of the animal.

The modern build-to-rent sector can already include bespoke agreements allowing residents to keep pets. This may be an example that might be considered.

20. Should the right to keep pets also be introduced as a right in the social sector?

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

The right to keep a pet should be consistent across the social and rented sectors.

21. How could the right to personalise a privately rented home be most effectively introduced for the sector and what is an acceptable definition of personalisation? For example, should the property be returned to the original state by the tenant where there is no explicit agreement between the tenant and landlord?

Please provide your views:

The majority of BTR landlords encourage residents to personalise their homes, by painting walls and hanging items on the walls. This allows for plenty of personalisation yet is easy to put right if needed. This encourages the tenant to think of the property as their home, resulting in longer tenancies and better care for the home so advantageous for both tenant and landlord. A separate alterations licence can be granted with explicit consent for the tenant's plans. The tenant should be responsible for returning the home to its original state, i.e., paint walls back to original colour (or just white) and fill holes in all cases, although in reality, some landlords and agents could use their discretion. Landlords could also specify that the works are carried out by a member of their maintenance team or someone with a specific accreditation, which reduces the risk of damage to the property.

It cannot be fair to a landlord for a property to be returned that requires extensive repair and refurbishment. Aside from the cost, this will mean a property being vacant for a period of time and thus unavailable to other tenants. The consultation notes there might be a case of considering the length of occupation. The longer a tenant occupies a property the more it might be expected to be personalised to a reasonable extent (painting etc). Care should also be taken to ensure that any personalisation does not devalue the property. But for relatively short-term tenancies of a few months, the landlord might reasonably expect a property to be returned without personalisation.

22. Should different consideration be given for the right to personalise where a property is furnished or unfurnished?

No

Please provide your views:

There should be no different consideration given. Where furnished, a landlord should expect to see their property returned as it was let. There should be recognition and scope for anticipated wear and tear for longer term furnished lets and this should be managed reasonably.

23. Is there a need to review how a private landlord can be protected against damage to their property caused by personalisation, above the current tenancy deposit limits, and who should resolve disputes?

Please provide your views:

Some of our members have suggested that if rights are introduced to allow personalisation, deposits would need to be increased to mitigate against the risk of tenants undertaking personalisation and not returning the property to the original state prior to lease expiry. Consideration would therefore need to be given to the time required to reinstate the property to the original condition. Any loss of income as a result should be a cost which can be recovered.

There are professional bodies who provide independent arbitration and adjudication services. The Housing Chamber is already overwhelmed and therefore should be avoided for these kinds of disputes, if possible.

Reform to the eviction process

24. Do you think additional protections against the ending of tenancies during the winter period are needed? For example, some or all of the following:

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

There are already very strong protections for tenants facing eviction proceedings. The Summary of Work of the Housing and Property Chamber 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 indicates that the emergency arrangements which prevents the eviction of tenants are have not actually protected tenants. The statistics show that 86% of evictions progressed, which is in line with previous years without the emergency legislation. The new proposals do, however, provide a means for certain tenants to exploit it. This is likely to lead to hardship for some unfortunate landlords and a risk that landlords would leave the market through fear of the negative impacts of the changes.

It is also worth noting that the Housing and Property Chamber's role generally ends with the tribunal issuing a final determination and /or an order, unless a review request, application for recall or permission to appeal request is then received. As with the courts, the Housing and Property Chamber has no role in enforcement of payment or eviction orders, which would be the responsibility of the landlord.

Our members have strong concerns that the system might be exploited by tenants who wish to draw out their tenancy despite having no reasonable chance of winning. This could place a significant burden on a vital housing tenure by potentially denying other tenants the chance of a home. The current proposals would mean that unscrupulous tenants have nothing to lose by referring their case to the Housing and Property Chamber. The statistics mentioned above show that of the 2720 applications closed during the year, a total of 381 (14%) were rejected. A breakdown of the reasons why the applications were rejected is as follows:

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Our members are concerned about the system being overloaded and the potential for lengthy waits before a ruling is made, which could also further incentivise unscrupulous tenants as mentioned above. This could significantly affect a landlord's financial position by being unable to remove a tenant who has defaulted on rental payments, meanwhile also incurring legal costs. In addition to the possibility of significant costs to the PRS sector in Scotland, members are also concerned about the demand on Scottish Government resources that tenuous claims could have. It also has the potential to add significantly to the backlogs in the delivery of public services.

