

Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Bill

Written submission to the Infrastructure and Capital investment Committee

James Clark-Dick

As a private landlord I would ask you to consider some points regarding the Private Housing Bill currently under discussion.

Firstly let me advise you that my wife and myself have only 3 flats and we take our responsibilities seriously. We only let out our properties in a condition which we would wish to live in them ourselves.

There appears to be a general feeling that landlords are greedy and rent out unsafe or disgusting properties. Legislation has been changed in recent years to give the tenants more protection whilst seriously limiting private landlords. It has been our experience that many tenants are the problem and not the landlord.

Since we commenced letting out property some 13 years ago we have had 16 tenancies in total. Of the 16 tenancies, 8 of them left owing a total of some £3000 in unpaid rent. Of the 16 tenancies, 10 of them left owing unpaid accounts to utility companies, city council, etc. In 3 cases, the tenants had cost us over £4000 in malicious damage and theft of our furniture and other items. Landlords need to be able to evict rogue tenants quickly and easily. The existing and proposed periods for eviction are utterly ridiculous. As landlords we can receive no rent for weeks/months before we finally obtain a court order at our own expense to achieve eviction. We can also be threatened with Anti-Social Behaviour action due to the behaviour of the tenants despite our hands being tied by legislation preventing swift removal of the offending tenant(s).

If you are introducing an entirely new Tenancy Agreement then please ensure that Insurance companies providing Landlord's insurance are aware of such changes and that the new tenancy agreements are acceptable for landlord cover. Currently we have to have Short Assured Tenancy agreements for our landlord insurance cover.

Can you also please ensure that there is provision within new legislation for Tenancy Agreements whereby all landlords MUST contribute to communal repairs and other costs, fees and factoring? Landlords should also have to insure such communal property by law.

I trust you will find my points to be fair and have validity with regard to the proposed legislation.

James Clark-Dick
November 2015