

London Assembly Housing Committee

Call for Evidence: Implementing and monitoring the Renters' Rights Act in London

Response from Propertymark

February 2026

Background

1. Propertymark is the UK's leading professional body of property agents, with over 19,000 members representing over 12,500 branches. We are member-led with a Board which is made up of practicing agents, and we work closely with our members to set professional standards through regulation, accredited and recognised qualifications, an industry-leading training programme and mandatory Continuing Professional Development¹.

Call for Evidence Overview

2. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 received Royal Assent on 27 October 2025, with the first major phase of implementation set for 1 May 2026. With the introduction of new regulations, including new powers and expectations for local authorities, councils in London have expressed concerns that they will require new resources in order to enforce the Act effectively. This Call for Evidence seeks to understand the impact that the Act will have on London, specifically:

- How the measures in the Renters' Rights Act can be implemented and adhered to in London.
- Key challenges local authorities in London will face in monitoring and enforcing the measures in the Renters' Rights Act, including having the necessary capacity and resources to do so.
- To what extent renters and landlords understand their new rights and responsibilities under the Renters' Rights Act.
- What actions the Mayor of London should take to adapt his current and planned work on the private rented sector to reflect the new measures contained within the Renters' Rights Act.

¹ <https://www.propertymark.co.uk/>

- What actions the Mayor of London can take to support local authorities in London to implement, monitor, and enforce the measures in the Renters' Rights Act.
- How the Mayor of London will monitor the impact of the Renters' Rights Act on the wider London housing market

Propertymark response – summary

3. Propertymark welcomes the opportunity to respond to the London Assembly's call for evidence on the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act 2025. Prior to producing this written evidence, we submitted a briefing to all London Assembly Housing Committee members which this response expands upon. Propertymark members have a considerable presence in London, with hundreds of smaller firms and large corporate agents who manage hundreds of thousands of tenancies in total across the city². Our members have seen the impact of Covid-19 and have concerns that, if improperly enforced, the Act will reduce the supply of available homes which will ultimately lead to the Act failing to improve security for tenants.
4. London is particularly vulnerable to some of the concerns expressed by our members, these include:
 - **London's high student population** – it is estimated that there are more than 400,000 university students study in London³. Under the Renters' Rights Act landlords with one- and two-bedroom properties cannot use Ground 4A to evict students when they graduate. New students rely on graduates vacating properties to find a home. If fewer graduates do not leave on time for the following years' students, London's student population will face a growing housing crisis.
 - **London has a large number of selective and additional licensing schemes** – as of November 2025, 60% of local authorities in London have at least one selective licensing scheme, with a further 50% having an additional licensing scheme⁴. The PRS Database has the potential to duplicate work and fees for landlords, potentially pushing many out of the PRS or leading to a reduction in landlords signing up to the Database.

² https://www.propertymark.co.uk/find-an-expert.html?q=London&company_service=residential-lettings&orderBy=

³ <https://www.lse.ac.uk/student-life/London-life/A-student-city>

⁴ <https://www.londonpropertylicensing.co.uk/selective-licensing/>

- **Short-term and holiday lets represent an attractive alternative to the PRS** – London has an estimated 82,000 properties used for short-term lettings, higher than any other part of the UK⁵. Even with London's additional restrictions on short-term lets⁶, a comparative lack of regulations and higher yields compared to the long-term PRS could increase the number of short-term lets in London at a cost of the availability of private rented homes.
- **Courts are especially overburdened in London** – the average possession time for landlords (from notice handed to eviction) is 8.5 months, which is over 40% higher than any other part of the UK⁷. This makes eviction costs particularly high in London as landlords may not receive any rent during proceedings.
- **London has a high proportion of landlords who rely on letting agents to fully manage their properties** – in 2019, the PropTech firm Rent Guarantor identified that 18% of rental homes in London were owned by overseas landlords⁸. These landlords fully rely on letting agents to manage their tenancies but will be expected to join the new PRS Database and belong to a new Landlord Ombudsman scheme.