25. If measures to restrict the ability of landlords to commence eviction proceedings during the winter period were introduced, what do you think is a reasonable 'winter period' timeframe?

Please provide your views:

This is challenging. If it relates to potential winter weather that could be anytime from November to May and could be about half of the year. This extends beyond the festive period into a period when there is less restriction on the number of properties being marketed. Meanwhile, the landlord has to meet costs, mortgage payments etc without any income.

26. What other policies or interventions could be considered to prevent evictions during the winter period?

Please provide your views:

Please see our answer to Q25. In order to prevent landlords from being forced to leave the market some of our members have suggested that a fund could be made available for Landlords to draw on (to cover rent arrears) during the winter period instead of evicting tenants for non payment of rent.

27. Should we introduce a specific requirement for the Tribunal and Sheriff Court to consider delaying the enforcement of eviction orders and decrees during the winter period?

No

Please provide your views:

Please see our comments at question 25

28. Do you agree the current calculation of damages for unlawful eviction should be reformed and simplified, as proposed (see paragraph 4.3 of draft strategy)?

Not Answered

Please provide your views:

A landlord found to have unlawfully evicted a tenant could be subject to the most serious repercussions including imprisonment. There is therefore already a significant imbalance in the relationship between landlords and tenant responsibilities. Conversely, a tenant found to have breached their tenancy agreement will be very unlikely to face a potential prison sentence.

29. If the current system for calculating damages for unlawful eviction was reformed as suggested in paragraph 4.3 of the draft strategy, what do you think would be the appropriate minimum and maximum level of multiplication that the First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) could apply?

Please provide your views:

We believe the potential penalties for landlords are significant and sufficient.

30. What other ways can we make it easier and more attractive for victims of illegal eviction to seek redress and exercise their rights?

Please provide your views:

The penalties facing landlords for illegal eviction are already of the highest level. The consultation should be looking at fairer ways to support landlords and other tenants who are mistreated by a tenant who has acted illegally.

31. In the event of a criminal prosecution not taking place, how best can we ensure that a tenant is compensated, where evidence exists of an unlawful eviction action?

Please provide your views:

Our members have questioned who would be in a position to decide whether there is evidence of an unlawful action. There are already measures in place for fit and proper persons in relation to landlords, which should be sufficient.

Supporting Students

32. Should students living in Purpose Built Student Accommodation be offered similar rights to students who rent from a private landlord?

No

Please provide your views:

As the Scottish Government is undertaking a separate review of PBSA later this year, we think it is premature to consider amending student tenancy legislation at this juncture. It would be preferable to consider this when the wider review of PBSA is complete.

PBSA has always been delivered on the basis that it is to support students in their studies and therefore is let for periods just short of a year. There is a specific planning class for the sector, underpinning the different status of this form of accommodation. There has always been a desire to guarantee first-year students a place in 'Halls', so that they are safe and assimilate better into academic life; for many their first time living away from home. As Universities have expanded, that promise increasingly relies on both University and private-owned accommodation. The major PBSA providers are also either a member of a Code of Practice run by UUK/Universities Scotland or ANUK/Unipol and therefore can be defined as such. If PBSA students were treated on the same basis as a PRT this would mean that it would no longer be possible to guarantee the availability of first year accommodation for students. This could lead to chaos for both higher education institutions and their reputable private sector accommodation providers.

As stated above, accommodation is a key consideration for students in deciding which academic institution to attend. Any uncertainty around the availability of accommodation for student occupation could deter students and particularly the key overseas/rest of the UK student sector from choosing to study in Scotland. This will clearly have a detrimental impact on providers of higher education in Scotland, and indeed the Scottish economy. Lack of available supplemental accommodation outside the academic year for tourists or those engaged with key conferences and cultural events could also

have a detrimental impact on the tourism industry in city centre locations in Scotland. In fact, it is very likely that students will find themselves nominally liable for periods of rent for periods that they have no need of accommodation.

33. Are there any particular aspects of the Private Residential Tenancy that are not working for the student market and what, if any changes/amendments, would help to address these or to encourage landlords to rent more to students? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

The PRT security of tenure provisions have reduced the number of HMOS that are seasonally available to students in line with the academic timetable. Whether a landlord would like to let to students or not, if there is a sitting tenant, there is nothing a landlord can do to provide accommodation for the new academic year. This has put increased demand on PBSA which has risen to the challenge but there are not enough PBSA beds built to meet this increase.

