
Renters' Rights Act

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	9 March 2026
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Tom McCann
Date JMB agreed report:	23 February 2026
Report Author:	Rosalynd Gater
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Renters Rights Act 2025 came into force in October 2025. This report sets out the basis of the new legislation, its potential resource impact and a range of recommendations for policy approval to implement the various aspects of the legislation specifically with reference to enforcement and debt recovery where penalties are not paid.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTES** the principles of the Housing Enforcement Policy for Renters' Rights Act.
- 2.2 **NOTES** that the model Civil Penalty Policy Procedure that has been drafted for use across England in connection with the Renters' Rights Act 2025 will be used by Public Protection Partnership (NB the use of Civil Penalties in relation to Housing Legislation has already been agreed at JPPC in October 2022).
- 2.3 **APPROVES** the use of the model Civil Penalty Policy Procedure.
- 2.4 **DELEGATES** to the Service Lead - Public Protection Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holders/ Cabinet Members from all three partner authorities of the Committee the authority to update the service enforcement policy to give effect to the enforcement elements of the Renters Rights Act 2025.
- 2.5 **APPROVES** the proposed changes to the Environmental Health Housing Policy 2025 – 2028 regarding the precedence of the model Housing Enforcement Policy over the approach described in the EH Housing Policy 2025 – 2028.
- 2.6 **APPROVES** that authority be delegated to the Joint Management Board to adopt the national Dept Recovery Policy for use by the Public Protection Partnership Team.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There has been a commitment by government to fund the implementation of the Act. To this end the Service via the partner Councils have been allocated a total of £78K this financial year. This will be used to support implementation both in the Public

	Protection Service but also we are working closely with our colleagues in the local authority housing functions who will also need training and other support.		
	Going forward there is a commitment to further funding in 2027/28 and ultimately the delivery of the new measures will be funded by the hypothecation of part of the annual fee to support enforcement. Any monies raised from the issue of penalty notices will also be hypothecated for housing work,		
Human Resource:	The resource impact is not known at this stage. There are a number of factors that determine impact including levels of public awareness, compliance levels and impact of hitherto discretionary areas not previously enforced by the service including illegal evictions. As the impact becomes clearer the service will undertake to inform the Committee including any disparity between funding and resource needs and the potential to re-prioritise from other parts of the service.		
Legal:	The enforcement of the Renters Rights Act 2025 is a statutory requirement and will affect both environmental health and trading standards in terms of resource. Steps are taking place to ensure officers have the right level of competence and they are granted authority in line with their training and competence.		
Risk Management:	There is a high level of public policy interest around this area of work. The failure to effectively enforce provisions could lead to legal challenge.		
Property:	None		
Policy:	The Committee has determined that all aspects of housing enforcement is one of its priorities. The new legislation requires a policy framework and the Inter-Authority Agreement delegates the approval and oversight of that framework to the Committee.		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
			Commentary
Equity Impact Assessment:			
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?			Landlords cannot discriminate against tenants based on any of the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.) This includes during advertising, selecting tenants, setting terms, and handling complaints or disputes.

			<p>If a tenant is subject to discrimination, a tenant can use the Equality Act to defend against a possession claim (eviction) if they believe it's based on discrimination. Tenants can also file a counterclaim against the landlord in such cases, potentially leading to a separate claim for compensation.</p> <p>The Renters' Rights Bill is also introducing a new landlord Ombudsman which aims to provide a fair and impartial resolution service for disputes including any Equality Act issues.</p>
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?			See above
Environmental Impact:	X		<p>The Renters' Rights Act is expected to have a positive environmental impact by driving improvements in the energy efficiency and overall condition of privately rented homes. Government plans linked to the Act include raising housing standards, tackling damp and mould, and introducing future rules that require landlords to fix serious hazards more quickly and make properties more energy efficient, helping reduce carbon emissions and lowering energy consumption.</p>
Health Impact:			<p>The Renters' Rights Act is expected to improve tenants' health by reducing exposure to poor housing conditions that contribute to physical and mental health problems.</p> <p>Many renters currently face issues such as damp, mould, unsafe conditions, and instability, all of which negatively affect wellbeing.</p> <p>Measures linked to the Act include plans to raise housing standards, tackle hazards more quickly, and improve energy efficiency in rented homes, helping create warmer, safer, and healthier living environments.</p> <p>A potential risk however is that the changes may increase the legal and financial risks to landlords which may lead to increases in the</p>

