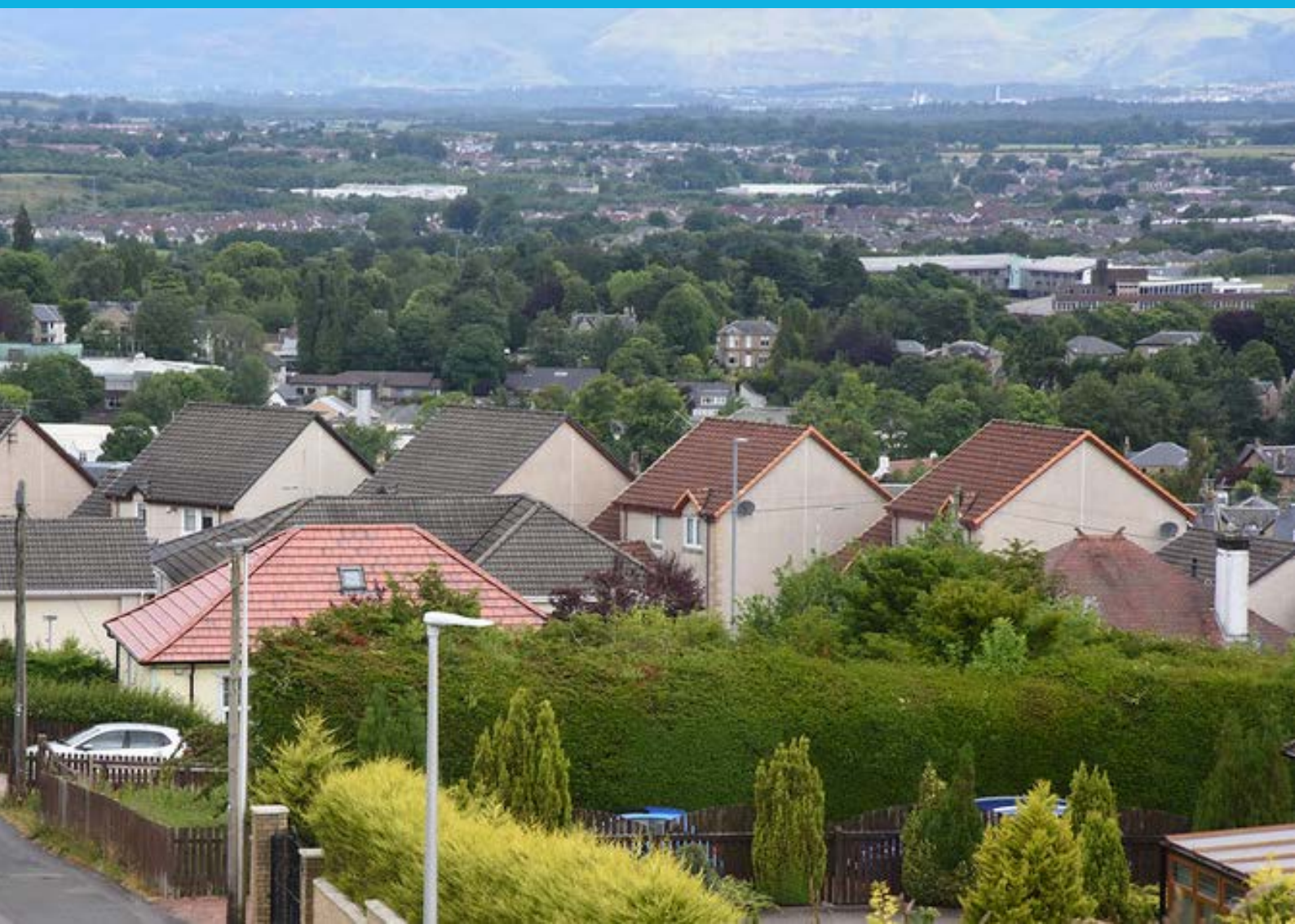


# Renting Matters in Falkirk

No.8



# Welcome

to our March 2026 edition of **Renting Matters in Falkirk**, a newsletter for private sector landlords and letting agents.