Private Landlords are leaving the sector because of the PRT and other changes to tax policy. For many the transfer of risk to them from tenants is simply too great and unbalanced to support their continued market participation. This is the wider problem if the government is concerned about the supply of rented accommodation, including students. It will also lead to upwards pressure on rents in areas of high demand for rented property.

Rent Guarantor Scheme

34. What would be the key features of an effective rent guarantor scheme?

Please provide your views:

The purpose of a guarantor would be to alleviate risk from a landlord's perspective without being exclusive. Consideration should be given to the ability of the institutions or the NUS to act as guarantors where a student is not able to offer a parent or similar person as guarantor.

35. How could we support the development of rent guarantor schemes that meet the needs of those groups who could benefit from them?

Please provide your views:

We suggest working with student representative bodies such as the NUS and the education institutions (usually universities).

Non-Standard Rented Accommodation

36. What are the key issues and concerns relating to current pitch agreements for Gypsy/Travellers on public sector sites?

Please provide your views:

37. If you rent or let a residential mobile home as a main residence, what type of tenancy do you have and what are the common problems you experience?

Please provide your views:

38. What do you believe are the key housing issues facing people with:

Please provide your views:

Please provide your views:

39. What can we do to improve the outcomes for those people with a tied house for their employment who are approaching retirement and may face losing their home?

Please provide your views:

We would certainly wish to see support for the outgoing employee. However, the government needs to bear in mind that there will also be rights for an incoming employee and that this is not a straightforward issue. An employee may indeed have benefited from accommodation provided by an employer in that they have not had to pay for their own privately owned, or privately/socially rented accommodation. We do not think that policy or legislative guidance is necessarily appropriate in these circumstances. A requirement via employment guidance for the employer to ensure appropriate notice and advice to retiring employees leaving their main place of residence should be a minimum expectation.

Affordable rents

40. What are the most important factors to be incorporated into a shared understanding of housing affordability (e.g. household size and composition, regional variations, housing standards, treatment of benefits)?

Please provide your views:

Our members have also suggested that the cost of accessing local employment and the incurring of costs commuting is also important. From the landlord/supplier perspective, pressures on labour, materials and interest rates are a factor in setting rents. The cost of construction materials alone has soared by over 20% in a late 2021 survey. Landlords are not immune from these rising costs and as businesses.

The SPF is firmly of the view that it is important to consider the wider context of the PRS market. A key factor to consider is that affordability should not just consider current affordability but should also take account of tenancy growth. It is worth noting that the areas deemed as potential rent pressure zones are those where demand outstrips supply, and where much needed investment must be encouraged.

Deficiencies in the social rented sector means that the private rented sector is effectively plugging the gap. There is a risk that further regulation of the PRS that places downward pressure on rents could result in many investors leaving the sector, thus further reducing the number of tenancies available. Indeed, the Scottish Association of Landlords recently reported a fall of 36,000 homes in the PRS sector. We believe this is related to the recent changes in tax and regulatory treatment of the sector. The capping of rent, especially at a negative level, means that re-investment in existing PRS properties becomes more difficult and risks elements such as maintenance and upgrading of systems (e.g., heating, lighting etc) to more modern and more efficient systems less likely.

Increasing housing supply is the key to reducing rents. Supply can most effectively be increased by encouraging Institutional Investors to invest in BTR in Scotland (as opposed to in other UK cities outside Scotland). There is a substantial weight of capital available to be deployed into the UK BTR sector. It is important that any new legislation does not deter this investment.

41. If we are successful in reaching a shared understanding of affordability in Scotland, how should it be used and evaluated?

Please provide your views:

Our members have suggested that there should be clarification of term 'rent control' which puts off a lot of investors despite what the detail may mean. For example, the current legislation for the designation of Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs) is control on rental growth and therefore fixes what rental increases are year on year, which is acceptable from an investors point of view. What is not acceptable to investors is any attempt to artificially set the starting and market rents that a tenant is willing to pay, which is a different policy and approach.

We regret that a balance has not been achieved in the relationship between landlords and tenants and there is a blurring of the social and private rented tenures. The application of lengthy periods of rent arrears before repossession action can be initiated by a landlord will further transfer the balance of risk heavily onto the landlord. This is likely to make landlords more cautious about their potential tenants with additional due diligence on potential tenants ahead of letting agreements.

