

Renting Matters in Falkirk

No.7



Welcome

to our September 2025 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, information from the Private Sector Team including upcoming events and future activities as well as highlighting new and existing information and sources of assistance.

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

We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful.

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Update on the Housing (Scotland) Bill

By Scottish Association of Landlords

The Housing (Scotland) Bill, which was first published in March 2024, has now completed stage 2 of its parliamentary progress. The Bill contains a number of provisions which would make changes to the private rented sector (PRS) including long-term rent controls which would 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 into private residential tenancies.

During stage 2, MSPs from all political parties had the opportunity to propose amendments to the Bill. Nearly 600 were proposed, which according to government officials is the second highest number of amendments proposed for any piece of legislation ever laid before the Scottish Parliament. An important government amendment to allow rents in RCAs to rise in line with inflation + 1% (up to a maximum of 6%) was agreed to.

In total the amendments were debated over nine days of committee meetings involving over 23 hours of discussion. Apart from amendments to add purpose-built student accommodation tenancies into local authorities' assessments of rent conditions (which the government will likely seek to reverse at stage three), most of the amendments agreed to have been relatively uncontroversial.

The Bill is now at stage 3 which is a final opportunity for MSPs to propose amendments to the legislation. We don't know yet how long the Stage 3 process will take.

If the Bill passes stage 3 then it is submitted for Royal Assent, where the King officially agrees to the Bill becoming a legally binding Act. While it is possible for some measures in a Bill to come into force immediately, in the case of the Housing (Scotland) Bill, the provisions affecting the PRS require secondary legislation to be drafted and approved to set out the finer details of how they will operate. This means that it is still likely to be another year or two (and possibly longer for some provisions) before they come into force.



Scottish Lettings Day 2025

The annual conference of the Scottish Association of Landlords (SAL) is taking place on Tuesday 21 October 2025, between 8.45am and 4.15pm, at Scottish Gas Murrayfield, Edinburgh. Programme and booking information is available on the SAL website at: [Scottish Letting Day - Scottish Association of Landlords \(SAL\)](#)

Tenemental Change Update

Article by Under One Roof

Recent Consultations

On 6th June, the Scottish Government launched a consultation on the introduction of new minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) for privately-rented properties in Scotland. The consultation, called the Draft Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations consultation, ran until 29th August and is now closed. The new MEES have been proposed as part of the Government's efforts to lower the country's carbon emissions, 19% of which comes from the way we heat our domestic properties. They are part of a wider set of reforms including EPC reform and the Heat in Buildings Bill, which all aim to reduce the carbon emissions caused by inefficient domestic energy use.

Among the proposals will be a requirement for privately rented properties to reach Band C of the new EPC ratings by the end of 2033, ensuring warmer homes and lower heating bills for tenants and landlords. Exemptions of 5 years will be put in place where tenants refuse to give consent to energy efficiency improvements, so landlords will not be penalised for being unable to secure consent from tenants.

[To find out more about the consultation, click here.](#)

The Scottish Government has also consulted on proposals for a new Heat and Energy Efficiency Technical Suitability Assessment (HEETSA), to help homeowners identify the correct energy efficiency improvements for their home. The consultation paper suggested that a Government-approved mechanism could help owners to choose how to improve their home, based on impartial assessments carried out by experts. The consultation closed on 29th August. [Click here to find out more.](#)

EPC Reform

New Energy Performance Certificate reforms are expected to be introduced to Parliament in autumn this year, and to come into effect in autumn 2026. As they currently stand, the proposals include an entirely new ratings system, providing more in-depth information on energy efficiency, emissions and cost, in a clearer and more accessible format. Additionally, the validity period for EPCs will be reduced from ten years to five, prompting more frequent assessments.

[Click here to find out more about EPC reforms](#)

Heat in Buildings Bill

As of April 2025, the Scottish Government has confirmed that a revised Heat in Buildings Bill will be introduced to Parliament later this year. This new Bill, in contrast to the previous draft Bill, will introduce a target for decarbonising heating systems in Scotland by 2045, rather than a prohibition against the use of polluting systems. The Bill will not include minimum energy efficiency standards for privately-rented properties, but instead these will be introduced in the draft regulations referenced above. Sign-up for our newsletter on the Under One Roof website and follow our Facebook and Instagram accounts to keep informed of any news on the Bill.

[Click here to find out more about the Heat in Buildings Bill](#)

Radio Teleswitch Service Switches Off from 30th June

Article by Under One Roof

Starting on the 30 June 2025, moving in phases across the country, Scotland's Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) for electric heating systems will be turned off. RTS is a system which uses long-wave radio signals to switch electricity meters from peak to off-peak prices. It allows users of electrical heating systems such as storage heaters to save money by heating their storage heater during off-peak hours. First introduced in the 1980s, the radio technology it uses is now considered out-of-date compared to modern smart meters, and so the service is being switched off.