5. Considering the above, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London's Councils will face considerable challenges in achieving effective enforcement while ensuring healthy growth within the PRS. Considering that the size of London's private rented sector has shrunk by 41% compared to pre-Covid-19 levels⁹, and the number of rented properties available has continued to fall since then, PRS stock is at critical levels¹⁰. Any further reduction would increase rents further and make it more challenging for tenants to move to more suitable homes.

Call for Evidence – questions

Question 1: What will change for private renters and landlords in London due to the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act, and how will it be possible to measure their success?

⁵ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8395/CBP-8395.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/buying-and-owning-home/guidance-short-term-and-holiday-lets-london>

⁷ <https://hcegroup.co.uk/news/2025/possession-delays-costing-landlords-thousands>

⁸ <https://www.rentguarantor.com/news/landlord/52-number-of-international-landlords-in-the-uk-s-prs-rises>

⁹ <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/newsroom/2023/sharp-fall-private-rental-listings-means-londons-housing-pressure-going-bad>

¹⁰ <https://trustforlondon.org.uk/research/private-rented-sector-accommodation-london-supply-2024/>

6. There are three major changes that we wish to highlight which will impact private renters and landlords in London due to the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act:

- **The first change is that vulnerable tenants will find it more difficult to find homes, with fewer reassurances for landlords to evict tenants who breach their tenancy agreements.** This is due to both the removal of Section 21 evictions and limits on taking rent in advance. Tenants who do not have a UK-based guarantor, can struggle to find suitable property, as there is an additional risk for the landlord to take on these tenants. Rent in advance helps tenants demonstrate their commitment to the landlord, providing the additional reassurance that a guarantor is meant to provide. However, the Renters' Rights Act prevents landlords from requesting more than one months' rent in advance of the tenancy commencing. While tenants are able to voluntarily pay for more than one months' rent after they have moved into the property, there is no legal mechanism requiring them to pay that even if they informally agreed to do so with the landlord. In addition to this, landlords have fewer options available to them if the tenant is not paying rent. Under existing legislation, if all other methods fail, a landlord could ultimately issue a Section 21 notice where a tenant is in rent arrears and has not guarantor who the landlord can call upon. However, with the removal of Section 21 notices, landlords would have to issue a Section 8 notice and seek a possession order from the courts. In London, this could take over 8 months for the court to issue an possession order. In that time, it is highly unlikely that the landlord will receive any rent. This great risk to the landlord will ultimately lead to landlords being more cautious when choosing tenants, with tenants perceived as a greater risk being less likely to be approved. While the Act does make explicit discrimination illegal, landlords and agents with multiple tenants expressing interest can still choose who will live at the property. This will risk forcing vulnerable tenants to seek rogue landlords and agents who would provide poorer quality homes and take advantage of the tenants' vulnerable situation.
- **The second change is that students will find it more challenging to find suitable accommodation.** This is another consequence of changes to evictions, including the lack of a specific ground for one and two bedroom student homes, as well as the restricts on rent in advance. Within the Renters' Rights Act, a new ground, Ground 4A, will be introduced to allow landlords to replace existing tenants who are graduating with new tenants who need a home for the next academic year. However, this ground can only be used for properties that are

HMOs, meaning any landlords with property that have fewer than 3 bedrooms cannot evict their tenants even if they have graduated. Tenants who do eventually move out without the ground being issued will have no obligation to do so before the start of the following term, meaning that landlords will struggle to find any tenants until the next academic year. Our members have reported that many of these landlords are discussing selling up entirely or switching to non-student tenancies. As a consequence, students will struggle to find accommodation during their time at one of London's many universities as student accommodation is highly competitive. The issue is compounded for international students who often don't have UK-based guarantors and will no longer be able to pay rent in advance.

