



A clean-sheet new start for renting homes

Renting homes is big business. Nearly a third of the population rents. The current law is archaic, complex and inflexible. The Law Commission proposes a radical new scheme.

Key features are:

- Identical contracts for council and housing association tenants. This will increase the security of the nearly 1.5 million housing association tenant households.
- Improvements to council and housing association tenants' rights eg better succession rights, the right to apply to add a partner or flatmate to the contract.
- Government approved model contracts to make private renting easier, cheaper and more flexible.
- Compulsory written contracts for all who rent, clearly setting out the rights and obligations of both landlords and occupiers.
- A clear and practical legal framework for supported housing, which provides accommodation for people with drink, drug or mental health problems, women's refuges etc.

Martin Partington, who has been in charge of the review, said:

Our recommendations deliver better regulation, giving government new flexibility to provide and deliver social housing. They also make clear the rights and responsibilities of landlords and renters. This is an historic opportunity to deliver a modern legal framework for renting homes.

The recommendations result from one of the largest consultation exercises ever undertaken by the Law Commission: over 70 public events were addressed, and over 400 written responses received to the two consultation papers.

Notes for Editors

1. The Law Commission is a non-political independent body, set up by Parliament in 1965 to keep all the law of England and Wales under review, and to recommend reform where it is needed.
2. A third of British citizens rent their homes. These recommendations will potentially apply to over 15 million people.
3. Rented Homes (LC284) was published in November 2003. This gave our key recommendations and proposals. Today's report provides a final Bill and model contracts which we invite ODPM to use.
4. Further info is available from http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/renting_homes.htm
5. For all press queries please contact:

Correna Callendar, Communications Manager 020 7453 1273
or Dan Leighton 020 7453 1235
e-mail: communications@lawcommission.gsi.gov.uk