However, over 100,000 homes in Scotland still use RTS meters. Under One Roof shares the concerns of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel that people in rural areas, and those who are already in fuel poverty or otherwise vulnerable, could be negatively affected by the switch-off.

Those who are still using storage heaters or electric boilers with RTS meters on or after 30th June could experience incorrectly high bills, as their meter will not automatically switch them from peak to off-peak tariffs. They could also experience interruptions to their electricity supply.

It is therefore very important, if you own a home with a storage heater or electric boiler, to check if you will be affected by the RTS switch-off. If you have an RTS meter, contact your electricity supplier right away to arrange a replacement meter fitting. If you are not sure whether you have an RTS meter, you can check in the following ways:

- Check your bill. Your tariff may be called something like ‘Economy 10,’ ‘Storage Heating Control’ or ‘Total Heating with Total Control.’
- Check your meter. Your electricity meter may have a switch box beside it labelled ‘RTS.’
- Check your heating system. You are more likely to have an RTS meter if you use an electric boiler or storage heater.

If in doubt, contact your electricity supplier as soon as possible. They will be able to advise on whether you have an RTS meter, and what to do to get it replaced.

Falkirk Council: Private Sector Team Update

- ▶ Navigating Tenement Building Repairs Webinar (1/10/25)
- ▶ 2025 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum (29/10/25)
- ▶ Retrofitting Webinar (18/2/26)
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Navigating Tenement Building Repairs Webinar

Save the Date: Wednesday 1/10/25, noon – 1pm

Under One Roof, in conjunction with the Private Sector Team, are hosting a free webinar on Wednesday 1/10/25, noon to 1pm.

This webinar is open to homeowners, landlords and letting agents across the Falkirk area and will include

- tenement maintenance
- how to organise common repairs
- Q & A session

Booking information is now available at: [Navigating Common Repairs I Falkirk](#)



2025 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum

Save the Date: Wednesday 29/10/25, 4pm – 7pm

Our 2025 Landlord and Letting Agent Forum will take place on Wednesday 29 October 2025, 4pm – 7pm, at The Westfield Café, Falkirk Stadium and will be an in-person event.

We are currently finalising the agenda and hope to share this with you soon.

We will add agenda information to our [What's new in the Private Sector and Landlord and Letting Agent Forum - Falkirk Council](#) pages soon. We will also email you, confirming the agenda when the booking opens for the Forum.



Retrofitting Webinar

Save the Date: Wednesday 18/2/26, noon – 1pm

Under One Roof, in conjunction with the Falkirk Council, are hosting a Retrofitting Webinar on Wednesday 18/2/26, noon to 1pm.

This webinar is open to homeowners, landlords and letting agents across the Falkirk area and is free to attend.

We plan to add agenda information to our [What's new in the Private Sector and Under One Roof](#) pages late 2025. We will also email you, when booking for this Webinar opens.

Staff changes...

Neil Wilson was appointed as the Senior Private Sector and Intervention Officer, early August 2025. Overseeing the work of the Private Sector Team, Neil has worked within our extended team for 12 years and brings with him a wealth of knowledge.

You will get to chance to meet Neil at our 2025 Landlord & Letting Agent Forum, on 29 October 2025.

Prescribed Information Checks

In March 2023, the Private Sector Team started a Prescribed Information pilot. This involved asking new and renewing landlords, without a professional managing agent, to submit copies of relevant safety certificates, as part of their landlord registration application.

These requests are a check for safety and legislative purposes, to ensure private landlords have the required documents and that properties meet both the Repairing and Tolerable Standards.

So far in 2025/26, 51% of landlords declaring that they have the relevant safety certificates do not actually have them.

The team work with landlords to ensure safety certificates are obtained. Where a landlord does not engage or comply within a reasonable time, a Third-Party Application is made to The Housing and Property Chamber, for enforcement action.

We have decided to continue checking Prescribed Information. These checks increase the safety of private tenants and neighbouring occupants and properties; help to maintain standards across the private rented sector and work towards creating a level playing field for landlords.



Feedback on the 2025 Landlord Survey

Aimed at Private Sector landlords, our 2025 survey ran from 24 February 2025 - 31 March 2025 and hoped to find out about demand, future plans, feedback on current and future actions as well as topics for 2025 publications and events.

Our 2025 Landlord Survey report can be accessed on our [Consultations](#) page, and shares the received feedback. This report has also been added to the survey on Participate+. A notification alert will have been sent to everyone who responded via this platform.