- **The third change is that complying with new legislation will be more difficult for landlords who live overseas.** One Propertymark member managing over 40,000 tenancies in London has 4,000 tenancies that they manage on behalf of landlords living in China and Hong Kong alone, and this is not unique to that agent. Landlords living overseas often hire a letting agent to fully manage their property, but the introduction of the Act cause two issues. Firstly, the Renters' Rights Act introduces explicit requirements for landlords, such as registering with the Landlord Database and PRS Landlord Ombudsman that a letting agent cannot do on their behalf. Secondly, without the regulation of property agents, there is inconsistency in the quality of service the agent provides to both the landlord and tenants. While Propertymark members have access to training and resources to help them understand the new requirements of the Act, letting agents who do not voluntarily sign up to higher standards may not be aware of the new requirements or will not be sure of them due to conflicting guidance. Furthermore, overseas landlords are a lot less likely to be aware of legislative changes or fully understand them due to language challenges; that is after all why they hire a managing agent.

7. All of this risks a reduction in supply as extensive changes taking place at one time will cause some landlords to consider selling while deterring potential new landlords until the full impact of the regulations can be assessed. The London Assembly must take note of changes in housing supply levels, in comparison to rising population levels and other factors of demand, to ensure that there is sufficient private rental stock available.

Question 2: What support do private renters need to help them benefit from the measures contained in the Renters' Rights Act?

8. There are three measures that can be introduced to support private renters to help them benefit from the measures contained in the Renters' Rights Act:

- **The first of which is to ensure that housing targets within London reflect demand for all tenures, and that the right incentives are in place to ensure that built to rent homes are made available for the private rented sector.** This will help to increase the supply of available homes within the private rented sector, allowing for tenants to easily move if they need to move to a new part of London or there is an issue at their property that is not being resolved. Without the ability for tenants to move home more freely, the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act will not increase security for tenants. Tenants would not be able to move to a better home if there is little stock available for them to do so. Increasing supply so that there are fewer potential tenants looking to move per property available also helps to relieve pressure on rents and ensures landlords will not turn away more vulnerable tenants.
- **Secondly, local authorities across all London boroughs should agree to a single guide on how to comply with the Act and take steps to ensure any enforcement action is consistent.** This will help tenants, agents and landlords to fully understand their responsibilities and set clear expectations for enforcement action. Setting this consistency is incredibly beneficial for landlords and agents who have properties across multiple London boroughs, avoiding confusion and improving compliance. Tenants will benefit from the improved compliance of landlords and letting agents as well as a better understanding of their own rights and responsibilities, especially if the guidance and enforcement doesn't change if they move into a different London borough.
- **Thirdly, enforcement action must prioritise tackling rogue landlords and agents, while supporting agents and landlords who are actively trying to comply with the regulations.** Many landlords and agents are concerned that, considering the number of new regulations, they will inadvertently breach the regulations despite all efforts to do so. By approaching these agents and landlords with an education-first approach to prevent repeat offences, local authorities can make it clear that there is no need for landlords to sell their properties out of fear of receiving considerable fines. Rogue landlords however who provide poor quality properties and who pay little mind to their legal requirements should face large financial

penalties. This will make it clear that standards need to be upheld and only good quality landlords and agents should be providing homes in the PRS. This will have a greater impact on raising standards while preventing a decline in available stock.

Question 3: What will be the main challenges for local authorities in London in monitoring and enforcing the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act?

9. There are three main challenges for local authorities in London in monitoring and enforcing measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act:

- **The first is the challenge in targeting rogue landlords and letting agents.** While the Landlord Database introduced by the Act is designed to better inform tenants of the standard of properties, rogue landlords are not likely to be registered onto the Landlord Database or if they are, they may involve the uploading of false documents. Rogue landlords are also not likely to advertise their property openly, making it even more challenging for local authorities to identify which properties in their jurisdiction are being let out illegally or at a poor standard. Local authorities must actively inspect properties and carry out additional investigations into the use of properties that they suspect to be rented out by rogue landlords.
- **Secondly, local authorities will need to work closely in order to ensure consistency in messaging around guidance and enforcement.** We would recommend that organisations such as London Councils, the London Assembly and Greater London Authority should lead on guidance and establish core principles of enforcement to ensure that local authorities are able to greater consistency.
- **Thirdly, local authorities already face a considerable funding shortfall and will struggle to find the capacity to increase inspections.** We expand on this in our response to question 4.

