



## **Cabinet Working Party Houses in Multiple Occupation**

***Renters Rights Act 2025***

**30<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

## 1. CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

- 1.1. The matters for consideration in this report contribute to the strategic objectives and priorities of the Council as detailed in Our plan for North East Lincolnshire: 2025 to 2028.
- 1.2. The new reforms contribute to the overarching priorities of delivering a Stronger Economy and Stronger Communities. The Council is clear that everyone should have the right to a safe place to call home, and we understand the vital link between good homes and good health.
- 1.3. The report also supports our vision to become a Marmot Place, building health and wellbeing into everyday life, through good work, safe homes, strong communities, and a healthy environment, so that every resident can live a longer, happier lifework.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Renters' Rights Bill (RRB) was introduced in the House of Commons on 11 September 2024, with aims to reform the private rented sector (PRS) in England by enhancing tenants' rights and protections. The Bill became law as the Renters' Rights Act 2025 after receiving Royal Assent on October 27, 2025.
- 2.2. The Renters Rights Act 2025 (RRA) aims to fundamentally transform the private renting experience in England, addressing longstanding issues within the sector. It seeks to target the insecurity, poor quality and unaffordability of housing in the sector and has been designed to provide renters with greater security and stability, enhancing their rights to reside in decent and safe homes without fear of sudden eviction.

## 3. RENTERS RIGHTS ACT 2025

- 3.1 The Act introduces a range of new measures into the private rented sector, as well as amending a raft of existing legislation such as the Housing Act 1988, Housing Act 2004 and Housing and Planning Act 2016. The Act is aimed mainly at England but extends to Wales and Scotland only in so far as it covers rental discrimination against children or benefits status. Local Authorities are the main enforcing authority, with changes to enforcement powers and expanded responsibilities.
- 3.2 Due to the nature and extent of the changes, the measures in the Act will be introduced in three phases.

Phase 1: Tenancy reforms (May 2026)

Phase 2: PRS Database & Ombudsman (Late 2026)

Phase 3: Standards upgrades (2035–2037)

3.3 **PHASE 1** - will be introduced in May 2026:

Subject and Overview	Act and Provisions	Responsibility to Enforce
<p><b>Abolition of section 21 'no reason / fault evictions' and grounds for possession.</b></p> <p>Landlords in the private rented sector will no longer be able to use section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to evict their tenants.</p> <p>Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988 contains the grounds for possession of homes let on assured tenancies. Section 3 of the RRA makes changes to this schedule such that landlords will have to give a reason or 'grounds' for possession. As such the Courts will no longer be able to order possession unless the new requirements are followed effectively banning s21 evictions.</p>	<p><b>Protection from Eviction Act 1977:</b> Unlawful eviction and harassment.</p> <p><b>Housing Act 1988:</b> Not providing a written statement of terms of the tenancy; Attempting to end the tenancy by service of a notice to quit; Attempting to end the tenancy orally or require that it is ended orally; Serving a possession notice that attempts to end the tenancy outside of the prescribed section 8 process; Relying on a ground where a person does not reasonably believe that the landlord will be able to obtain possession.</p>	Duty to Enforce -Local Housing Authority

<p><b>Introduce Assured Periodic Tenancies in the private rented sector (PRS)</b> the vast majority of new tenancies and existing tenancies in the PRS will become Assured Periodic Tenancies. This means tenants will be able to stay in their property for as long as they want, or until a landlord serves a valid section 8 notice. Tenants will be able to end their tenancy by giving two months' notice.</p>	<p>As above</p>	
<p><b>Offering for sale and reletting within the restricted 12-month period.</b> Tenants will benefit from greater protection during the 12-month period at the beginning of a tenancy, during which landlords cannot evict them to move in or sell the property.</p>	<p><b>Housing Act 1988:</b> Reletting or marketing a property within the 12 months no let period after using the moving or selling grounds section.</p>	<p>Duty to Enforce – Local Housing Authority</p>
<p><b>Reform possession grounds in the PRS so they are fair for both parties</b> – landlords will only be able to evict tenants when they have a valid reason. Possession grounds will be extended to make it easier for landlords to evict tenants who commit anti-social behaviour, or who are in serious persistent rent arrears</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Duty to Enforce – Local Housing Authority</p>
<p><b>Limit rent increases to once a year in the PRS</b> – There is already an existing statutory procedure for increasing rent under the Housing Act 1988 known as section 13. The Renters Rights Act 2025 makes some amendments to the detail of this. Landlords will have to follow the revised section 13 procedure and provide the tenant with a notice detailing the proposed rent increase at least two months before it is due to take effect.</p>	<p><b>Housing Act 1988:</b> Section 13(b) enables a tenant to challenge the validity/format of the notice, whilst Section 14 provides for a tenant to make an application to the Residential Property Tribunal to challenge the actual increase.</p>	<p>Tenant makes an application to the Residential Property Tribunal (RPT)</p>