This edition provides an update on key developments affecting the private rented sector, an overview of events planned for 2026 and those that have recently taken place. It highlights online information as well as forthcoming areas we hope you will help us raise awareness of, with your tenants.

We have partnered with the Scottish Association of Landlords and Under One Roof to provide updates in areas they specialise in.

We hope you will find this newsletter informative and useful.

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- **2026 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum (30/9/26)**
- **Voice of the Tenant and Landlord Survey - published reports**

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# Sector Information

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## Housing (Scotland) Act

### Article by Scottish Association of Landlords

The Housing (Scotland) Bill, which was laid before the Scottish Parliament in March 2024, has now received Royal Assent which means that it is now law. However, the provisions in the Act will not come into force for some time yet. Most will require further legislation, to firm up the details of how they will operate, before they can be implemented. Implementation dates for some measures in the Act have recently been announced – more details can be found at <https://scottishlandlords.com/news-and-campaigns/news/housing-scotland-act-2025-update>.

As a reminder, the Act contains a number of provisions which will make changes to the private rented sector (PRS) including long-term rent controls which will apply within rent control areas (RCAs) designated by the government, greater rights for tenants to personalise their home, obtain permission for a pet and end a joint tenancy where there is disagreement between the tenants about ending the lease. It also makes provision for the government to introduce further legislation in the future to convert older assured and short-assured tenancies in to private residential tenancies.

Attention now turns to the wording of secondary legislation along with developing guidance and template documents required for the provisions to come into force. The government will work with stakeholder groups representing landlords and tenants in the lead up to the Act's provisions being implemented, to ensure that the finer details of the legislation are workable and well understood by those living and working in the PRS.

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# Discrimination rules change on 1 May 2026

## Article by Scottish Association of Landlords

The UK Government has recently introduced new legislation, the Renters (Rights) Act, which includes provisions to make it illegal for landlords and letting agents to apply a blanket ban on renting to people who receive benefits or families with children.

Whilst other provisions in the Act only apply in England, the provisions on renting to those with children or on benefits will also apply in Scotland and Wales and will come into force in Scotland on 1 May 2026.

This legislation requires landlords and letting agents to ensure that families and those on benefits are not discriminated against when looking for a home to rent. Landlords and letting agents will still be able to refuse to rent to those with children or on benefits in some circumstances, like:

- if the property would be overcrowded or is genuinely not suitable for children e.g. it is a retirement or student accommodation, there are safeguarding concerns over shared facilities in the building or it is not safe for occupation by children.
- if the tenants' income is insufficient to cover the rent (after accounting for other household expenditure). Landlords should set the same income requirement for all prospective tenants and treat all forms of income equally.

The legislation renders of no effect any term in an insurance policy (entered into or renewed on/ after 1 May 2026) or mortgage policy which prohibit or restrict the occupation of the dwelling by a child or which would prohibit occupation by a benefits claimant.

Offences under this legislation will be criminal offences in Scotland, subject to a level 3 fine on the standard scale (currently £1000). Convictions under this legislation will be considered to be relevant with respect to the 'fit and proper person' tests for landlord and letting agent registration.

The Scottish Government has published guidance on the new provisions which can be [read here](#). These new provisions are in addition to existing discrimination provisions under the Equality Act 2010, which prohibit landlords and letting agents from treating tenants less favourably based on protected characteristics (disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation). Age, marriage, and being in a civil partnership are also protected characteristics but are not included for discrimination in renting out a home.

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# Awaab's Law duties set to commence in October 2026

Article by Scottish Association of Landlords

New regulations to protect tenants from damp and mould have been approved by the Scottish Parliament. The Investigation and Commencement of Repair (Scotland) Regulations 2026 will introduce new duties on landlords to investigate reports of damp and mould and start any repairs needed within a set timescale. The new duties are set to come into force on 6 October 2026.

