

FAIR POSSESSIONS COALITION

*ARLA Propertymark; Cornwall Residential Landlords Association; Country Land and Business Association; East Midlands Property Owners; **Eastern Landlords Association**; Guild of Residential Landlords; Humber Landlords Association; iHowz; Landlord Action; Leeds Property Association; National Landlords Alliance; National Landlords Association; North West Landlords Association; Portsmouth and District Private Landlords' Association; Residential Landlords Association; Safe Agent; South West Landlords Association; Theresa Wallace (Chair, The Lettings Industry Council)*

PRESS RELEASE

**Under embargo until:
00:01, 4th June 2019**

LANDLORD CONFIDENCE KEY TO POSSESSION REFORMS

SECTION 21 repossessions should be retained in the private rented sector unless and until a new system is in place that provides landlords with the same level of confidence about repossessing properties in legitimate circumstances.

Groups representing landlords and letting agents forming a 'Fair Possessions Coalition' have united in warning that plans to abolish Section 21 repossessions without a new system in place would undermine investment in the sector at a time when private landlords are relied upon on to provide homes for one in five households in England.

In a statement the Coalition notes that whilst landlords much prefer to have good tenants staying long term in their properties they need certainty that in legitimate circumstances, such as tenant rent arrears or anti-social behaviour, they can swiftly and easily repossess their properties in much the same way as social landlords and mortgage lenders.

It is argued that the current 'Section 8' process, under which landlords can repossess properties based on a number of grounds, is not fit for purpose and does not provide the level of certainty offered by Section 21. The current judicial process for dealing with possession cases is confusing for tenants and takes an average of over five months from a landlord applying to the courts for a property to be repossessed to it actually happening.

Instead of tinkering with the system, the Coalition calls for a comprehensive overhaul of the regulations and processes enabling landlords to repossess their properties. It should lay out clear grounds for repossession that are unable to be exploited by criminal landlords or unreliable tenants.

Linked to the reform should be the establishment of a new, dedicated, fully funded housing court. This should make better use of mediation taking into account models in use abroad and meet in local venues such as schools and community centres,

making the process less intimidating and easier for landlords and tenants to obtain the swift and accessible justice they need if the relationship is to work effectively.

The Coalition argues that such reforms must form part of a wider package of measures including welfare reforms to better support vulnerable tenants to sustain tenancies and smart taxation to encourage the development of the new homes for private rent the country needs.

-ENDS-

- The Fair Possessions Coalition is made up of: ARLA Propertymark; Cornwall Residential Landlords Association; Country Land and Business Association; East Midlands Property Owners; **Eastern Landlords Association**; Guild of Residential Landlords; Humber Landlords Association; iHowz; Landlord Action; Leeds Property Association; National Landlords Alliance; National Landlords Association; North West Landlords Association; Portsmouth and District Private Landlords' Association; Residential Landlords Association; Safe Agent; South West Landlords Association; and Theresa Wallace (Chair, The Lettings Industry Council)
- Full copies of the statement, which have been sent to the Government, are available on request.
- For further information, please contact Ed Jacobs, consultant to the Residential Landlords Association, by emailing ed.jacobs@publicaffairsco.com or ring 0113 278 02111 (office hours) or 07706386773 (outside office hours).