



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Policy paper

Implementing the Renters' Rights Act 2025: Our roadmap for reforming the Private Rented Sector

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Applies to England

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Ministerial foreword

In our manifesto, we promised to overhaul the regulation of our country's insecure and unjust private rented sector (PRS). The Renters' Rights Act delivers on that commitment.

The Act will empower renters by providing them with greater security, rights and protections so that they can stay in their homes for longer, build lives in their communities, and avoid the risk of homelessness. It will ensure that we can drive up the quality of privately rented housing so that renters have access to good-quality and safe homes as a matter of course. And it will allow us to crack down on the minority of unscrupulous landlords who exploit, mistreat or discriminate against renters.

The Act will also provide tangible benefits for responsible landlords who provide high-quality homes and a good service to their tenants. Not only will it improve the reputation of the sector as a whole, but it will also ensure that good landlords enjoy simpler regulation, and clear and expanded possession grounds, so that they can regain their properties quickly when necessary.

We now need to 'switch on' the various measures contained in the Act.

This roadmap provides an overview of our implementation plans for the coming years. It includes detail on how we will phase our reforms and when they will come into force.

The move to a new system of periodic tenancies is at the heart of the Act. Once switched on, it will mean the end of fixed-term tenancies and the long-overdue abolition of section 21 'no-fault' evictions.

In the first phase of our reforms, we will implement the new tenancy regime. This will apply to both new and existing tenancies and will come into force on 1 May 2026.

This time period will provide sufficient time for landlords and letting agents to prepare effectively and for the necessary implementing regulations to be made. We will support all stakeholders through detailed guidance and communications.

The Act's remaining provisions will be brought into force in two further phases.

In the second phase from late 2026, we will introduce our innovative Database of PRS properties to bring together key information for landlords, tenants, and councils. The Database content will inform tenant choices when entering new tenancies; will help landlords understand their

obligations and demonstrate compliance; and will support councils in targeting enforcement.

In this phase we will establish a Landlord Ombudsman for the PRS to improve dispute resolution, settling issues between tenants and landlords without costly court proceedings.

Phase three will focus on raising standards through the extension of Awaab's Law and a modernised Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector. The timescales for implementing these changes will be subject to consultation.

These reforms are part of our Plan for Change to renew Britain.

I look forward to working with you to ensure a smooth implementation of this transformative Act.

Matthew Pennycook
Minister of State for Housing and Planning

Section 1: Introduction

1. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 has now completed its passage through Parliament and received Royal Assent. This is a huge moment for all those who have waited for change. We can now tackle the insecurity, poor standards and affordability issues that are evident in some parts of the sector.

2. A programme as ambitious as this means a big adjustment for those living and working in the sector. Throughout the development of the Act, we have consulted extensively with tenants, landlords, letting agents, and local councils to understand their concerns and needs.

3. The sector will need time to prepare for changes before the law becomes operational. By providing advance notice of the Act's first significant phase of implementation, we have balanced the urgent need for reform, with giving the sector time to prepare for the changes.

4. Landlords and letting agents will be required to understand what the reforms mean for their business practices, and to adapt them accordingly. Local councils will need to understand and prepare for changes to enforcement powers and their expanded responsibilities. Others who support the sector, including advice service providers, and our courts and tribunals, will need time to get ready.

5. We will give those affected by the reforms sufficient time to familiarise themselves with the new duties and expectations and embed change within their organisations. This roadmap supports these preparations.

6. Successful implementation goes beyond merely introducing the reforms. We need everybody to understand their new responsibilities and feel able to exercise their new rights. This roadmap explains how we are supporting the sector with guidance, communication and funding, as well as preparing services like the courts and tribunals.

7. The government appreciates the constructive way the sector has worked with us so far. We look forward to continuing this partnership as we move into making change happen.

8. You may wish to start by familiarising yourself with the table in Annex A: Milestones to see the shape of our plans at a glance.

Section 2: Taking a phased approach

9. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 contains big changes, affecting different parts of housing law. It is urgent that we reform this broken system, but we also need to allow time for tenants, landlords, letting agents, and local councils to be ready for the changes so that they work well on the ground from day one.