			price of rented properties, which could cause more financial pressures to renters, and possibly price some people out of the market, which may lead to physical and mental health and wellbeing impacts to the less well-off segments of the population.
ICT or Digital Services Impact:			Any amended policies will be added to the Key Policy page on the PPP website
PPP Priorities:			The report will impact on the following PPP Priorities (delete those that are not appropriate) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Safer Communities 2. Improved Living Environment 3. Protecting Consumers from Fraud 4. Reducing Harm in Young People 5. Protecting and Informing Consumers 6. Protection of the Environment 7. Promoting Animal Welfare 8. Safety in the Workplace 9. Safe and Healthy Food Chain Business as Usual Activity is supported too.
Data Impact:			Any data collected will be dealt with in accordance with the PPP's privacy statement.
Consultation and Engagement:	Colleagues in the Housing and Public Health Teams will be consulted on the report.		
Other Options Considered:	None – This is new legislation that the authorities must take into account.		

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 (RRA) received Royal Assent and became law in October 2025, bringing with it major changes to the private rented sector in England, including new rights and responsibilities for landlords, letting agents and tenants, and new enforcement powers for the Local Authority Environmental Health Housing and Trading Standards Officers employed within the shared Public Protection Service.
- 4.2 At Appendix 1 there is a summary of the changes coming into force under the Renters Rights Act along with information on the implications for staff within the shared service and those in the local authority Housing Teams.

5. Implications

- 5.1 The planning for the implementation of the Act has been ongoing for the past year led by Service on behalf of the partner Councils. Since the Act has received Royal Assent and there has been published a timeline for implementation and detailed guidance has been produced. This has allowed implementation to be more focused, although we are still awaiting further guidance to be available.
- 5.2 The Service is working closely with the LA Housing Teams as, although for the tenancy changes most will be enforced by PPP officers (and some will be directly with the

Housing Ombudsman) the LA housing teams may be the main route in for intelligence on breaches through their work involving homelessness. There is also further work to be done with the PPP Case Management Unit, the LA Legal teams and West Berkshire Finance.

- 5.3 Externally, implementation and training of LA officers is being co-ordinated by Operation Jigsaw (a small group of Environmental Health and Trading Standards who are funded by MHCLG) and they are also the communication lines between the LAs and MHCLG. There is also an organisation called Justice For Tenants who are a charitable organisation with the remit of assisting LA with the enforcement of the Act through the use of Civil Penalties.

6. Timeline

6.1 The known timeline for implementation of the provisions of the Act is as follows:

- December 2025 – the new enforcement powers given to Housing enforcement officers came into force.
- 1 May 2026 – the tenancy section of the Act comes into force.
- Late 2026/early 2027 – the Landlord Database and Housing Ombudsman
- Future (no date given) – Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's law for private rented sector.

7. Policy Decisions for JPPC

- 7.1 At the time of writing a national set of model policies are being drafted for adoption by enforcement authorities to facilitate transparent enforcement under Act. Unfortunately, some of these are not available as yet for inclusion in this report and for Member approval in the March JPPC. An added complication is that the next JPPC due in June 2026 will be after the implementation date of the Act. The Public Protection Service is in a position, in this report, to detail what the changes will be to policy and attach the policy that we have to date.
- 7.2 One of the main changes brought about by the Act is the introduction of a statutory duty to enforce tenancy legislation this was previously a power to enforce e.g. the Protection from Evictions Act 1977. This, along with the introduction of many Civil Penalties in the Act for breaches and offences, changes the landscape of tenancy enforcement. As a result, the policies that LA have in place presently need to be updated with this in mind. Three main policy areas will need to be introduced. In Bracknell and West Berkshire this will be through JPPC.
- 7.3 **Enforcement Policy** - the existing enforcement policy for PPP is based on the principles of the Regulators Code and the Code for Crown Prosecutors.
- 7.4 As the Regulators Code heavily features a progressive approach to enforcement with information actions as a base, and the new RRA directing that for the breaches and offences listed a Civil Penalty notice should be served, this will not be in line with most LA Environmental Health Enforcement Policies, including ours. The view of the legislators is that, in this Act there are the consolidation of rights of tenants from landlords who are not following the law, and so the minimum deterrent is a civil penalty breach.

