

Shelter
88 Old Street
London
EC1V 9HU
t 0344 515 2000
shelter.org.uk

██████████
C/O Spicerhaart Lettings Limited
Colwyn House
Sheepen Place
Colchester
Essex
CO3 3LD

21 August 2018

Re: Discrimination against renters who claim housing benefit

Dear ██████████

I am writing to you with regard to your company's policies and practices towards renting to people in receipt of housing benefit.

We have recently carried out an extensive mystery shopping exercise into letting agent practices towards people who claim housing benefit. As part of this investigation we contacted a range of letting agent branches, including 25 branches of Haart.

This investigation has found a widespread problem across the industry of letting agents banning benefits recipients from properties which they are marketing. 8 of your branches told us that it was branch policy not to accept people claiming housing benefit and significant numbers of your other branches said that there were no properties available for someone currently on benefits.

We believe this policy is wrong. It unfairly discriminates against the growing number of households who rely on housing benefit to be able to afford a place to live. This policy also disproportionately disadvantages women and people with disabilities because these groups are more likely to be claiming housing benefit.

We will be publishing the findings from our research tomorrow, as part of a wider campaign to expose unfair practices in the lettings industry towards people in receipt of housing benefit. A copy of our research is available on request.

We would be interested to hear your thoughts on our research and particularly, how you plan to address any unfair policies and practices within your organisation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,



Greg Beales

Director of Communications, Policy & Campaigns, Shelter

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██████████
C/O Countrywide
Countrywide House
Lake View Drive
Annesley
Nottingham
NG15 0DT

21 August 2018

Re: Discrimination against renters who claim housing benefit

Dear ██████████

I am writing to you with regard to your company's policies and practices towards renting to people in receipt of housing benefit.

We have recently carried out an extensive mystery shopping exercise into letting agent practices towards people who claim housing benefit. As part of this investigation we contacted a range of letting agent branches, including 25 branches of Bridgfords.

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Dexter London Limited
66 Grosevenor Street
London
W1K 3JL

21 August 2018

Re: Discrimination against renters who claim housing benefit

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you with regard to your company's policies and practices towards renting to people in receipt of housing benefit.

We have recently carried out an extensive mystery shopping exercise into letting agent practices towards people who claim housing benefit. As part of this investigation we contacted a range of letting agent branches, including 25 branches of Dexters.

This investigation has found a widespread problem across the industry of letting agents banning benefits recipients from properties which they are marketing. 2 of your branches told us that it was branch policy not to accept people claiming housing benefit and significant numbers of your other branches said that there were no properties available for someone currently on benefits.

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Sequence (UK) Limited
Cumbria House
16-20 Hockliffe
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire
LU7 1GN

21 August 2018

Re: Discrimination against renters who claim housing benefit

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you with regard to your company's policies and practices towards renting to people in receipt of housing benefit.

We have recently carried out an extensive mystery shopping exercise into letting agent practices towards people who claim housing benefit. As part of this investigation we contacted a range of letting agent branches, including 24 branches of Fox & Sons, one of your local Sequence brands.

This investigation has found a widespread problem across the industry of letting agents banning benefits recipients from properties which they are marketing. 2 of your branches told us that it was branch policy not to accept people claiming housing benefit and significant numbers of your other branches said that there were no properties available for someone currently on benefits.

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[REDACTED]
Newcastle House
Albany Court
Newcastle Business Park
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE4 7YB

21 August 2018

Re: Discrimination against renters who claim housing benefit

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you with regard to your company's policies and practices towards renting to people in receipt of housing benefit.

We have recently carried out an extensive mystery shopping exercise into letting agent practices towards people who claim housing benefit. As part of this investigation we contacted a range of letting agent branches, including 25 branches of Your Move.

This investigation has found a widespread problem across the industry of letting agents banning benefits recipients from properties which they are marketing. 1 of your branches told us that it was branch policy not to accept people claiming housing benefit and significant numbers of your other branches said that there were no properties available for someone currently on benefits.

We believe this policy is wrong. It unfairly discriminates against the growing number of households who rely on housing benefit to be able to afford a place to live. This policy also disproportionately disadvantages women and people with disabilities because these groups are more likely to be claiming housing benefit.

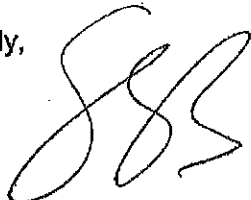
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[REDACTED]
**Hunters Property Group Limited,
Apollo House,
Eboracum Way,
York,
YO31 7RE**

21 August 2018

Re: Discrimination against renters who claim housing benefit

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to make you aware of some research that we are publishing this week about letting agent practices towards people in receipt of housing benefit.

We have recently carried out an extensive mystery shopping exercise into letting agent practices towards people who claim housing benefit. As part of this investigation we contacted a range of letting agent branches, including 25 branches of Hunters.

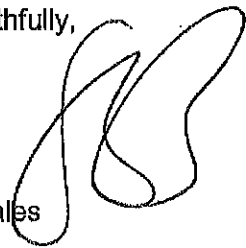
In contrast to other letting agent brands, no branch of Hunters stated that it was your policy not to accept renters in receipt of housing benefit. However, 10 of your branches still stated that they did not have any properties available for people claiming housing benefit, with five of those suggesting that this is because no landlords currently let to people on housing benefit.

We will be publishing the findings from our research tomorrow, as part of a wider campaign to expose unfair practices in the lettings industry towards people in receipt of housing benefit. A copy of our research is available on request.

In the report, we are calling on the lettings industry to end discrimination towards people in receipt of benefits and we have a number of specific asks for letting agents. We would be very interested to know your thoughts on these asks and in particular, whether Hunters can pledge that all their branches will meet these standards.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,



Greg Beales

Director of Communications, Policy & Campaigns

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