10. We will therefore introduce the measures in the Act in 3 phases.

Phase 1: From 1 May 2026

11. In Phase 1 we will:

a. **abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions** – landlords in the PRS will no longer be able to use section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to evict their tenants.

b. **introduce Assured Periodic Tenancies in the private rented sector (PRS)** – 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.

c. reform possession grounds in the PRS so they are fair for both parties – 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.

d. limit rent increases to once a year in the PRS – landlords will have to follow the revised section 13 procedure and provide the tenant with a notice detailing the proposed rent increase at least 2 months before it is due to take effect.

e. ban rental bidding and rent in advance – 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 1 month's rent in advance.

f. make it illegal to discriminate against renters who have children or receive benefits – 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.

g. require landlords in the PRS to consider tenant requests to rent with a pet – 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.

h. strengthen both local council enforcement and rent repayment orders - civil penalties will be expanded, and there will be a new requirement for local councils to report on enforcement activity. Rent repayment orders will be extended to superior landlords, the maximum penalty will be doubled, and repeat offenders required to pay the maximum amount.

These measures will all take effect on **1 May 2026**.

12. New investigatory powers giving local councils a stronger ability to inspect properties, demand documents, and access third-party data to crack down on rogue landlords and enforce housing standards more effectively will come into effect on 27 December 2025.

13. **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 we are working with social housing landlords and the Regulator of Social Housing on implementation for the social rented sector.

Phase 2: From late 2026

14. During Phase 2 we will introduce the PRS Database and PRS Landlord Ombudsman. We will do this in 2 key stages, beginning from late 2026:

Stage 1: Regional rollout of the database for landlords and local councils

15. We will commence roll out of the Database 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.

16. Regulations will mandate landlord registration, payment of a fee and the provision of key information by landlords. Subject to the will of Parliament, we expect this to include at minimum, for each PRS property:

- The **landlord's contact details**. This will include capturing relevant information from all joint landlords.
- The **property details including** the full address, type of property (flat/house), number of bedrooms, number of households/residents and confirming whether the property is occupied and furnished, etc.
- **Safety information – Gas, Electric and Energy Performance Certificates** – so tenants are assured about the safety and energy efficiency of the property.

Stage 2: Further roll out of the database and introduction of the Ombudsman

17. Public access and data sharing will be enabled following the launch of landlord registration.

18. **We will also establish the PRS Landlord Ombudsman 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. 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.

19. Implementation of the Ombudsman will happen after the introduction of the Database, and we continue to explore ways to share information between the Database and the Ombudsman to minimise landlord sign-up burden.

20. The development of the Ombudsman will happen in stages:

- **Stage 1** will happen at least 12 to 18 months before implementation. The Secretary of State will choose a scheme administrator to run the new service, which will then need time to scale up.
- **Stage 2** will require landlords to be members of the new service – we expect this to be in 2028, when the Secretary of State is confident the service is ready for delivery. We will make sure landlords are given sufficient notice in advance of requiring them to be members of the scheme.

Phase 3: A new Decent Homes Standard in the PRS (dates settled following consultation)

21. We will introduce a Decent Homes Standard (DHS) to the PRS for the first time. 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. We consulted on the updated DHS between 2 July and 12 September 2025, and proposed that it is brought into force in either 2035 or 2037.

22. **We are currently considering consultation responses and will announce details of the standards and confirm the implementation timeline as soon as possible.** While we are proposing a long-term deadline, our expectation is that landlords should commence works earlier wherever feasible, remaining mindful of the effect on tenants.

23. Government has consulted on plans to require all domestic privately rented properties in England and Wales to meet **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) of EPC C or equivalent by 2030** unless a valid exemption is in place.

Further details will be set out in the government's response to the consultation.

24. As part of the pathway to applying the Decent Homes Standard to the PRS, we will implement the review **of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)**.

25. **We will 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. We will consult on the details of this policy, including implementation timescales, in due course.

Secondary legislation

26. While many of the changes to the PRS are contained in the Act itself, the government will need to make secondary legislation (in the form of regulations) to add further detail to some provisions and to bring the Act's measures into force.

27. For example, the government will need to make commencement regulations to implement the abolition of section 21 'no fault' evictions and the introduction of Assured Periodic Tenancies for new and existing tenancies which will come into effect on 1 May 2026.

28. We will also need to make further regulations to support the full implementation of Phase 1 in Spring 2026. These will include more substantive regulations which will, for example, exempt private Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) from the assured tenancy regime. Where we can, we will publish information ahead of the statutory instruments, for example on the specific information about the tenancy that landlords will need to give tenants in writing.

29. Full details of our planned programme of statutory instruments can be found in Annex B, including for later stages of implementation of the Act's provisions.

Tenancy agreements

New tenancies in the PRS created on or after 1 May 2026

- Landlords will need to provide certain information about the tenancy to their tenants in writing. This could be through a written tenancy agreement. The detail of what information landlords must provide will be set out in secondary legislation.
- This will be published in time for landlords to prepare their new tenancy agreement templates ahead of the new changes coming into effect.
- We will publish a draft in January 2026, so landlords can begin preparing.

