

PARTICK UNITED RESIDENTS GROUP

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Part 1: Right to Buy

This part of the Bill places abolishes the right to buy by making certain repeals. The commencement of the main section on repeals is prohibited for at least 3 years. The Bill will also make some amendments which it is intended will apply before the repeals are commenced.

Q1. *What are your views on the provisions which abolish the right to buy for social housing tenants?*

The Right to Buy should be abolished due to the ever increasing pressure on social housing stock

Q2. *Do you have any views on the proposed 3 year timetable before these provisions come into force?*

Too long. 18 months would be enough

Part 2: Social Housing

This part makes provisions which relate to social housing. The rules and procedures around the allocation of social housing will be adjusted as will the operation of short Scottish secure tenancies and Scottish secure tenancies.

Q3. *In your view, will the provisions which are proposed to increase the flexibility that landlords have when allocating housing, allow them to make best use of social housing?*

Yes, RSL's require more flexibility

Q4. *Will the proposals which will adjust the operation of short Scottish secure tenancies and Scottish secure tenancies provide landlords with tools that will assist them in tackling antisocial behaviour in an appropriate and proportionate manner?*

Reservations about short Scottish Secure tenancies:

- People may behave impeccably for 6 months then revert to type
- Other tenants may feel insecure due to uncertainty of tenancy

Q5. *Will this part of the Bill meet the Scottish Government's objective of providing further protection for tenants, particularly tenants with short SSTs, by strengthening their rights?*

Right to appeal does strengthen tenants rights to a degree, but not convinced. This requires further consultation

Part 3: Private Rented Housing

This part provides for the transfer of the sheriff's existing jurisdiction to deal with matters relating to private rented housing to the First-tier Tribunal (which is to be created under the Tribunals Bill, currently before the Parliament). In particular it transfers all non-criminal actions relating to regulated tenancies and some actions relating to the repairing standard, the right to adapt houses and landlord registration. Ministers are given a power to transfer certain actions relating to houses in multiple occupation. Part 3 also contains some further adjustments to private rented housing legislation, making changes to the landlord registration system and creating some third party rights in relation to enforcing the repairing standard.

Q6. *Do you have any comments on the proposals for transferring certain private rented sector cases from the sheriff courts to the new First-tier Tribunal?*

Situations can be resolved quickly which will help minimize stress to tenants

Q7. *Do you have any views on the adjustments to private rented housing legislation, which are intended to enhance local authorities' discretionary powers to tackle poor conditions in the private rented sector?*

Any legislation which helps improve and maintain the fabric of buildings and living conditions for tenants must be good

Q8. *Do you have any comments on the Scottish Government's intention to bring forward provisions at Stage 2 to provide additional discretionary powers for local authorities to target enforcement action at an area characterised by poor conditions in the private rented sector?*

Enforcement action, if carried out, will have a significant impact on private rented housing issues, however, will LA's have the resources to implement such actions?

Part 4: Letting Agents

This part establishes a registration system for letting agents. As well as setting up a register, it sets out various offences, provides for the publication of a code of conduct and gives the First-tier Tribunal the power to issue letting agent enforcement orders in relation to breaches of that code. It also confers on Ministers a power to transfer the

existing jurisdiction of the sheriff in relation to disputes between letting agents and landlords or tenants.

Q9. *Do you have any comments on the proposal to create a mandatory register of letting agents in Scotland, and the introduction of statutory provisions regarding letting agents' practice?*

Essential to have a code of conduct – this will give a reference point to both sides

Q10. *Do you have any views on the proposed mechanism for resolving disputes between letting agents and their customers (landlords and tenants)?*

Tribunal process should help resolve disputes fairly

Part 5: Mobile Home Sites with Permanent Residents

This part creates a new licensing regime for mobile home sites with permanent residents. It inserts a new Part 1A into the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960.

Q11. *Do you have any views on the proposed new licensing scheme?*

No

Q13. *What implications might this new scheme have for both mobile home site operators and permanent residents of sites?*

N/A

Part 6: Private Housing Conditions

This part includes a number of adjustments to the law as it relates to private housing including conferring on local authorities a power to pay a share of costs arising from the tenement management scheme under the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004 and modifying provisions relating to work notices, maintenance notices and maintenance orders under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

Q13. *Do you have any comments on the various provisions which relate to local authority enforcement powers for tackling poor maintenance, safety and security work, particularly in tenemental properties?*

These enforcement powers are vital to the upkeep and continued maintenance of tenemental property

Part 7: Miscellaneous

This part contains some miscellaneous housing provisions, including a power to exempt certain securities from the right to redeem after 20 years contained in section 11 of the Land Tenure Reform (Scotland) Act 1974, the conferral of a power to delegate on the president of the private rented housing panel and homeowner housing panel, a modification of the Scottish Housing Regulator's powers and a repeal of certain enactments relating to defective designation.

Q14. *Do you have any comments relation to the range of miscellaneous housing provisions set out in this part of the Bill?*

None

Other Issues

Q15. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Bill's policy objectives or specific provisions?

None

Q16. Are there any other issues that the Scottish Government consulted on that you think should be in the Bill?

None

Partrick United Residents Group

21.02.14