This is the first set of regulations for the implementation of Awaab's Law, named after two-year-old Awaab Ishak who died in 2020 from a respiratory condition caused by mould in his family's housing association flat in England.

Landlords in Scotland are already required under the Repairing and Tolerable Standards to repair damp and mould problems in their properties. What this new law will do is introduce clear timescales in which they must do this. For details of these timescales, go to <https://scottishlandlords.com/news-and-campaigns/news/awaabs-law-duties-set-to-commence-in-october-2026>

If a landlord is unable to adhere to the required timescales then they must set out in writing to the tenant the reasons why and the expected timescale in which they will comply.

In instances where damp and/or mould is not a result of a building defect, landlords would be expected to work with tenants to signpost them to appropriate advice and guidance.

Detailed government guidance will be published in due course to help landlords and tenants understand their rights and responsibilities when damp and mould appear in a property.



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# Ask and Act

The Ask and Act duty requires public bodies to actively ask individuals about their housing situation and, if necessary, take action to prevent homelessness. This duty became law on 6/11/25.

If there are any issues which have the potential to affect your tenants housing situation or make them homeless please identify them as early as possible. If appropriate, please make a referral on to the Homeless Prevention Team for support/ assistance. Early referral allows the (Homeless Prevention) team to work with you and your tenant to explore options, prevent issues from escalating: supporting positive outcomes for everyone.

If you think that you or your tenant could benefit from support, please contact the team on 01324 503600 or by emailing: [preventionteam@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:preventionteam@falkirk.gov.uk) (please ask permission from your tenant, before making a referral). Information is also available online at: [Housing Options and Homeless Prevention](#).

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# Making Tax Digital for Income Tax

Changes have been introduced from 6 April 2026 regarding the way landlords report Income Tax. Further information is available at: [Making Tax Digital for Income Tax and HMRC videos and webinars for Making Tax Digital for Income Tax](#).



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# Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)

Article provided by Under One Roof

Back in June 2025, the Scottish Government launched a consultation on new MEES regulations for private rented properties. This consultation closed in August 2025, and the Government has yet to publish any further next steps.

If the draft legislation, called the Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations, was to be passed by the Scottish Parliament, it would introduce new requirements for all privately rented properties in Scotland to reach Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C by 2028 for new tenancies, and by 2033 for all rented properties. There would be responsibilities placed on landlords whose properties don't yet reach EPC band C to make improvements such as installing insulation, replacing old, inefficient heating systems and making fabric repairs to improve the energy efficiency of their property.

[Click here to find out more about MEES and the closed consultation](#)

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# Heat and Energy Efficiency Technical Suitability Assessment (HEETSA)

Article provided by Under One Roof

At the same time in June 2025, the Scottish Government also opened a consultation on HEETSA, a new impartial assessment system to help homeowners identify the correct energy efficiency improvements for their home. In the retrofit sector as it currently stands, it can be difficult for homeowners to get unbiased recommendations for clean heating and energy efficiency measures which are correctly tailored to what their building needs. HEETSA, if introduced, could create a standardised assessment process, carried out by impartial, qualified professionals, resulting in a clear report which is easy for homeowners to understand and act upon.

Like the MEES consultation, the HEETSA consultation closed in August 2025. Since then, the Scottish Government has commissioned the international infrastructure engineering firm AECOM to review how retrofit assessments currently take place, and recommend improvements.

[Click here to find out more about HEETSA and the finished consultation](#)

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# Compulsory Owners' Associations

Article provided by Under One Roof

In December 2025, the Scottish Law Commission released a new report on tenement law, urging the Scottish Government to introduce compulsory owners' associations. Owners' associations already exist throughout Scotland, and are crucial for helping tenement owners navigate repairs to common parts of their building, such as the roof or stairs. Organising these kinds of repairs requires working together, communicating openly, and making decisions fairly. Being part of an owners' association, with a constitution and established processes for voting on decisions, can make this process much easier.

The proposed new legislation would create an owners' association in every tenement building in Scotland, with the following new responsibilities for the flat owners:

- to hold at least one annual meeting,
- appoint a manager for the association,
- approve a repair budget, and
- ensure building information is provided to property registers.