- 7.5 In practice we will need to have a separate policy in place for offences under the RRA. As all local authorities are in this position the Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers are drafting an enforcement policy that can be adopted by LAs across England. This will give consistency and will ensure that landlords are aware of the enforcement policy especially where they operate cross-border in different LA areas thus creating clear expectations and a fairer more transparent system.
- 7.6 This model policy has not been drafted at the point of writing the JPPC papers for March 2026.
- 7.7 **Civil Penalty Policy and Process** – the charitable organisation Justice for Tenants (JFT) has been involved with the policy and process for issuing Civil Penalties in England for the last few years. The Service have already entered into a legal agreement with JFT to enable us to use their services. At present more than half of the LAs across England have entered into this agreement. The policy that JFT have drafted (which was released to LAs on 22nd January 2026) (Appendix 2) takes account of all of the legal and tribunal rulings with regard to issue of Civil Penalties for housing. By following the policy, the LAs are ensuring that they are following the correct process which will ensure that the landlords are getting a fair and consistent approach that follows the legislation and case law set. JFT have also produced a web-based tool for ensuring that the drafting and process of determining the Civil Penalty is covered and correct, along with the correct templates for service. There is a discount of 15% for prompt payment written into the Civil Penalty policy.
- 7.8 By adopting the JFT policy and process we are future proofing ourselves where there are appeals to the Civil Penalty and reducing the time the process will take, and the legal time taken for appeals.
- 7.9 Civil Penalties for Housing offences have existed prior to Renters' Rights Act, and at the Joint Public Protection Committee October 2022, the Committee approved the direction that the PPP are taking in Environmental Health Housing with regards to the use of Civil Penalty Notices.
- 7.10 **Environmental Health Housing Policy 2025 – 2028** – the work of the team and the direction was set out in the Environmental Health Housing Policy 2025 – 2028 which was approved by this Committee at the October 2025 meeting. The policy details the general approach to enforcement of Housing matters and is in line with the wider shared service Enforcement Policy which follows the Regulators Code. Due to the changes detailed above that we will need to amend the approved policy to align with the new requirements.
- 7.11 The main changes are detailed in the table at the front of the amended policy. The amended policy is presented at Appendix 3.
- 7.12 **Debt Recovery Policy** – MHCLG see the increased work in LAs brought about by the Renters' Rights Act to be supported by the use of Civil Penalties. This highlights the importance of debt collection and the ACEHOs are presently drafting a model Debt Collection Policy that can be adopted across LAs in England. At the time of writing this has not yet been released. At present debt collection sits in the legal departments of Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire and shared service will start communications as to the implications of the RRA. Justice for Tenants also have a legal team who deal with debt collection and that is a route to consider.

8. New Burdens Funding

- 8.1 New Burdens funding has been received and will also be available in 2026/27 for the implementation and ongoing work involved with RRA. A plan has been drafted of spend required by the shared service and the LA Housing teams for this financial year, with consideration as to spend required within other LA departments such as legal teams. The implementation spend is mainly for officer training, equipment to increase efficiency and equipment required for increased enforcement, and process and procedure drafting.
- 8.2 MHCLG see the increased work and enforcement work being funded by civil penalties and hypothecation from the Landlord Registration Database when it is implemented as landlords will be required to pay for entry to the database. The amount is unknown at the time of writing; however, the housing enforcement teams will be expected to ensure that the landlord database is audited for accuracy.

9. Communication

- 9.1 MHCLG are leading on the roll out of communication on the RRA, they are using the GOV.UK website and will carry out National publicity campaigns to landlords and to tenants.
- 9.2 They and their delivery arm i.e. Jigsaw have been running webinars and updates for LAs to assist in the implementation and awareness of all of the changes coming through.
- 9.3 The Shared Service are leading on the local communications plan which will include to Members, other departments (legal, finance) external bodies e.g. CAB; and to landlords, managing agents, tenants and residents.

