



## Renters' Rights Bill: amendment to the Private Rented Sector Database

### INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of the Renters' Rights Bill depends on the availability of reliable, localised data in the private rented sector (PRS). However, **the PRS in England is characterised by a lack of information on local rental markets. There is no consistent tracking of eviction notices served, previous enforcement action taken, rental prices (or rent increase) data, gas or electrical safety certificates**, etc. This makes it difficult for local authorities and central government to monitor trends, enforce new standards, or intervene where needed. It also makes it exceedingly hard for tenants to enforce their own rights when they have been infringed. 86% of private renters say they would be likely to use publicly accessible register of landlords that allowed prospective tenants to check things such as essential safety standards and previous complaints.<sup>1</sup>

The Renters' Rights Bill introduces the framework and legislative powers to establish a Private Rented Sector Database to address these challenges. The Bill, as it stands, would make it mandatory for landlords to be registered on the database, introduce fines and penalties for neglecting to make entries or keep information up-to-date, and place limits on gaining possession of a property without maintaining up to date entries. **However, there are currently no plans to require private sector landlords to provide more details than their address, contact details and banning orders.**

Without improved data collection, key provisions of the Bill—such as the abolition of no-fault evictions, outlawing discrimination and efforts to address affordability through the tribunal—will be almost impossible to implement in practice. **In some situations, such as gas and electrical safety, the lack of data risks eroding existing protections for tenants.**

Strengthening data collection and transparency must be a core component of the Renters' Rights Bill. Minimum standards on the type of data that will be collected by the new database should be outlined in the primary legislation to ensure that it reaches its full potential as a tool for enforcement of standards and information for tenants

**Shelter are supporting a group of amendments tabled by Baroness Thornhill to this effect, which ask for the PRS database to include: [banning order and rent repayment orders issued](#), [previous eviction notices served](#), and [rent levels and subsequent increases](#).**

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<sup>1</sup> Shelter/YouGov survey of 4,023 private renters in England. Fieldwork was undertaken between 14th July - 16th August 2023. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all private renting adults (aged 18+).



## **ESSENTIAL DATA FOR AN EFFECTIVE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR DATABASE**

Many tenants do not even know who their landlord is. Research by the Tenancy Deposit Scheme Charitable Foundation found that renters lack basic information about their landlords and have no reliable way to assess a landlord or the standard of a property before signing a tenancy agreement.

Meanwhile, local authorities must spend already limited enforcement capacity simply trying to identify landlords and agents operating in their areas. This is a waste of scarce resources that could be better used enforcing standards and supporting tenants.

The current drafting of the Bill leaves most of the detail around the database to future secondary legislation. However, the government must set clear expectations in primary legislation around the core functions and minimum data requirements of the database from the outset. Without this, the new system risks falling short of its transformative potential at best or eroding existing protections for renters and further burdening local authorities at worst.

On the other hand, a fully functioning database that gathers the right data does have the potential to drive up standards and transparency in private renting, and ensure the new rights and regulations introduced by the Renters' Bill are implemented effectively. This amendment introduces priority areas as a minimum standard, where the database should include and publish (where appropriate) data to ensure the new legislation is effective, for example:

### **1. Eviction Notices**

Local authorities currently have no consistent or centralised way to track when eviction notices, including Section 21 or Section 8 notices, have been served. This lack of transparency makes it difficult to monitor patterns of eviction, identify repeat misuse, or hold landlords accountable for unfair practices. With the Bill replacing Section 21 with new 'no-fault' grounds (1 and 1A), requiring landlords to log eviction notices provides a basic accountability mechanism, enables local authorities to flag repeat or suspicious use of these grounds, and creates a paper trail that can support enforcement or redress. Research from Nationwide Foundation has found that 1 in 5 landlord sale evictions in Scotland did not end up in a sale of the property.<sup>2</sup> Requiring landlords to log eviction notices would:

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<sup>2</sup> Indigo House and Nationwide Foundation, RentBetter: Wave 3 final report, September 2024



- Enable local authorities to monitor local eviction trends
- Flag patterns of potentially unlawful eviction
- Support enforcement of lawful use of new 'no-fault eviction' grounds
- Ensure compliance with the 12-month no relet rule

Additionally, the current lack of requirement for the database to include gas and electrical safety certificates risks reducing tenants' existing protection from unfair evictions where basic safety standards are not met. As a bare minimum, valid gas and electrical safety certificates and EPCs should be required for a database entry to be considered active, thereby enabling the landlord to serve a valid section 8 notice.

## **2. Previous Enforcement Action**

There is no central record of previous enforcement taken against landlords. Requiring entries on the database to reflect prior fines, improvement notices, or other significant enforcement action, would:

- Act as a deterrent to non-compliance
- Help tenants make informed choices
- Ensure councils are able to identify repeat offenders across local authority boundaries

## **3. Rental Price and Rent Increase Data**

The absence of localised rent data makes it harder to monitor affordability and assess rental data which is truly reflective of a local market. Requiring landlords to list the monthly rent and any changes over time would:

- Help guide tribunal decisions on affordability and fair rent challenges
- Help to improve the rental market data that is used to set Local Housing Allowance rates
- Support local authorities and national government in policy design
- Improve transparency for renters comparing properties

## **4. Safety and Condition Standards**



As a minimum, landlords should be required to upload valid gas and electrical safety certificates, and proof of compliance with the Decent Homes Standard. This would:

- Ensure renters do not lose the existing protections from 'no-fault' evictions that they currently have, where landlords fail to meet safety minimum obligations
- Protect tenants' health and safety
- Create real accountability for landlords
- Allow authorities to prioritise inspections more effectively

These are four clear examples of where improved data collection is desperately needed and for the Renters' Rights Bill to genuinely enhance standards and protections for renters by improving transparency and accountability in the sector. In the long-term, a comprehensive database would make the enforcement of existing and new standards more complete and efficient, which would maximise the impact of the new legislation while saving councils time and money.

**If you would like to discuss the Renters' Rights Bill with Shelter, please feel free to contact us at [public\\_affairs@shelter.org.uk](mailto:public_affairs@shelter.org.uk).**

**Shelter urges peers to support the amendments outlined below:**

**Lead member:** Baroness Thornhill

**Amendment text:**

Clause 76, page 115, line 13

at end insert—

"(d)in respect of a landlord entry, details of any banning orders or rent repayment orders that have been made against the landlord."

**Member's explanatory statement:**

This amendment would require the Private Rented Sector database to include information on any banning orders or rent repayment orders made against a landlord, improving transparency and supporting tenant decision-making.

**Amendment text:**

Clause 76, page 115, line 13



at end insert—

“(d)in respect of a dwelling entry, details of any notices given to any previous tenant under section 8 of the Housing Act 1988, including the grounds relied upon.”

**Member's explanatory statement:**

This amendment would require the PRS database to record the history of Section 8 eviction notices served for each dwelling, including the legal grounds used, in order to enhance tenant awareness and promote responsible landlord practices.

**Amendment text:**

Clause 76, page 115, line 13

at end insert—

“(d)in respect of a dwelling entry—

(ii)details of the rent that was payable at the commencement of the tenancy;

(iii)details of any increases in rent in relation to any previous tenancy.”

**Member's explanatory statement:**

This amendment would ensure that the private rented sector (PRS) database includes rent levels at the start of a tenancy and any subsequent increases. It aims to improve transparency for prospective tenants and support informed decisions in the rental market.