**Housing Bill – Briefing for CEO Forum April/May 2025**

**Housing Bill as presented**

* Homelessness prevention duties
	+ Duty on relevant bodies to ‘Ask and Act’ about people’s housing situation
* Domestic abuse provision
	+ Bring legislation in line with most up to date understandings of domestic abuse
	+ Require social landlords to implement a domestic abuse policy
	+ New domestic abuse financial control related pre-action requirement
* Rent control in private rented sector
	+ Require local authorities to monitor and report conditions in their local PRS
	+ Powers to introduce rent control areas with restrictions on PRS rent increases
* Tenants’ rights
	+ New rights to keep a pet and make decorative changes

**SFHA amendments to the Housing Bill**

**Homelessness prevention**

We have worked alongside Crisis and Scottish Government to introduce amendments to the Bill which would provide further clarity on the duties and actions of relevant bodies as well as on information sharing and co-ordination between relevant bodies. These were lodged by the Housing Minister and were agreed to by the Social Justice and Social Security committee.

We also briefed the committee in support of a group of amendments which would remove the intentionality test in cases where people are threatened with homelessness. These were also passed by the SJSS committee.

**Exempting MMR from PRS rent control measures**

We have worked cross-party to seek an exemption for Mid-Market Rent homes from the rent control provisions contained in the Bill for the private rented sector. Amendments which seek to do this in some form have been lodged by Labour, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Greens.

We are continuing to work with Scottish Government to gain their support on an exemption and are regularly meeting with officials to evidence the fact that external rent controls are not needed and that they will have a detrimental impact on the supply of MMR homes. The Scottish Government have opened their consultation on exemptions from PRS rent controls and we will respond on behalf of our members.

In addition, we have also worked to exempt MMR homes from the provisions in the Bill which would restrict the frequency of rent increases in certain circumstances to ensure the continuation of a once yearly increase in April.

The above amendments will be considered by the Local Government, Housing and Planning committee from Tuesday 6th May and so there outcome is not yet known.

**Appeals process for decisions made by the Regulator**

Following on from our research into the regulatory framework and subsequent evidence given to the Local Government, Housing and Planning committee, we have also worked to introduce an independent appeals process for decisions made by the Scottish Housing Regulator. This would introduce a right of appeal to a First-tier Tribunal after a review of the decision has been taken by the Regulator.

This amendment will also be considered by the LGHP committee, so the outcome is not known.

**Notice delivery**

We have worked with Scottish Government and others on an amendment to the Bill which would remove the requirement for recorded delivery of rent notices.

This amendment will also be considered by the LGHP committee, so the outcome is not known.