The consultation highlights that 'Anyone who requires support to manage and stay in their tenancy can access it: no matter the tenure, all tenants who require additional support can access it;' it also states that 'Although we have some of the strongest homelessness legislation in the world, which ensures people receive the support they need, we recognise that prevention and early action is critical'. It is not clear if the Scottish Government or the third sector will be in a position to meet the rent of a tenant who can no longer afford it where there is no existing provision in the social sector.

Our members have raised concerns about the lengthy process of initiating repossession grounds based on rent arrears, whereby it may be up to 3 months before these grounds can be initiated. This lengthy and uncertain processes for landlord repossession will add unacceptable risk for existing and prospective investors, as well as a decrease in asset value. The reality is that it is not in the interest of most landlords to evict tenants and thus reduce their own income. This is why eviction rates in the professionally managed PRS are very low and the vast majority of those are due to rent arrears or antisocial behaviour. Indeed, the vast majority of tenancies are ended by tenants themselves.

There are now 700,000 less local authority homes than there were 40 years ago. Only 200,000 of those have been substituted by RSL homes. The private sector is currently making up the balance. However, due to tax and legislative pressure the PRS sector is starting to shrink, whilst demand is getting greater.

Scottish Government statistics show that the whole rented sector has reduced from 1.2m to 1m over the last 40 years, despite population growth and changes in household formation. This highlights that the rental population has stayed the same, but the private sector has taken up the slack in supply.

Our members are concerned about some general assumptions made in the strategy's Sector Overview and Policy Context. For example, there are many factors which may have contributed to the decrease in the percentage of younger households owning with a mortgage. This could be due to numerous factors, not least people choosing not to take on a massive financial commitment at a time of economic uncertainty. Many people choose to rent who are not facing homelessness but are in a period of their life where flexibility is key, and renting is the best option.

Our members also have strong concerns that 'the situation of high and rapidly increasing rents in the private rented sector, especially in areas with low to moderate household incomes needs will be addressed by the introduction of rent controls as part of this strategy'. This appears to indicate that the private sector is being regulated to protect issues that are currently affecting the social sector.

42. Do you think the data we are proposing to collect will provide all the necessary evidence to inform national and local rent control considerations? Please explain your answer.

No

Please provide your views:

As previously stated, our members have suggested that there should be clarification of term 'rent control' which puts off a lot of investors despite what the detail may mean. For example, the current legislation for the designation of Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs) is control on rental growth and therefore fixes what rental increases are year on year, which is acceptable from an investors point of view. What is not acceptable to investors is any attempt to artificially set the starting and market rents that a tenant is willing to pay, which is a different policy and approach.

As recognised in the Strategy affordability varies per tenant. Providing high quality, high value homes can ease affordability in a supply constrained

market as it releases housing units.

The SPF has questioned why it is considered necessary to extend the rent control measures set out in the provisions of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016, which are intended to be a discretionary tool for local authorities to target issues of rent affordability in their areas, given the cross-party drive to increase supply.

As previously stated, it is worth noting that the areas deemed as potential Rent Pressure Zones (RPZ) are those where demand outstrips supply, and where much need investment needs to be encouraged. It should also be recognised that the designation of an RPZ should be viewed as failure on part of local authorities in meeting local housing need and demand, and therefore, should only be applied for in extreme circumstances.

It should be recognised that many people choose to rent who are not facing homelessness but are in a period of their life where flexibility is key and therefore renting is the best option. It is important to note that demand for renting is not therefore linked exclusively to home ownership.

The Scottish Household Survey 2019 figures show that 84% of households in the private rented sector are either very or fairly satisfied with their housing compared to 81% of households in social rented homes. There is no doubt many people want to own a home at some point in their lives but nearly a third do not, and if so, not for their entire lives.

Our members are firmly of the view that the regulation of the PRS sector should be fair and equitable and should support the interests of tenants and responsible landlords in a balanced way. However, we agree that a lack of data is a substantial issue. It is our strong view that the designation of an RPZ or the introduction of further regulation on rents should be driven solely by a robust statistical evidence base and an understanding of the impact the use of such regulatory interventions will have on the wider market.