At the moment, this is just at the proposal stage, but we will of course keep local authorities updated if it gets introduced to the Scottish Parliament.

[Click here to find out more about owners' associations, and the Scottish Law Commission's recommendations](#)



# Falkirk Council: Events Update

2026

- ▶ Retrofitting Webinar (18/2/26)
- ▶ Building Insurance Webinar (25/2/26)
- ▶ Damp & Mould Webinar (17/3/26)
- ▶ 2026 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum (30/9/26)
- ▶ Voice of the Tenant and Landlord Survey - published reports

2025

- ▶ Navigating Tenemental Repairs (1/10/25)
- ▶ 2025 Landlord and Letting Agent Forum (29/10/25)

2026

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## Retrofitting Webinar: Wednesday 18/2/26

Under One Roof hosted a free webinar, introducing the basics of retrofitting and explained how you can work with fellow owners to carry out energy efficiency improvements throughout your building. You can access a recording of this webinar on our [Under One Roof](#) webpage.

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## Building Insurance Webinar: Wednesday 25/2/26

Under One Roof hosted a free webinar, exploring individual building insurance issues. You can access a recording of this webinar on our [Under One Roof](#) webpage.

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# Damp & Mould: Tuesday 17/3/26

Under One Roof hosted a free webinar outlining how this new law will affect you, your tenants and what you can do to prevent and treat, damp and mould. You can access a recording of this webinar on our [Under One Roof](#) webpage.

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## 2026 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum

**Save the Date: Wednesday 30/9/26, 4pm - 7pm**

Our 2026 Landlord and Letting Agent Forum will take place on Wednesday 29/9/26, 4pm - 7pm, at The Westfield Café, Falkirk Stadium: this will be an in-person event.

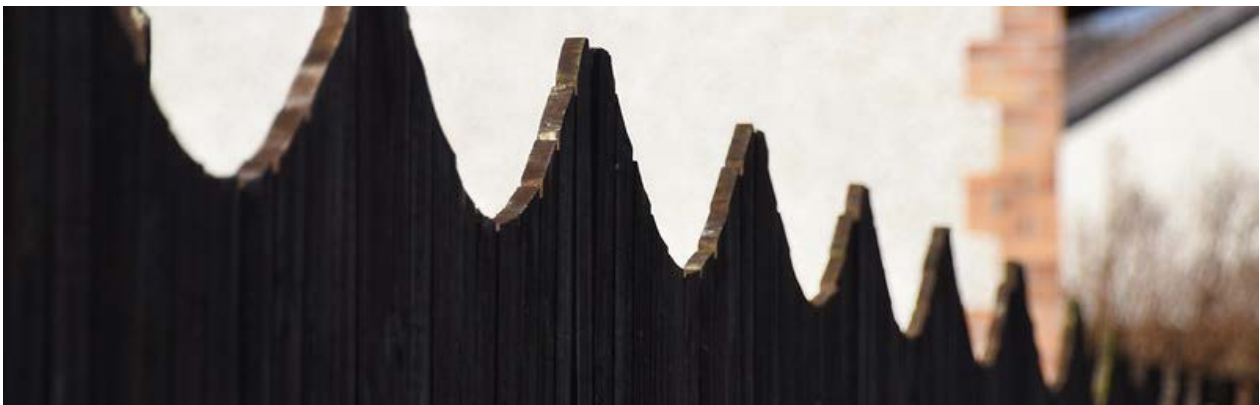
We plan to add the finalised agenda to our [Landlord and Letting Agent Forum](#) page, during August 2026. We will also email you, confirming the agenda when booking opens for the Forum.

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## Voice of Tenant and Landlord Surveys Wave 1 and Wave 2: published reports

The November 2025 Webinar to discuss the Wave 1 survey, was unfortunately cancelled due to low numbers. We had planned to reschedule a Wave 1 and 2 comparison Webinar for Spring 2026 but have decided instead to share the recently published comparison information, at this time. These reports can be accessed online via [Safe Deposit Scotland Charitable Trust](#) at: [Housing Research | SafeDeposits Scotland Charitable Trust](#).

