

People and Health Overview Committee – 16 March 2026

Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026



New Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 - Background

Renters Rights Act 2025 - Royal Ascent on 27 October 2025
Started under the previous government as the Renters (Reform) Bill 2023

Phase 1 commencement 1 May 2026

‘The biggest change to renting in a generation’

Existing enforcement provisions retained (Housing safety, Improvement Notices, MEES and HMO's etc) and expanded by the new Act to include new enforcement powers

Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 – Background

New renting rules including:

- abolition of s21 ‘no reason/no fault’ evictions
- new possession grounds/processes
- new letting anti-discrimination provisions
- changes to rent increases and how rent is advertised

New renting rules = a need to get compliance = new enforcement powers =
an updated enforcement policy

Phase 2 – National Private Rented Sector (PRS) Landlord Database

Phase 3 – Decent Homes Standard extended to PRS



Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 - What's new?

New duty on councils to enforce the 'landlord legislation'

13 new breaches and criminal offences

New system of civil financial penalties - minor breaches fines up to £7,000 and criminal offences fines up to £40,000.

The government have prescribed fine 'starting points' for all offences

New duty to report on enforcement activity

Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 - Impact of the Act and new Policy

Improved rights for tenants and professionalise landlords

Increased demand for council services

Shift from achieving compliance, to punishment and deterrence – more fines, bigger fines

Reporting - increased oversight and transparency of PRS enforcement

New National PRS Landlord Database proposed in Phase 2 - landlord portal, enforcement intelligence and enforcement income

Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026 - Dorset Council Response

Amended Housing Standards and Tenants Rights Enforcement Policy 2026

New Burdens Funding for both Housing Standards and Housing Options Teams

Communications plan for landlords and tenants

Landlord Forum Meeting and Newsletters

Staff training and systems development ready for 1 May 2026 implementation