It is important to consider the detrimental impact that rent controls can have on investment and supply. Investors are broadly comfortable taking market risks, but when markets are distorted by legislation such as rent controls, investors can choose to avoid these markets in favour of others that are less regulated. There is a very real risk that investors will leave the sector and it is critical that the impact of this is clear to tenants. Capital is mobile and there is also a risk that investors will choose to invest in other cities in the UK where there are free markets.

Notwithstanding the ability for landlords to appeal, the introduction of blanket rent controls may limit a landlord's ability to improve the quality of their property, including for any new standards in the future. If rent is capped, especially at a negative level, re-investment in existing PRS properties becomes more difficult, this risks elements such as maintenance and upgrading of systems (e.g., heating, lighting etc) to more modern and more efficient systems less likely.

Our members would be very happy to engage further to address the management of rent in a way that does not further constrain supply in the marketplace.

The SPF is very concerned that any further changes to the regulation of the tenancy regime or introduction of further rent controls could deter vital sources of funding. The associated additional investor risk premium could leave Scotland disadvantaged, and potentially un-investable in this sector. The loss of liquidity and the impairment of value would be unacceptable.

We believe that the introduction of a blanket rent control, may also cause significant distress to smaller landlords because it would also give no protection from any increased borrowing costs (further increases in the Bank of England base rate for example). The consequence of increased borrowing costs, not being met by commensurate rental increases at review, could lead smaller landlords to exit the PRS which will diminish housing supply rather than increase it, thus exacerbating pressures on supply.

43. What can we do to ensure that landlords and agents provide accurate rental data (and other relevant property information), as soon as any changes are made? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

The SPF supports improving rental data for the Scottish PRS. We will be pleased to work with the government to achieve this objective. Our key concern is that changes to the private rented residential market are made on an informed basis, and we do not believe this is presently the situation in relation to rental evidence. For this reason, we support submitting rental information as part of landlord registration procedures (that already exist), which can therefore be used to support a better understanding of changes to rent for existing and new tenancies.

44. What is your view on making rental and property information publicly available for tenants and others to view?

Please provide your views:

Our members support the transparency and professionalisation of the rental industry. However, we are of the view that tenancy details should not be publicly available, and consideration would need to be given to GDPR requirements. We think that any data should be anonymised per property and should be at the ward level.

45. What is your view on enabling Rent Penalty notices to be issued where a landlord fails to provide up to date registration, rent data and property details?

Please provide your views:

We do not believe that the administration of landlord registration procedures is sufficiently robust to support this approach.

46. Do you agree that the rent adjudication process should only result in rents being decreased or maintained? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

No. Our members are very concerned about the proposal that when a tenant appeals their rent, rent officers and the First-tier Tribunal will be able to either lower or maintain the rent, depending on their assessment, but will not be able to raise the rent. It was suggested when the Fair Rents (Scotland) Bill was proposed to the previous Parliament that this would re-balance the power of the appeals process which currently acts a barrier to a tenant taking a case to appeal. Under the 2016 Act a tenant can appeal against a proposed increase of rent initiated by his or her landlord. In practice, rents are generally increased on appeal, which underlines that the proposals are unfounded and unwarranted. The process should be fair and equitable to all parties, and the current proposals could encourage speculative claims to delay any increase.

47. Do you agree with the proposal not to extend any national rent controls to the social rented sector?

No

Please provide your views:

Rent inflation is not exclusive to the PRS but the same underlying cause is evident - supply shortages, coupled with high demand, are pushing up social rents for Registered Social Landlords. The most recent data available from the Scottish Housing Regulator shows that average RSL rents rose by 2.7% in 2020-21. By contrast the most recent Scottish Government statistics show that at a Scotland level there were estimated increases in average rents for 1 bedroom (0.6%), 2 bedroom (0.6%) and 4 bedroom (1.2%) properties, with average rents for 3 bedroom properties showing no change (0.0%), and rents for 1 bedroom shared properties falling by 0.4%. Regional trends combine to show an estimated 0.6% annual increase in average 2-bedroom monthly rents at a Scotland level. The most common type of property in the private rented sector is a 2-bedroom property, with nearly half (49 per cent) of all private rented properties in Scotland estimated to be this size.

48. Do you think the current safeguards for rent setting in the social rented sector are sufficient and, if not, how could they be strengthened? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

49. Are there elements of the existing Rent Pressure Zone system that could be built upon when designing a new system of rent controls? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

Our members are firmly of the view that the existing Rent Pressure Zone system should form the basis of any new regime for rent management, albeit based on proper rental data as discussed earlier.