Question 4: Do local authorities in London have the capacity and resources they need to monitor and enforce the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act?

10. Based on London Councils assessment of their current capacity and resources, local authorities in London will struggle to effectively monitor and enforce measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act. While there is no definitive public statement on staffing levels for private rented sector

inspections, London Councils has agreed with the UK Government's assessment on the poor state of local authority finances, with an estimated shortfall of £500m in 2025¹¹. Historic cuts have led to considerable reductions in repairs, inspections and spending within the social rented sector¹², which indicates cuts across all housing tenures. Local authorities across London are being required to do more at a time where housing staff turnover rates have been as high as 20% in recent years¹³. Based on this understanding, local authorities will need more funding to support the enforcement of measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act.

Question 5: How will the Renters' Rights Act affect the Mayor's Private Rented Sector Partnership, manifesto commitments, and work to provide safe and decent homes for Londoners?

11. Our comments are on the understanding that this question refers to the Mayor's vision for private renting in London¹⁴. There is one area that will need to be accelerated and two that should be reviewed pending a review of the impact of the Renters' Right Act.
12. The commitment to reforming courts must be accelerated. The removal of Section 21 notices will lead to an increase of evictions through the Courts. London has the UK's highest average timeframes for evictions from notice to eviction, at 8.5 months according to the High Court Enforcement Officers Association¹⁵. Tenant support charity Shelter estimates that there were 11,400 Section 21 evictions where bailiffs were required to evict tenants between July 2024 and June 2025, with 30,000 Section 21 notices issued in England during the same period¹⁶. Due to the removal of Section 21 notices, we will see thousands of more evictions going through the Courts every year as landlords issue Section 8 notices to tenants instead. Existing evidence suggests that the removal of Section 21 notices will lead to an increase in Section 8 notices, as the English Private Landlord Survey 2024 shows the primary four reasons for a landlord evicting a tenant are valid

¹¹ <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/news-and-press-releases/2025/london-councils-responds-parliamentary-report-warning-cliff-edge-local>

¹² <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/news-and-press-releases/2025/budget-approaches-london-boroughs-highlight-rent-convergence>

¹³ <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/one-in-five-housing-staff-in-london-could-leave-this-year-new-data-says-82503#:~:text=Inside%20Housing%20%20News%20%20One%20in,the%20course%20of%20this%20year.>

¹⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/mayors-priorities-londons-housing-and-land/reforming-private-renting-london?ac-54164=54161>

¹⁵ <https://hcegroup.co.uk/news/2025/possession-delays-costing-landlords-thousands>

¹⁶ https://england.shelter.org.uk/media/press_release/11400_no-fault_bailiff_evictions_in_the_year_since_government_committed_to_ban_them

Section 8 grounds¹⁷. These are that the property was not cared for, the tenant was in arrears, the tenant engaged in anti-social behaviour and that the landlord wanted to sell the property. An increase in waiting times for Courts to make a decision has negative consequences for both good landlords and good tenants. Rogue landlords can use the lengthy and costly court times to place pressure on tenants to leave the property, even if they have a good chance of winning their legal case. Tenants seeking to take advantage of the lengthy court process however can stay put at the property while continuing not to pay rent or breach the terms of the contract. In short, a faster, well-resourced court process that makes quicker decisions is in the best interests of which party is in the legal right.

13. We would recommend that efforts to improve security through tenancy reform and powers to control rents should be temporarily paused until a full review of the impact of the Renters' Rights Act can be made. Should there be a reduction in stock within the PRS, and a subsequent increase in average rents, then taking similar measures would reduce supply further, placing even greater pressure on rents.

Question 6: How can the Mayor support local authorities in London to implement and enforce the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act, and monitor the impact on Londoners?

