



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Rt Hon James Brokenshire

*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local
Government**

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To Clive Betts MP

15 April 2019

Dear Clive,

Private Rented Sector Tenancy Reform

As you will be aware, the Government was due to publish its response to the recent consultation on 'Overcoming the barriers to longer tenancies' in the private rented sector. I wanted to write to you in your capacity as Chair of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee to inform you the Government has published its response, which begins the process of reforming the private rented sector.

As part of our response, today I announced reforms to the legislative framework governing how private tenancies can be ended in England to improve security in the private rented sector for both tenants and landlords.

The private rented sector has changed dramatically in the last twenty years, and the sector needs to keep pace with these changes. The number of people who live in the private rented sector has doubled, and it is home to more families with children and older people. These households need stability and security in their home.

The current legislative framework leaves tenants feeling insecure. They can be asked to leave their homes, with as little as only two months notice, without the landlord providing any reason, using eviction proceedings under Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988. This sense of insecurity can profoundly affect the ability of renters to plan for the future, to manage their finances or to put down roots in their local communities.

The Government intends to establish a fairer system for both tenants and landlords by legislating to repeal Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988. Bringing an end to so called 'no fault evictions', would mean that a tenant cannot be forced to leave their home unless the landlord can prove a specified ground, such as rent arrears or breach of tenancy agreement. It would provide tenants with more stability and protect them from having to make frequent and short notice moves. It would also empower tenants to challenge their landlord about poor property standards where this occurs, without the worry of being evicted as a result of making a complaint.

The private rented sector must also remain a stable and secure market for landlords to continue to invest in. The legislation I am introducing will include measures that provide landlords with additional safeguards to successfully manage their properties. We will strengthen the existing grounds for eviction available to landlords under Section 8 of the

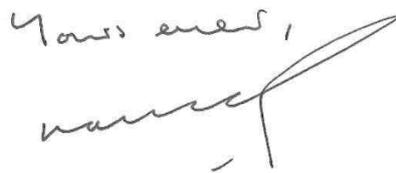
Housing Act 1988. This will allow the landlord to regain their property when they want to sell it or move into it themselves.

It is important that landlords can have confidence that the court system works for them in instances when there is no other option but to seek possession of their property through the courts. That is why our announcement included improvements to court processes, to make it quicker and smoother for landlords to regain their properties when they have a legitimate reason to do so.

Removing no-fault evictions is a significant step. Today's announcement is the start of a longer process to introduce these reforms. We want to build a consensus on a package of reforms to improve security for tenants while providing landlords with the confidence that they have the tools they need.

We will launch a consultation on the details of a better system that will work for landlords and tenants. The Government will collaborate with and listen to landlords, tenants and others in the private rented sector to develop a new deal for renting. Ministers will also work with other types of housing providers outside of the private rented sector who use these powers and use the consultation to make sure the new system works effectively.

The Government wants to work closely with members of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee to develop these proposals and bring forward legislation to introduce a generational change in the private rented sector.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Brokenshire', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE MP