We firmly agree with and appreciate the statement in the consultation on the draft strategy 'Recognising the significant change represented by these proposals, this consultation is seeking to explore a wide range of interconnected policies and issues, enabling us to gather input and views from a wide range of stakeholders - including tenants and landlords as well as investors in the sector - so that we can identify the best actions, whilst also working to mitigate the challenges that will co-exist.'

It should also be borne in mind that if rents are increasing that does not mean that landlords are directly benefitting. For example, in this current inflationary environment where rents are increasing, BTR landlords' operational expenditure is also increasing significantly due to increase in staffing costs and ongoing maintenance. Therefore, investors could, in theory, be hit by a rent pressure zone restricting rental increases and spiralling operational costs, dramatically reducing the income generated. This will lead investors to either investing less in the building or selling the asset.

It is also important to consider the detrimental impact rent controls can have on a fair and functioning private rented market. Investors are broadly comfortable taking market risks, and the recent evidence in Scotland is that the concept of managed rental growth in exceptional markets is acceptable. The issue arises when markets are distorted by legislation that may look to set rents or to constrain reasonable and affordable rental growth. The risk then is that investors choose to avoid these markets in favour of others that offer a fairer balance of regulation.

There is a very real risk that investors will leave the sector and the impact of this is that opportunity presented by the emerging BTR in Scotland is lost, and that across the market there is (a) a reduction in investors and landlords, (b) a drop in the housing available for rent, and (c) a significant drop in investment into the remaining rental stock. This misses a real opportunity to achieve more efficient homes and better standards in general. Each of these consequences has a direct and detrimental impact on tenants and does nothing to improve the sector.

We have learned in recent years that investors in Scotland recognise that well considered rental management can be a benefit to investors and residents and that through a collaborative approach, we can create a system that achieves our common goals and is detrimental to neither the investor nor the resident. While the application of the RPZ system may not have worked as hoped, the mechanics behind it are of sound basis and should not be discarded. When there is a system in Scotland that could be reasonably adapted to work, it would be dangerous to consider alternative models from elsewhere applied to markets with different cultural characteristics and with questionable degrees of success.

Our members are firmly of the view that the regulation of the PRS sector should be fair and equitable and should support the interests of tenants and responsible landlords in a balanced way. We have been consistent in our assertion that a lack of data is a substantial issue. Our members are firmly of the view that the designation of an RPZ or the introduction of further regulation on rents should be driven solely by a robust and transparent statistical evidence base and an understanding of the impact the use of such regulatory interventions will have on the wider market.

The Scottish Government has set the standard for creating a fairer, more transparent private rented sector and we know from colleagues in the British Property Federation that the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016 is being closely reviewed as a template for reform in England. We understand that the Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs) mechanism within this is seen as a workable form of rent regulation, and a fair and manageable

compromise between investor and occupier concerns.

After five years we are yet to see a local authority in Scotland making use of this instrument and, without a workable solution, there remains the risk that the wider aspects of the current legislation is undermined. A perpetual programme of government intervention neither creates sustainable legislation nor supports institutional investment into the sector.

The key to supporting the implementation of the RPZs policy lies in the collation of information on actual passing (paid) rent in the sector, both at the initiation of new tenancies and at in-tenancy rental uplifts. This data would support the RPZ instrument and would provide a solid and irrefutable evidence base to inform any need for reformed legislation, thus creating sustainable, evidence-based legislation and certainty to the market on government intentions.

As previously stated, SPF members are keen to work with the Scottish Government to explore options for the most appropriate and manageable way to create such a database that collects the most accurate information aligned with Government policy. We understand that Rent Service Scotland already has such a framework in place and perhaps its remit could be expanded.

50. Do you agree with the vision and principles set out in the strategy in relation to a future model of rent controls for the private rented sector in Scotland? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

Please see our response to question 49.

The only stable long-term solution to control rent levels is to introduce measures to incentivise and facilitate increases in the supply of properties in the marketplace. Trying to control rents further by regulation is likely to lead to a deterioration in property quality, a fall in investment in the sector, a culture of more frequent mid tenancy rent increases, increases in starting rents (if controls affect mid tenancy increases) and a loss of tenant mobility. It could also lead to vast numbers of small investors leaving the sector further reducing the number of tenancies available. These consequences go against the Scottish Government's strategic aims of enabling growth and investment in the PRS, as the economy begins to recover from Covid-19 and meeting the needs of the people living in the sector, consumers seeking accommodation, and landlords committed to continuous improvement.