Rules for tenancies created before 1 May 2026

- If an existing tenancy in the PRS already has a written tenancy agreement, then landlords won't need to change it or issue a new one.

- Instead, landlords with existing tenancies will need to provide tenants with a copy of the government published 'Information Sheet' on or before 31 May 2026. This document will inform tenants about the changes made by the Act.
- We will publish this online in March 2026, before the reforms come into effect on 1 May 2026.
- However, if a landlord has agreed an existing tenancy verbally with a tenant, they'll need to provide a written summary of the main terms. Again, a landlord will need to do this **on or before 31 May 2026**.

Section 3: Preparing for implementation

30. In this section we set out how we will support the sector to get ready for change. Guidance, communications and advice mean people know what they need to do. Strong enforcement and a well prepared, modern justice system mean rights can be made tangible. We also set out how we will monitor and evaluate the impact of the reforms.

Guidance

31. Stakeholders need clear guidance to help them understand how the new laws will work. We will publish guidance to support our implementation programme. We have worked with stakeholders, content designers, and user researchers to make sure the guidance is accessible and contains all the information people need.

Guidance for landlords and letting agents

- Landlords and agents will need time to prepare their businesses for these changes. We will publish guidance for landlords covering Phase 1 reforms 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.

Guidance for tenants

- Tenants will need to know about the changes when the reforms are brought into force and at the point when they are looking for a new home or signing a tenancy agreement. We will publish guidance for tenants on Phase 1 reforms 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. We will also publish Easy Read versions of our guidance to make sure everyone understands their new rights and responsibilities.

Communications

32. Our communications campaign will target both landlords and tenants to make sure they are aware of our reforms. We will use a multi-platform advertising campaign, partnership marketing, and social media to encourage landlords to engage with our guidance and understand what they need to do to be compliant with the legislation. We will launch our campaign for tenants in April 2026. This will help tenants understand how their rights are changing and what they need to do to exercise their new rights and responsibilities.

33. We will work with trusted voices in the sector, and other household names. This means that as well as getting our messages across widely, we will ensure our campaign meets the needs of harder-to-reach groups.

Advice

34. MHCLG has increased our 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. The government will continue to fund the Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service (HLPAS) which provides anyone at risk of losing their home with free legal advice, and representation in court.

35. To aid preparations and awareness raising of the reforms, we will continue to engage with housing advice organisations to understand on the ground challenges and tenant experiences.

Local enforcement

36. We are committed to ensuring those with a responsibility for effective enforcement have the necessary capacity and capability to uphold the new requirements. This includes making sure local councils are ready and resourced.

Guidance for local councils

- Local councils need time to prepare for the first phase of reforms given the critical enforcement role they will play. We have published enforcement guidance for local councils on GOV.UK. The guidance provides the critical information that enforcement officers will need to know in order to carry out their work in line with the new legislation.
- Local housing authorities will receive **£18.2 million in 2025/26** to support preparations for the implementation of the **Renters' Rights Act 2025** and to build enforcement capacity. Funding will be allocated based on the number of private rented sector properties in each local area.
- We expect to confirm a **further new burdens funding allocation for 2026/27** in early 2026, ahead of Phase 1 commencement.
- We are supporting councils through a bespoke programme of training, webinars and resources through 'Operation Jigsaw', a cross-local councils initiative.
- Shelter will deliver training on the PRS to local council officers, covering different aspects of the Act, funded by government.

The justice system

37. Courts and tribunals have an essential role in giving tenants and landlords swift access to justice if needed. We've worked closely with the Ministry of Justice and HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) throughout the development of the Bill.

The County Courts

- Most tenancies end amicably without the need for landlords to take possession action in the county court. Where court action is necessary, we are preparing carefully to ensure both tenants and landlords maintain swift access to justice.
- We are working closely with the Ministry of Justice and HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) to agree how these reforms are implemented. 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.

The Residential Property Tribunal

- The First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) is being prepared for our reforms, and we 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.

- 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.

- HMCTS are building a new digital end-to-end service for resolving all possession claims in the County Courts in England and Wales. The service will offer an online route for making and responding to possession claims, filing documents, and receiving updates and outcomes, offering improved user experience through guided journeys.
- This service will be rolled out in stages with a first release in 2026, building up to the full service which will be operational 18 months after the Act received Royal Assent. In the meantime, we will ensure that existing possession processes are updated to reflect the reforms in the Act and that sufficient capacity is in place for the courts to handle new possession cases until the introduction of this new digital service.
- We are also working to develop a new digital system in the Tribunal to make processes more efficient and assessing options for an alternative organisation to handle rent challenges in the future.