10. Concluding Observations

- 10.1 For the government this is regarded as a flagship piece of the legislation aimed at rebalancing the relationship between landlord and tenant e.g. ending Section 21 evictions as well as improving housing standards e.g. the extension of Awaab's law to the entire rented sector.
- 10.2 For local authorities it is the biggest step change in duties around the regulation of the rented sector in decades. There are new powers, new duties and increased emphasis on the importance of housing standards and tenants and landlords' rights. It is important that have a framework in place to deliver against our new duties, and we will continue to inform the Committee on developments and progress in this respect.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Renters' Rights Act 2025 Summary

Appendix 2 – JFT Model Policy - Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected: All Wards

Officer details:

Name: Rosalynd Gater
Job Title: Strategic Manager Compliance and Programme
Tel No: (01635) 519098
E-mail: rosalynd.gater@westberks.gov.uk

Renters' Rights Act 2025 Summary

The **Renters' Rights Act (RRA)** received Royal Assent and became law in October 2025, bringing major changes to the private rented sector in England, including new rights and responsibilities for landlords, letting agents and tenants, and new enforcement powers for the Local Authority Environmental Health (EH) Housing Officers PPP to ensure compliance.

Below is a summary of the changes coming into force under the Renters Rights Act along with information on the implications to the Environmental Health Housing Team in PPP and the LA Housing Teams.

Timeline

The timeline for implementation of the provisions of the Act is as follows:

- December 2025 – the new enforcement powers given to Housing enforcement officers came into force.
- 1 May 2026 – the tenancy section of the Act comes into force.
- Late 2026/early 2027 – the Landlord Database and Housing Ombudsman.
- Future (no date given) – Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's law for private rented sector.

Workflow and Workload

Implementation – PPP are leading on the implementation of the RRA and working together with the LA Housing Teams at Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire. In preparation PPP also undertook a reorganisation to relocate a Senior Trading Standards Officer into the EH Housing Team as the RRA will involve both EH and Trading Standards (TS) collaborative work and the new enforcement powers are based on existing TS powers. The main enforcement for tenancy issues (which are coming into force on 1 May 2026) will fall to PPP EH Housing enforcement team. However, many of the reactive complaints may well come into the Councils via the LA housing teams routes, for example, if people are presenting as homeless due to an eviction. Work is ongoing on the process of the collaboration between the departments and on training of the officers for the new legislation.

The second part of the Act to come into force is the Landlord Database, this will be a public database, the maintenance and auditing of this database will rest with PPP, whilst the database itself is being designed and hosted nationally. All landlords will have to register and upload supporting documents such as gas safety certificates and electrical certificates, there will be a fee, paid annually, for the registration. Part of the fee will come to the Local Authority for the auditing work required. Failure to register will be an offence, for which a Civil Penalty will be payable.

Estimated Numbers of Landlords in Bracknell and West Berkshire LA areas:

	Bracknell	West Berkshire
Number of Residential Properties (2021 figure)	52,060	66,658
Number of Private Rented Sector properties	8,164 (15.7%)	11,398 (17.1%)
For comparison - Number of Registered Social Landlord properties	8,164 (15.7%)	9,332 (14%)

Enforcement

New enforcement powers under the Renters Rights Act came into force in December 2025. This increased the investigatory powers held by LA EH Housing Officers to enable investigations required as part of the Act to be undertaken more effectively and efficiently, this included the removal of the 24 hour notice that we currently have to give to Landlords before inspecting a property where enforcement actions are needed.

Civil Penalty Notices form the basis of enforcement under the Act, and there is a duty to enforce (NB it is mandatory that LAs investigate and take enforcement actions for offences and breaches under this Act)

PPP are currently reviewing the Authorisation of Officers so actions can be taken under the Act and have been reviewing training and competency of officers (both in process and with practical training to upskill and ensure that the new legislation, the new enforcement powers, and Civil Penalty processes are known).