Supply of rented homes

51. How do we ensure that we are achieving the right balance between building new properties and acquiring existing properties through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme?

Please provide your views:

52. Where has the acquisition of existing stock for the Affordable Housing Supply programme worked well? Are there other opportunities to engage with owners/landlords to allow first refusal to those delivering the Affordable Housing Supply Programme?

Please provide your views:

53. Beyond the routes already available to deliver Mid Market Rent homes how could new, additional investment in this be supported?

Please provide your views:

New investment in affordable housing can be supported by clearly setting a policy framework for BTR investors to own and manage a form of discounted market rent. The scale of discount and number of homes can be agreed with the local authority to meet the needs of that particular area whilst also balancing viability.

Some of our members have suggested that it would also be helpful if there was an understanding across the public sector procurement process of limitations in the viability of design led affordable housing.

54. What measures can we put in place to help encourage Build-to-Rent developments in Scotland?

Please provide your views:

The Scottish Government has an opportunity to stabilise the legal and regulatory environment, and positively differentiate Scotland from the rest of the UK, by providing favourable conditions for investment in the sector, whether in relation to planning, building standards, land supply or financial incentives.

As stated above our members are firmly of the view that the regulation of the PRS sector should be fair and equitable and should support the interests of tenants and responsible landlords in a balanced way. We agree that a lack of data is a substantial issue. Our members are also firmly of the view that the designation of an RPZ or the introduction of further regulation on rents should be driven solely by a robust (and transparent) statistical evidence base and an understanding of the impact the use of such regulatory interventions will have on the wider market.

As also stated above we have learned in recent years that investors in Scotland recognise that well considered rental management can be a benefit to investors and residents and that through a collaborative approach, we can therefore create a system that achieves our common goals and is detrimental to neither the investor nor the resident. While the application of the RPZ system may not have worked as hoped, the mechanics behind it are of sound basis and should not be discarded. When there is a system in Scotland that could be reasonably adapted to work, it would be dangerous to consider alternative models from elsewhere applied to markets with different cultural characteristics and with questionable degrees of success.

The Scottish Government can encourage BTR developments in Scotland by requiring Local Authorities to identify the housing need for rental homes and setting targets for local authorities to deliver through the planning system. This would send a clear message to the sector that local authorities want to see build to rent development in their constituencies. Removing the need to license BTR apartments as HMOs could also help. There is no benefit to local authorities or the investor by having to designate apartments as HMOs, as the BTR developments are already meeting building regulations and appropriate for multiple occupation.

There is much that the traditional PRS sector could learn from the BTR sector. There is one complete BTR development in Scotland at Forbes Place in Aberdeen which provides 292 homes. The development has had very positive feedback from its many residents. We think it is a good example of how purpose built, professionally managed, and institutionally owned PRS can contribute to the housing mix. We are strongly of the view that measures introduced to protect tenants from unprofessional or unscrupulous landlords should not accidentally target schemes like Forbes Place. It is worth noting that the development at Forbes Place is owned and funded by the British Coal Pension Funds, typical of much of the long-term patient capital invested into this sector.

We firmly agree with and appreciate the statement in the consultation: 'Recognising the significant change represented by these proposals, this consultation is seeking to explore a wide range of interconnected policies and issues, enabling us to gather input and views from a wide range of stakeholders - including tenants and landlords as well as investors in the sector - so that we can identify the best actions, whilst also working to mitigate the challenges that will co-exist.'

The voice of those that provide the homes for the sector must be considered as well as the tenants. There is a real risk that landlords will leave the sector and potential investors reluctant to proceed. The consultation states that the Government is aiming to grow the BTR sector (to have more secure, stable tenancies). Our members are concerned that the implementation of legislation that is not fair and equitable, or based on a sound evidence base, will effectively reduce the number of tenancies available and place unacceptable risk for existing and prospective investors, as well as a decrease in asset value. It is not just regulatory reform that is increasing pressure on landlords, but tax, administration, licencing, and costs.

55. Is the current approach to social rented sector housing allocations achieving the right balance between supporting existing social tenants and those who are seeking a home within the social sector?

