

Fair Rents (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to protect private sector tenants by introducing measures to limit rent increases and to increase the availability of information about rent levels. The consultation runs from 15 May 2019 to 6 August 2019. All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer. All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response. Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded. Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here: [Consultation document](#) [Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice attached to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation. Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I would like this response to be published anonymously

Please provide your name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

Aim and approach - rent cap

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of capping private sector rent increases annually across Scotland at one percentage point above inflation (measured according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI))?

Partially opposed

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I am concerned about the increase in rents however rent control just not convinced that rent controls will work. In countries such as Sweden that has rent controls there is a huge waiting list for properties and a black market in subletting so they have created a supply crisis and not solved the affordability crisis. Further the Scottish Government were warned that various changes they made to the PRS would lead to an increase in rents and they ignored these warnings and ploughed on anyway. Just as if you drop stones into a tank raises the level of water if you keep on increasing costs to landlords and ban letting agent fees then rents will rise. For the actual calculation it concerns me that the inflation is based on an annual basis when it should be based on the last rent increase. I haven't raised rents for ten years and whilst I am happy to receive less than the market rent if interest rates were to rise then I would be in trouble. I don't really want to give my tenant a large rent increase prior to this bill taking place but am also aware that I may be putting myself in risk of going bust if I don't increase rents and rent control limits me to my current rent that is about 60% of the market rent and interest rates rise.

Rent level appeals

Q2. Which of the following best expresses your view of providing that, when tenants appeal their rent, rent officers and the First-tier Tribunal would be able to either lower or maintain the rent but not increase the rent?

Neutral (neither support nor oppose)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I would be very surprised if this was something the first tier tribunal would do anyway.

Landlord registration scheme

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view of expanding the landlord registration scheme so that landlords must input the rent that they charge when they register, and update the system when the rent changes?

Neutral (neither agree nor oppose)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The Landlord Registration website is not the best and it is unlikely that this would run smoothly.

Other options - Rent Pressure Zones

Q4. Which of the following best expresses your view of tackling the problem of rents rising significantly faster than inflation by making it easier for a local authority to apply to create a Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ)?

Partially opposed

Please explain the reasons for this response.

I have no doubt if it was easier then politicians and local authority would want rent pressure zones as they have no skin in the game and rent pressure zones would appeal to tenants.

Financial implications

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
Government and the public sector			X			
Businesses (including landlords)	X					
Individuals (including tenants)		X				

Q6. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

I think that we need to rebalance the regulation of letting between short term and long term to reduce cost push inflation. Also as interest rates cannot be controlled if they increase then Landlords will make a loss cannot increase rent to cover it, have to sell up and the tenant will be evicted.

Equalities

Q7. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, maternity and pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I don't think it will make any difference.

Q8. In what ways could any negative impact of the Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

The inflation calculation needs to be calculated properly based on the inflation between the last rent increase and the current date.

Sustainability

Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably, i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Rent controls don't work and the actual proposed calculation is not scientific. This will inevitably lead to a clamor to increase rents by landlords who do not currently charge the market rent before the bill is introduced and a supply issue if interest rates rise (which is inevitable) in the long term.

General

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

I think that rent control was inevitable following the route that the Scottish Government has chosen it's a bit like the song there was an old lady who swallowed a fly and rent control will be like swallowing the horse. I would hope that the Scottish Government might look to loosen their grip on the PRS.