<p><b>Ban rental bidding and rent in advance</b> – landlords and letting agents will not be able to ask for, encourage, or accept an offer that is higher than the advertised rent. Landlords and agents will also not be able to request more than one month's rent in advance.</p>	<p><b>Renters Rights Act 2025:</b> Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the advertised rate</p> <p><b>Housing Act 1988 :</b> Demanding rent in advance after a tenancy has been entered into.</p> <p><b>Tenant Fee's Act 2019 :</b> Demanding rent in advance before a tenancy has been entered into.</p>	<p>Duty to Enforce – Local Housing Authority</p> <p>Local Housing Authority</p> <p>Trading Standards</p>
<p><b>Makes it illegal to discriminate against renters who have children or receive benefits</b> – landlords and letting agents will not be able to do anything to make a tenant less likely to rent a property (or prevent them from renting it) because they have children or receive benefits. This includes withholding information about a property (including its availability), stopping someone from viewing it, or refusing to grant a tenancy.</p>	<p><b>Renters Rights Act 2025:</b> Discrimination against those on benefits or with children in the lettings process.</p> <p>Only a civil standard of proof i.e. on the balance of probabilities is required. This is aligned with similar legislation, such as the wider anti-discrimination provisions of the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>Duty to Enforce – Local Housing Authority</p>
<p><b>Require landlords in the PRS to consider tenant requests to rent with a pet</b> – landlords will have an initial 28 days to consider their tenant's request, and they will have to provide valid reasons if they refuse it</p>	<p><b>Housing Act 1988:</b> Prohibiting the keeping of a pet section</p> <p>Section 11 of the Renters Rights Act 2025 inserts a provision into the Housing Act 1988 that it is an implied term of every tenancy that a tenant may keep a pet if the tenant asks to do so and the landlord consents. Such consent cannot be reasonably refused by the landlord.</p>	<p>Civil action by the tenant to secure performance of the obligation. A landlord may subsequently threaten eviction, but this would be illegal and dealt with under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 described above in 'Abolition of s21 no fault evictions'.</p>

<p><b>Strengthen both local council enforcement and rent repayment orders - civil</b></p> <p>penalties will be expanded, and there will be a new requirement for local councils to report on enforcement activity. Rent repayment orders (RRO's) will be extended to superior landlords (the original property freeholder or someone with a leasehold interest above the immediate landlord, i.e land and building owner). The maximum penalty will be doubled, and repeat offenders required to pay the maximum amount.</p>	<p><b>Housing &amp; Planning Act 2016:</b> Lists offences for which a RRO can be made.</p> <p>A rent repayment order is an order from a tribunal to a landlord to pay back a portion of the rent paid by a tenant. A landlord must have committed at least one of a specific list of offences.</p> <p>The Renters Rights Act 2025 strengthens RRO's, making them easier and more appealing for tenants and local councils to pursue.</p>	<p>Application to an RPT in most cases by a tenant but a local authority can also make an application to recover benefit payments.</p>
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- 3.4. The abolition of section 21 and tenancy reforms during Phase 1 will not apply initially to the social rented sector. This will happen during Phase 2, and government are working with social housing landlords and the Regulator of Social Housing on implementation for the social rented sector.
- 3.5. **PHASE 2** - will see the introduction of the PRS Database and PRS Landlord Ombudsman. This will be introduced in two key stages, with the roll out of the Database in stage 1 from late 2026. Signing up to the PRS Database will be mandatory for all PRS landlords and they will be required to pay an annual fee which will be confirmed closer to launch.
- 3.6. Regulations will mandate landlord registration on the database, payment of a fee and the provision of key information by landlords. This is expected to include landlord contact details, property details and safety information, including gas, electrical and energy performance certificates. Stage 2 extends the database roll out to enable public access and data sharing.
- 3.7. A PRS Landlord Ombudsman will be introduced during Phase 2. The Ombudsman will provide a redress service for private rented sector tenants when things go wrong. It will also support landlords with tools, guidance and training on handling complaints from tenants early.
- 3.8. The Ombudsman scheme will be mandatory for PRS landlords. Landlords will be required to fund the service through a fair and proportionate charging model confirmed closer to launch.
- 3.9. The Landlord Ombudsman Service will be developed in stages but it is anticipated that this will be ready and rolled out in 2028.
- 3.10. **PHASE 3** – Includes a proposal to introduce a Decent Homes Standard (DHS) to the PRS. This will ensure that all PRS properties meet a minimum