It should also be noted that the burden of proof for some of the offences is beyond all reasonable doubt (Criminal burden of proof) and for some it is on the balance of probability (Civil burden of proof)

The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £7,000:

- Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information under section 16D of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground where the landlord does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.

- Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process under section 33 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process under section 34 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Breach of duty under Regulation 3, 3B, 3C, and 3D of The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.

The following offences are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier under section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977.
- Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the landlord has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct under section 16(J) of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
- Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
- Breach of a banning order under section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice under section 30 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Contravention of an overcrowding notice under section 139 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to obtain a selective licence under section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to obtain an HMO licence under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with management regulations in respect of HMOs under section 234 of the Housing Act 2004.

- Failure to comply with HMO licence conditions under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with selective licence conditions under section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.

Reporting to MHCLG

LAs will be required to report activity to MHCLG. Work is still ongoing on the reporting format and methods but this will have time implications for LAs and will also have implications on our recording of data and the systems that we use.

PPP are currently looking at the returns and the database (Idox) reporting capacity. Idox have been asked by a number of EH departments for changes to ensure that the necessary reports can be done.

Key reforms – DUTY to enforce, (rather than the existing power to enforce) coming into force on 1 May 2026

The RRA makes it a DUTY for LAs to enforce, this is a change from existing tenancy legislation which gives the LA the power to enforce.

LA Implications

This change in wording means that LAs no longer have any discretion in enforcement of tenancy legislation, and it is widely believed that failure of the LA to investigate and exercise its duty under the Act could result in formal complaints and judicial review.

As with all new legislation those who will be enforcing it, and those who will act on behalf of the tenants and the landlords will be carefully monitoring what happens when the legislation comes into force and we expect that test cases will be taken and decisions made will be under scrutiny while precedents are set.

It is still very much an unknown as to the workload implications of the reforms coming in, however, the duty to enforce is one reason that the workload will increase in relation to tenancy issues, the second reason is the new raft of offences brought in by the act for both tenancy issues and duties for landlords.

Key reform – Enforcement Powers for officers authorised under the RRA in place as of 27th December 2025

Government guidance confirms that these powers are designed to help enforce existing housing legislation more effectively, not just the new duties arriving in 2026. They apply across a wide range of statutes, including: Housing Act 2004, Housing Act 1988, Protection from Eviction Act 1977.

- Power to require documents and information from landlords and agents relating to any private tenancy they have been responsible for in the previous 12 months (this can be requested without needing to suspect a specific offence, and the compliance time is short. Examples would be tenancy agreements, safety certificates, rent records, deposit information and communication logs.
- Power to enter business premises – including letting agent offices, property management companies and landlord business addresses to inspect, copy or seize documents relevant to an investigation. Entry is possible without a warrant in many circumstances, provided the premises are not used as a dwelling.

- Power to seize and retain evidence and examine physical or digital evidence when investigating breaches of housing law. Such as: Tenancy files, Digital records (emails, databases, rent ledgers), Safety certificates, marketing materials, internal communications showing knowledge of non-compliance. This aligns housing enforcement with investigatory powers long available in trading standards and environmental health.
- Power to require explanations and co-operation: the act introduces new powers to compel individuals to explain documents or information provided to the authority. This includes landlords, letting agents, employees of property businesses and contractors involved in property management.

Implications for PPP

These powers significantly expand PPP ability to detect, investigate and enforce breaches of private rented sector (PRS) legislation. PPP can now uncover breaches without relying on tenant complaints so opening housing enforcement up to proactive interventions. The new power to enter business premises will assist with investigations and gathering of evidence. This stronger enforcement should improve safety, security and rights for tenants, and create a level playing field for those Landlords who are doing the right thing.

The new powers will also result in a raised workload which MHCLG are indicating will be self-funding with the Civil Penalties put in place by the Act. This will mean more Housing Enforcement Officers are required, which, in a field that is low in competent qualified officers at the present time presents a risk. In PPP we have recently lost two competent officers (1/3 of total), recruitment has brought in one officer who is going to be enrolled on the Housing Enforcement apprenticeship and we are currently seeking approval to go out to advert for a qualified officer. As it is uncertain how the workload will rise, and what the income will look like, an evaluation of growth posts has not been carried out.

