

Motion to Council on S21 Housing Act 1988

Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 means that right now families in rented homes can be kicked out with just two months' notice (after 6 months as a tenant) - without blame on their conduct as a tenant (renter) or for any other valid reason; they are no-fault evictions.

The consequences can be dire with people ending up sharing a single room in temporary accommodation, children having to unnecessarily change schools and lose friendships and much more. It's unfair and in this day and age totally illogical but it's perfectly legal!

England is one of the few countries in Europe that allows people to be evicted without private landlords having to give a reason. The threat of being kicked out without doing anything wrong causes insecurity and stress for millions of families, and makes people suffering shoddy housing scared to complain.

Locally we have done much to try and improve the standards in private rented accommodation, for example through selective licensing. The Government has recently announced other changes to the private rented sector but with these s21 notices (for a 6 month tenancy) whilst they give landlords flexibility, they are a major cause of homelessness nationally and create lots of churn.

The Scottish government has already acted to protect private tenants by restricting no-fault evictions there. We are delighted therefore that the Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary James Brokenshire has just announced that no-fault 'section 21' evictions are to be abolished to protect people in private rented accommodation. A consultation is to take place before the summer on the plans, and we urge this Council to take part. The motion is:-

"This Council believes S21 of the Housing Act 1988 is a major cause of homelessness, creating distress, insecurity and housing churn for renters, and therefore supports the Government's recent decision to abolish no-fault 'section 21' evictions and resolves to take part in the Government's consultation on their plans."

Proposer: Cllr Tom Fox

Secunder: Cllr Bill Chatt

Date: 15 April 2019