standard of housing quality and provide local councils with powers to take enforcement action if PRS properties fail to meet it.

- 3.11. Government consulted on the updated DHS between 2 July and 12 September 2025 and propose that it is brought into force in either 2035 or 2037.
- 3.12. As part of the pathway to applying the Decent Homes Standard to the PRS, government will also implement the review of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The HHSRS was introduced in the Housing Act 2004 and is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings.
- 3.13. Government also proposes to extend Awaab's Law to the PRS, setting clear legally enforceable timeframes within which PRS landlords must make homes safe where they contain serious hazards. This will empower tenants to challenge dangerous conditions in their homes. Consultation on the details of this policy, including implementation timescales, is expected in due course.

## **4 PREPARING FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1. The Act places an increased responsibility on local authorities as the main enforcing authority for the new provisions. We need to ensure that we have the necessary capacity and capability for these new requirements.
- 4.2. Local housing authorities have received a share of £18.2 million in 2025/26 to support preparations for the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and to build enforcement capacity. Funding was allocated based on the number of private rented sector properties in each local area.
- 4.3. Government will confirm a further new burdens funding allocation for 2026/27 ahead of Phase 1 implementation.
- 4.4. Officers are attending bespoke training sessions, meetings and webinars through Operation Jigsaw, which is a cross local council initiative. Details of further funded training sessions will be released in the new year.

## **5 GUIDANCE**

- 5.1. Guidance for Enforcement Officers has been released. We need to review our policies, procedures and authorisations to ensure that they align to the new requirements.
- 5.2. Guidance for landlords was released in November 2025. The guidance will help landlords understand what the new rules mean for them and explain what they need to do to comply with the legislation once the measures are in force on 1 May 2026.

- 5.3. Guidance for tenants on phase 1 reforms is anticipated in April 2026. The guidance will help tenants to understand what has changed and support them to hold their landlord to account if things go wrong.
- 5.4. MHCLG has also increased existing funding for Shelter's Expert Housing Advice Line, which provides one-to-one advice by phone for professionals and volunteers who help clients with housing cases.

## 6 THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- 6.1. Courts and tribunals have an essential role in giving tenants and landlords swift access to justice if needed. The justice system will be supported with funding to ensure that the courts and tribunals have the resources and capacity they need to handle the additional workload these reforms will generate. This includes further funding for a new digital end-to-end possession service in the county courts.
- 6.2. The First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) is being prepared for the reforms, and will ensure sufficient capacity is available to meet extra demand. The Ministry of Justice is currently assessing the introduction of fees in line with practice across courts and tribunals.
- 6.3. In the longer term, the government intends to establish an alternative body or mechanism to the First-tier Tribunal to make initial rent determinations, subject to a final viability assessment. This will help support the Tribunal's capacity.

## 7 NEXT STEPS

- 7.1. The Environmental Health and Housing Team have been preparing for the proposed changes but have more to do as the guidance and legislative detail become available. A summary of the next steps and timescales is set out below.
  - Engage with services across the authority to understand the impact of the changes and the resource implications. To commence in January 2026, with fortnightly preparedness meetings until implementation.
  - Establish responsibilities across the organisation.
  - Review existing policies and procedures to ensure they align with the new requirements. This will commence in February 2026.
  - Review officer authorisations. The officer scheme of delegations has been updated to reflect changes to primary legislation, but we are still waiting on secondary legislation for some provisions within the Act.
  - Continued attendance and engagement at regional meetings in relation to Renters Rights Act 2005. This is ongoing.

- Officer training – ongoing.
- Website updates to ensure it includes clear information and advice on the new reforms. Will commence in January 2026 and will be regularly reviewed once further national information and guidance is released.

## **8 CONTACT OFFICERS**

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