Key reform Ending Section 21 'no-fault' evictions – coming into force on 1 May 2026

- Landlords will no longer be able use Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to evict tenants.
- Reformed possession grounds will be fairer for both parties:
- Landlords will only be able to evict tenants when they have a specific, legally valid reason, otherwise known as a 'possession' ground'.
- Possession grounds will be extended to make it easier for landlords to evict tenants when they want to sell the property, move into the property or move in members of their family.
- The changes will also make it easier to evict tenants who commit anti-social behaviour.

LA Implications

The duty to enforce here, rather than the existing power to enforce will result in increased workload for the LAs. But it will also mean better protection from unlawful evictions for tenants. Over the years there has been a reduction in Tenancy Relations Officers across all LAs, this enforcement of unlawful evictions will be carried out by PPP Housing Enforcement Officers, however there will also be a time implication for the LA Housing officers as many of these cases will be reported to the homelessness

team initially. PPP and the LA Housing Teams are working on the process and procedures needed for this.

Key reform - All tenancies becoming periodic - coming into force on 1 May 2026

- There will be no more fixed term tenancies.
- Most new and existing tenancies in the private rented sector will become assured periodic tenancies, or 'rolling tenancies'.
- This means renters will be able to stay in their property until they end the tenancy or until a landlord serves a valid notice to end it or obtains a court/possession order.
- Renters will be able to end the tenancy at any point by giving two months' notice.

LA Implications

Again, this will result in increased workload for the LA, and we will be investigating where tenants report this to us. Enforcement will be carried out by PPP Housing Enforcement Officers, however there may also be a time implication for the LA Housing officers as many of these cases will be reported to them initially

Key reform - Limits on rent increases (once per year) - coming into force on 1 May 2026

- Landlords will have to follow the new legal process for increasing the rent.
- This will include providing the tenant with notice, detailing the proposed rent increase at least two months before that increase is due to take effect.
- Tenants will be able to appeal excessive above-market rents which are purely designed to force them out.
- Provides stronger protections against so called 'backdoor evictions'.

LA Implications

It will be an independent tribunal that will make a judgement on whether the rent increases are excessive. LAs will signpost to the tribunal.

Key reform - Discrimination against renters who have children or receive benefits will be illegal - coming into force on 1 May 2026

- The landlord 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), preventing them from viewing it, and refusing to grant a tenancy.

LA Implications

This will result in increased workload for the LA, and we will be investigating where tenants report this to us. Enforcement will be carried out by PPP Trading Standards/PPP Housing Enforcement Officers, however there may also be a time implication for the LA Housing officers as many of these cases will be reported to them initially.

As issue will be how to prove if there is no overt evidence as landlord still has rights to choose.

Key reform - Rental bidding will be banned - Coming into force on 1 May 2026

- The landlord will have to include a specific price on any written property advertisement, and will not be able to ask for, encourage or accept an offer that is higher.

LA Implications

This will result in increased workload for the LA, and we will be investigating where tenants report this to us. Enforcement will be carried out by PPP Trading Standards/PPP Housing Enforcement Officers, however there may also be a time implication for the LA Housing officers as many of these cases will be reported to them initially.

Key reform - Requiring large amounts of rent in advance will be banned - coming into force on 1 May 2026

- The landlord will only be able to require up to one month's rent in the period between all parties signing the tenancy and the tenancy starting.
- The landlord will not be able to accept any payment of rent before this period.
- Once the tenancy's begun, the landlord will not be able to require any payment of rent before it's due.

LA Implications

This will result in increased workload for the LA, and we will be investigating where tenants report this to us. Enforcement will be carried out by PPP Trading Standards/PPP Housing Enforcement Officers, there is an amendment to the Tenants Fees Act. However there may also be a time implication for the LA Housing officers as many of these cases will be reported to them initially.

Key reform - Landlords must consider tenant requests to rent with a pet: - coming into force on 1 May 2026

- The landlord will have to consider and respond to a tenant's request within a set timeframe and will have to provide valid reasons if they choose to refuse it.