Please provide your views:

56. What more can be done to support people with protected characteristics trying to access social rented homes?

Please provide your views:

Raising standards

57. What is the best way to ensure that landlords undertake essential repairs in a timely fashion?

Please provide your views:

Institutional landlords have Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with their professional managing agents, including repairs and maintenance requests action times. It is in their interest to maintain their properties to maintain the asset value, tenant satisfaction and ultimately their reputation. There are different SLA periods for different work with different levels of urgency. Cognisance is taken of the current repairing standards.

58. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the current housing registration systems and what could be improved to help drive up standards of management?

Please provide your views:

It is important that landlord registration is properly supported and administered. Unfortunately, we do not believe that it has been so to date. There needs to be a positive working relationship with landlords and managing agents if registration is to work effectively and this will require proper resourcing.

59. What are the key challenges for landlords in meeting all the housing standard requirements and timescales and what support could be put in place to help landlords overcome barriers?

Please provide your views:

Increasing the energy efficiency and warmth and lowering the carbon emissions requires integrated masterplans at a local authority or government level. This cannot be done at a building level; it requires a local authority or government masterplan level of implementation to achieve this successfully.

A re-activated and modern infrastructure is fundamental to a modern Scotland. Large scale national planning is welcomed to achieve this. Forming attractive new homes with low carbon energy, access to fibre and electric vehicle infrastructure needs to be led by utility authorities as part of an enabling process to help developers and investors provide these attractive new homes. Such infrastructure is also important in reducing the adverse impacts of poor air quality by removing reliance on fossil fuels and combustion engine vehicles. An improved network can also help public transport develop, leading to a reduction in road network scales, reduced external noise and improved air quality.

The automated energy improvement measures recommended by the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) must be improved. The measures can be misleading and direct landlords to install energy efficiency measures that will provide poor return/ investment for both the landlord and the tenant. Examples of this include installing renewable systems ahead of proposing fabric first enhancements.

For properties that use electric heaters, SAP recommendation is to install wet central heating with gas boilers (where mains gas is available). This goes against recent policy proposals to move away from natural gas heating, both in terms of local air quality and national carbon emission targets (i.e., all electric buildings with a cleaner national grid).

Our members have also repeatedly called for the enhancement of the methodologies used to produce EPC ratings and prescribe solutions. We have noted that EPC ratings for both domestic and non-domestic buildings are often inaccurate, and do not always account for changes in technology. We would like to see greater emphasis on ensuring that EPC methodology is improved. It is also vital that the Scottish Government gives local authorities additional resources to support landlords and other property owners, as local authorities have a vital role in the enforcement of regulations.

60. What is your personal experience in securing necessary adaptations for disability - either for yourself, or for your tenants - in rented accommodation?

Please provide your views:

The modern purpose-built rented accommodation delivered by our members will meet modern building standards. For members engaged in renting older PRS stock the key challenges they have will be in loss of rental income where properties are required to be vacant between lettings for the purpose of adaptations; or of access to rented properties occupied by their tenants.

Please provide your views:

Please provide your views:

61. Do you consider the vision and principles for the private rented sector Regulator to be the right ones? Are there any additional principles that you think are important? Please explain your answer.

Please provide your views:

The Regulator must be seen as an impartial and balanced official who will understand the issues of the PRS from both a tenant and landlord's perspective. This must include an appreciation that a landlord may have responsibility for many tenants in properties and that it is not always a binary landlord/tenant issue that needs to be considered. The regulator must also have access to up to date and holistic evidence sources for rent and other issues such as repairs or tenant satisfaction.

About you

What is your name?

Name:

Mandy Catterall

What is your email address?

Email:

mcatterall@bpf.org.uk

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Scottish Property Federation

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response with name

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.

I consent

Evaluation

Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Very dissatisfied

Please enter comments here.:

Our members are firmly of the view that the regulation of the PRS sector should be fair and equitable and should support the interests of tenants and responsible landlords in a balanced way. We are concerned that this consultation is based on a number of assumptions which are not backed by the evidence and there is little opportunity to highlight this. The consultation also does not consider the interests of institutional landlords that are looking to build and invest in good quality rental communities and who at times need to balance the needs of that community against the interest of one tenant.

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:

Very dissatisfied

Please enter comments here.:

Please see our comments above.