We hope you find this information useful and will review the possibility of a Webinar in future, should there be a demand.



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# Navigating Tenement Building Repairs: Wednesday 1/10/25

Under One Roof hosted a free webinar on Navigating Tenemental Building Repairs. You can access a recording of this webinar on our [Under One Roof](#) webpage.

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# 2025 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum: Wednesday 29/10/25



The 2025 Landlord and Letting Agent Forum was held in-person on Wednesday 29 October 2025, between 4pm - 7pm, at the Westfield Café, Falkirk Stadium.

You can access the following information via Participate+, our digital engagement platform, at: [2025 Landlord and Letting Agent Forum | Participate+](#):

- Agenda
- Presentations:
  - Scottish Association of Landlords
  - Energy Presentation: ECO4 and GBIS Flex
  - Private Sector Team presentation
  - Mixed Tenure Repairs
  - Deposit Assistance Scheme
  - Homeless Prevention Team
- Home Energy Scotland Private Sector Landlord Leaflet
- Contact details: presenters and stall holders

# Falkirk Council: Private Sector Information

- ▶ [Biennial Private Rented Sector Tenant Survey](#)
- ▶ [Renting Privately in Falkirk Newsletter](#)
- ▶ [Renting Trends in Falkirk](#)
- ▶ [Online Information](#)
- ▶ [Let us know...](#)

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## Biennial Private Rented Sector Tenant Survey

We made the commitment to issue a survey to all private rented tenants, every two years, in our [2023 - 2028 Local Housing Strategy \(LHS\)](#). We are working towards issuing our 2025/26 Biennial Private Rented Sector Tenants Survey during April/ May 2026. This survey hopes to:

- increase awareness of assistance and support
- find out why tenants are renting now and their property aspirations
- find out about their renting experience and affordability
- find out how the Private Sector Team can help

This survey will help us track changes, build on our understanding of Falkirk's private rented sector and inform future information/ support.

We plan to share a link to the survey, with you, once live. We hope you will help us raise awareness of this publication, by sharing it with your tenants.



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# Renting Privately in Falkirk Newsletter

We are currently working towards publishing our second Renting Privately in Falkirk Newsletter: this is a newsletter aimed at private sector tenants across Falkirk. We plan to share a link to the newsletter, with you, once published. We hope you will help us raise awareness of this publication, by sharing it with your tenants.

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## Renting Trends in Falkirk

We collect information from private rented sector adverts every week. This helps us to:

- build a picture of the private rented sector
- support the development of our Local Housing Strategy
- ensure that adverts contain the correct information
- where necessary, enforce Landlord Registration requirements

We have shared information online every quarter since 2022/23 and, where possible, provide an annual overview. This helps us to track changes in rents over time. You can access this information at:

- [Renting privately: Rental information \(current\)](#)
- [Renting privately: Rental information \(previous\)](#)



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# Online information

Private housing is our main web page. It hosts a range of information relevant to landlords, letting agents, private tenants and homeowners including:

- What's new in the Private Sector page, includes information about forthcoming events, consultations, publications, energy advice and funding sources.
- What we do and provides useful links
- Rent Deposit Assistance Scheme
- Energy advice
- Financial and practical support
- Renting privately: What you should know

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## Let us know...

If you would like to suggest topics/ ideas for our Forum, newsletters or online information, please email [privatesector.housing@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:privatesector.housing@falkirk.gov.uk).

### Privacy Statement

The council must comply with Data Protection Legislation as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018. If you supply personal information to us you can find out how we handle personal data at [www.falkirk.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/privacy)

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, LARGE PRINT or audio tape please contact the Private Sector Team.

If you have any queries regarding this newsletter, please contact the Private Sector Team:

Tel: 01324 590797

Email: [privatesector.housing@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:privatesector.housing@falkirk.gov.uk)

March 2026