Monitoring and evaluation

38. With changes on this scale, we have to know if they are working and achieving our ambitions. We are committed to the robust evaluation of the impact of our reforms and have commissioned Verian to carry out the first phase of the evaluation project on behalf of the department. The evaluation will make use of a range of new and existing data including the results of the English Housing Survey, and data from trusted stakeholders including local councils.

39. New data will be collected through interviews, surveys and focus groups including with tenants, landlords and local councils. We will publish the findings from our evaluation at the two and five-year points after implementation.

Annex A: Milestones

Date	Audience	Milestone
27 October 2025	Tenants, landlords and local councils	Royal Assent for the Renters' Rights Act 2025
November 2025	Landlords	Landlord guidance for first phase of measures goes live
November 2025	Local councils	Enforcement guidance for local councils goes live
November 2025	Landlords	Communications campaign for landlords commences
27 December 2025	Local councils	New local council enforcement measures and investigatory powers (provided by the Act) for local councils go live
April 2026	Tenants	Communications campaign for tenants commences
April 2026	Tenants	Tenant guidance for first phase of measures goes live
1 May 2026	Tenants, landlords and local councils	Implementation of first phase of measures of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
From late 2026	Landlords and local councils	PRS Database and associated guidance goes live for local councils and landlords
2027	Tenants and landlords	Reforms apply to the Social Rented Sector
2028	Landlords	Mandatory sign-up for landlords to join the PRS Landlord Ombudsman
TBC – subject to consultation	Tenants and landlords	Implementation of Awaab's Law for the PRS
TBC – subject to consultation	Tenants, landlords and local councils	Implementation of Decent Homes Standard for the PRS

Annex B: Statutory instruments

Table of statutory instruments (SIs) required for the Renters' Rights Act 2025

To note, 'coming into force dates' are subject to finalisation and, where applicable, the approval of Parliament.

Title	Description	Coming into force date
Commencement SI No 1 (facilitation of investigatory and enforcement powers)	Brings all necessary elements of investigatory powers and provisions for statutory guidance on certain financial penalties in the Act into force.	27 December 2025
Commencement and transitional provisions for Phase 1: core tenancy reform and enforcement measures	Formally commences the relevant tenancy reform measures in the PRS (abolition of section 21, introduction of new/revised section 8 grounds, section 13 rent increases, etc.) and relevant transitional provisions, rental discrimination and rental bidding (including relevant financial penalties), the new enforcement duty on local councils and expanded rent repayment orders (including extension to superior landlords).	1 May 2026
Written Statement of Terms and Information Sheet	Rules setting out what information PRS landlords must give tenants in writing. PRS landlords with existing written tenancies will be required to provide an information sheet to tenants, detailing the key changes made by the Act.	1 May 2026

Title	Description	Coming into force date
Prescribed Forms	A new suite of prescribed forms will be introduced, in line with the commencement of the tenancy reforms in the PRS.	1 May 2026
Tenancy Reform Consequential Amendments	Makes consequential amendment to existing secondary legislation required as a result of bringing the tenancy reform provisions into force.	1 May 2026
Exempt Legal Professionals	Provides for the full range of legal representatives, including those from other jurisdictions, that are not caught by the new duties to be excluded from the definition of “relevant person”.	1 May 2026
Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) exemption	Exempts private PBSA that complies with UNIPOL and ANUK student housing codes approved under section 233 of the Housing Act 2004 from the assured tenancy system and ensures providers have access to an amended “Ground 4A” (the student possession ground) for existing tenancies.	1 May 2026
Financial Penalties	Increases maximum civil penalties for certain housing offences under the Housing Act 2004 and Housing and Planning Act 2016 from £30,000 to £40,000.	1 May 2026
Category 1 Hazards – Financial Penalties under Section 6A of the Housing Act 2004	Commencement of new financial penalties for Category 1 Hazards in private rented homes (preceded by publication of associated guidance) Spring/Summer	2026
PRS Landlord Ombudsman	Sets the conditions which must be met by a scheme to be approved or designated by the Secretary of State.	Phase 2 – 2026
	Requires landlords to sign up to a	Phase 2 – 2028

Title	Description	Coming into force date
	scheme, after it has scaled up and is ready to accept members.	
Database	Establishes the requirements for making and updating entries.	Phase 2 – from late 2026
	Enables data-sharing in specific circumstances and publication of certain data.	
	Mandates the recording of landlord banning order offences by local councils.	
Awaab's Law and Decent Homes Standard (DHS)	Sets the Awaab's Law requirements that must be met by landlords of privately rented homes.	Phase 3 – TBC
	Sets DHS requirements for privately rented homes.	



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