NEW Private Tenants Newsletter

During September 2025, we will be launching our first ever Private Renting in Falkirk online Newsletter for private sector tenants. We are hoping you will help us to raise private sector awareness by sharing this forthcoming newsletter with your tenants.



2025/26 Biennial Private Sector Tenants Survey

During 2025/26, we will be issuing our Biennial Private Sector Tenants Survey. We committed to issuing this survey in our 2023-28 Local Housing Strategy. We hope you will help us raise awareness of the survey with your tenants.

Online Information...

A range of information available online relevant to landlords/ letting agents, private tenants and homeowners can be accessed online at: [Private housing](#).

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

Falkirk Council: Private Sector Information

- ▶ **ECO4 Flex Scheme – Helping Tenants and Landlords Improve Energy Efficiency**
- ▶ **Rural Village Gas Infrastructure Project**
- ▶ **Rent Deposit Assistance**
- ▶ **Housing Options & Homeless Prevention**
- ▶ **Financial & Practical Support**

ECO4 Flex Scheme – Helping Tenants and Landlords Improve Energy Efficiency

Falkirk Council is actively supporting the ECO4 Flex scheme, a government-backed initiative designed to help households reduce energy bills and improve home warmth through energy efficiency upgrades. The scheme is funded by major energy suppliers and runs until March 2026.

What Is ECO4 Flex?

ECO4 Flex allows private renters and homeowners to access free or subsidised energy-saving measures such as:

- Insulation upgrades
- Heat pumps
- Solar panels

These improvements not only reduce carbon emissions but also enhance the comfort and value of properties. The average home receives £20,000 worth of works.

Who's eligible?

Households may qualify if:

- Their total income is below £31,000

- A resident has a long-term health condition worsened by cold living conditions
- Other income or health-based criteria are met

Importantly, tenants in privately rented homes can apply, but they'll need landlord approval before any work begins.



What landlords need to know

As a landlord, your cooperation can unlock significant benefits for your tenants and your property:

- No cost to you – installations are funded by energy suppliers
- Improved EPC ratings – making your property more attractive and compliant
- Healthier tenants – reducing risks linked to cold homes

How to Apply

Applications are managed by Scarf on behalf of Falkirk Council. Tenants or landlords can:

Call 01224 213 005

Email eco@scarf.org.uk

Contact an approved installer listed on the [Falkirk Council website](#)

An installer will assess the property and collect necessary documentation. Final approval is subject to energy supplier decisions.

Stay Safe

Only use approved installers. Falkirk Council warns against scams—installers will never cold-call or knock on doors unexpectedly.

Rural Village Gas Infrastructure Project

Falkirk Council has several rural villages that are not connected to the gas network and therefore residents rely on electricity or solid fuel to heat their homes. However, after a decision by Councillors to change this, natural gas is now available in the villages of Avonbridge, California, Letham and Whitecross. Slamannan will be complete at the end of the summer. This is great news for our tenants and owners who want to change to an affordable, efficient, and modern gas central heating system.

Funded by the Council and working with SGN to install the gas mains, the preparation for this project has been ongoing for the last few years. It is one of the largest gas mains extension projects that SGN have worked on in Scotland in recent years and involves planning the pipe route, engaging with landowners and establishing contracts for the work.

Overall, this represents a major investment in our rural villages by Falkirk Council. If you rent a property in one of these villages and would like to install a gas supply, the costs for this include a mains contribution charge of £2,000 and the standard service connection cost of £893 plus VAT per property. To find out more, scan the QR code.



www.sgn.co.uk/falkirk or scan the QR code which will take you to the SGN Falkirk Gas Mains Extension page.



Rent Deposit Assistance

Our Rent Deposit Assistance Scheme may be able to help prospective tenants on a low income and unable to raise a deposit, to secure a private rented property in the Falkirk Council area.

This includes pre-approving people for assistance before they have identified a property, which they will be able to evidence to prospective landlords.

For more details please see [Rent Deposit Assistance Scheme](#).



Housing Options & Homeless Prevention

Our Homeless Prevention Team, within the Housing Needs Service, are working hard to help as many people as possible. The Team aims to help prevent people becoming homeless, by helping them to sustain their current homes, or to move house in a planned way.

The team provide a wide range of assistance, including issues such as:

- Helping people stay in their current home
- Money worries and rent arrears
- Making a house a home, for example, help with household goods
- Hoarding
- Help to find other suitable accommodation if their current home is not suitable
- Helping people to access other services which can provide help and support. If there is a waiting list for help, then the team will keep in touch until this is available

Becoming homeless can be disruptive to people's lives, and we want to ensure that people are aware that there is a range of help available to prevent this.

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