14. There are three ways that the Mayor can support local authorities in London to implement and enforce the measures introduced by the Renters' Rights Act:

- **Firstly, improving the competency and standard of letting agents will help to improve compliance and the quality of service to tenants without requiring local authorities to actively inspect properties.** Since there are no qualification or training requirements for letting agents in England, the quality of service and compliance with regulations is inconsistent. Considering the limitations on local authority resources, we would propose that introducing requirements for letting agents to be qualified in London would be a long-term solution. In the short-term, requiring letting agents to register with an approved professional body, and allowing professional bodies to regulate their members, can help to improve standards without the need to establish a new body in London for the monitoring of the standards of letting agents.

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-private-landlord-survey-2024-main-report/english-private-landlord-survey-2024-main-report>

- **Secondly, the Mayor of London must direct and support London-wide guidance on the Renters' Rights Act as well as support local authorities to establish consistent enforcement practices.** If these are driven centrally by the GLA, rather than individually by local authorities developing their own standards, greater consistency in both guidance and enforcement is more likely to be achieved.
- **Thirdly, in light of the removal of Section 21, the GLA should consider publishing updated guidance on homelessness.** There is currently confusion around if local authorities should advise tenants to stay at properties until they receive a possession order by the court¹⁸, although sections 6.29-6.38 of the latest version of the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities states that there should not be a blanket policy that the tenant should always or never stay at the property but that the local authority should take steps to work with the landlord to identify how the tenant can remain at the property¹⁹. Updated guidance should take the opportunity to reduce confusion and to advise local authorities on how to proceed if a Section 8 notice has been issued as Section 21 notices will no longer be legal.

Question 7: How can the Mayor help renters and landlords understand their new rights and responsibilities under the Act?

15. The two most important ways that the Mayor can help renters and landlords understand their new rights and responsibilities under the Act have already been mentioned in our response to question 6:

- **Firstly, create a single set of guidance and enforcement policies across all London Boroughs.** This will help improve the consistency of messaging, improve understanding from both landlords and tenants and prevent landlords and tenants from having to learn how each London Borough interprets and enforces the legislation.
- **Secondly, through working with professional bodies such as Propertymark, introducing greater standards and requirements for letting agents helps to ensure that more agents**

¹⁸ <https://www.property118.com/are-councils-acting-illegally-when-telling-tenants-to-stay-put/>

¹⁹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/693042c54bedc0e762303fd1/Homelessness_code_of_guidance_18_Nov_2025.pdf

in London understand the Act and how they need to adjust their standard procedures.

Setting these standards also increases trust in the sector which, along with greater knowledge of the Act, will help letting agents resolve disputes between tenants and landlords.

Question 8: What impact will the Renters' Rights Act have on the supply of rented properties, and how can this be monitored?

16. We are concerned that the Renters' Rights Act will have a negative impact on the supply of rented properties. While efforts have been made by Propertymark and the sector to avoid this, as fewer rental properties is not in the best interests of tenants, landlords or letting agents, Propertymark members continue to report that a considerable number of landlords have expressed their interest to sell. The English Private Landlord Survey 2024 highlighted that the two largest reasons that landlords sold as recent and forthcoming legislative changes²⁰. In London there is evidence to suggest that the number of homes for sale for owner occupiers has increased considerably, that 22% of all newly listed homes for sale in inner London during July 2024 were rented out at some point in the previous decade²¹. This was a ten-year high and compares to 9% across the whole UK over the same period. Once the Renters' Right Act has been implemented, the PRS Database combined with local authority licensing schemes would serve as a good way to monitor the size of the PRS. If the number of landlords and properties registered across local authorities and the Database changes, that would serve as a way to monitor the impact of the Act.

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-private-landlord-survey-2024-main-report/english-private-landlord-survey-2024-main-report#starting-and-ending-tenancies>

²¹ <https://www.estateagenttoday.co.uk/breaking-news/2024/08/london-landlord-exodus-on-the-rise-warning/#:~:text=Ongoing%20tax%20and%20regulatory%20clampdowns,%E2%82%AC%C2%AFresearch%20from%20TwentyCi.&text=Colin%20Bradshaw%2C%20chief%20executive%20of,London%20it%20is%20%C2%A32%2C399.>