

About this inquiry

This inquiry by the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee is aimed at scrutinising the Government's proposals for reforming the private rented sector as set out in its White Paper, A Fairer Private Rented Sector.

Key points and recommendations

The number of older people living in the private rented sector (PRS) is set to increase significantly over the next few years.

Living in a non-decent home can be particularly harmful to many older people living in the PRS.

Age UK continues to support the abolition of Section 21 no fault evictions.

This reform needs to be accompanied by other policy changes to minimise the number of landlords who leave the market as a result. Failure to do so could lead to a significantly reduced supply of rental properties and have an adverse impact on tenants.

We welcome recognition of the need for more social housing supply, which we believe will continue to have an important role in housing lower income groups for a long time to come.

Local Authorities must be adequately resourced to enforce standards and tackle bad landlords.

We support the extension of the Decent Homes Standard to the PRS, which will be important to improving the living standards of many older tenants. Investment in retrofitting will be required to improve the existing housing stock.

Financing for adaptations, such as the Disabled Facilities Grant, must be clearly signposted and available for PRS tenants.

About Age UK

Age UK is a national charity that works with a network of partners, including Age Scotland, Age Cymru, Age NI and local Age UKs across England, to help everyone make the most of later life, whatever their circumstances. In the UK, the Charity helps more than seven million older people each year by providing advice and support. It also researches and campaigns on the issues that matter most to older people. Its work focuses on ensuring that older people: have enough money; enjoy life and feel well; receive high quality health and care; are comfortable, safe and secure at home; and feel valued and able to

Enforcement

Enforcement is key to making these reforms a success and this will require additional resources. Having to demonstrate compliance through the Property Portal will encourage many landlords who might fall into the “mixed and lower compliance”^{viii} groups to adhere to the regulatory requirements. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this was a product of

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- ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2020-to-2021-private-rented-sector>
- ⁱⁱ https://www.independentage.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/Unsuitable_insecure_and_substandard_homes_Independent_Age_2018_0.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/consultation-responses-and-submissions/safe-at-home/accessible-homes-cp-age-uk-final.pdf>
- ^{iv} <http://rentbetter.indigohousegroup.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/05/Wave-2-Executive-Summary.pdf>
- ^v <https://www.citylets.co.uk/research/reports/pdf/Citylets-Quarterly-Report-Q4-2021.pdf>
- ^{vi} <http://rentbetter.indigohousegroup.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/05/Wave-2-Executive-Summary.pdf>
- ^{vii} https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1078643/EPLS_Headline_Report_2021.pdf
- ^{viii} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-fairer-private-rented-sector/a-fairer-private-rented-sector>
- ^{ix} <https://www.habinteg.org.uk/latest-news/new-government-data-reveals-accessible-homes-crisis-for-disabled-people-1557/>