LA Implications

It will be an independent tribunal that will make a judgement on whether the request for a pet has been considered correctly. LAs will signpost to the tribunal.

This may also result in an increase of nuisance complaints coming through to EH Communities team as there may be an increase in dog barking and fowling complaints.

Key reform – New requirements for tenancies - coming into force on 1 May 2026

Landlords will need to make sure they've understood the new rules for tenancy agreements:

They will need to make sure that they have given their tenant written information about the terms of their tenancy.

- Tenancies that started before 1st May 2026 – these will not need to be changed or reissued. Instead, what landlords will need to do is send their tenants a government-produced information sheet before 31st May 2026. The information sheet will be published on the Gov.UK website in March 2026.
- Tenancies that start on or after 1st May 2026 – the landlord will need to provide tenants with certain information about the tenancy in writing. This can be in the tenancy agreement. In January 2026, Gov.UK are publishing details on what information must be included to give landlords sufficient time to prepare the tenancy agreement template.
- If the current tenancy is based entirely on a verbal agreement, the landlord will need to give the tenant a written record of specific terms of the agreement. This is instead of providing the information sheet.

LA Implications

Again, this will result in increased workload for the LA, and we will be investigating where tenants report this to us, or where we find that the information has not been given in the prescribed way. Enforcement will be carried out by PPP Housing Enforcement Officers, however there may also be a time implication for the LA Housing officers as many of these cases will be reported to them initially. PPP and the LA Housing Teams are working on the process and procedures needed for this.

Key reform – Strengthening of rent repayment orders and extension of the rent repayment order system to some of the new offences in the Act - coming into force on 1 May 2026

- Increasing the maximum penalty to two years' rent (double what is now) and ensuring repeat offenders have to repay the maximum amount.

LA Implications

This is taken by the tenant against the landlord and is heard at housing tribunal, the money goes back to the tenant. Where the tenant is in receipt of housing benefit/universal credit that LA can take it on their behalf and recoup the money that they have paid. This will have implications for the LA Housing Teams should they decide to take this role.

Key reform – Landlord database - coming into force end 2026

- This will be a National Database that will be centrally hosted and LA will have access to the back office.
- All landlords will have to upload information to the database regarding their properties and including certification and agreements.
- The landlords will be charged a fee, part of which will go to the LA.

LA Implications

This will have major implications for the PPP EH Housing Team as it is expected that we will audit this database in order to ensure that landlords have registered (this we will do reactivity in the first instance) and to ensure that the information uploaded is correct, e.g. gas safety certificates will be uploaded, we will be auditing to ensure that it is a valid gas safety certificate. It is unknown what fee will be paid and what % of the fee will come to LA for this work, but it will be this fee that will be used to ensure we

have officers to audit the database. Currently we have in the region of 20,000 private rented sector properties across PPP area which will each need to be registered.

On the other hand, this will also support local authorities as we will have a better idea of the landlords in the area and will help to target enforcement activity where it is needed most. Failure to register will be an offence with a Civil Penalty.

Key reform – Introduce a new Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman that will provide binding resolutions for tenants’ complaints about their landlord - coming into force at end 2026

- This will bring tenant-landlord complaint resolution on par with established redress practices for tenants in social housing and consumers of property agent services.

LA Implications

None.

Key reform – that are introduced by Renters Rights’ Act but have no implementation date

Decent Homes Standard and Application of Awaab’s Law in private rented sector

- Apply the **Decent Homes Standard** to the private rented sector to give renters safer, homes. The Decent Homes Standard covers issues such as repair, living standards e.g. kitchens must be under 20 years old as well as protections from cold homes through insulation etc. This will be PPP enforced but will need secondary legislation and so not expected to come into force for some time.
- Apply ‘**Awaab’s Law**’ to the sector - this is setting clear legal expectations about the timeframes within which landlords in the private rented sector must take action to make homes safe where they contain serious hazards. It will be similar to the legislation just enacted for Registered Social Landlords. This will need secondary legislation to enact and so not expected to come into force for some time. It is unknown who will enforce (RSL is with the Housing Ombudsman).