

Belfast Asian Women

Re: Private Tenancies Bill

Below I have summarised some of the issues faced by members of my group;

1) No access to private rented property upon arrival to Northern Ireland to work. There is a huge increase of professional migrants coming into Northern Ireland, therefore there is a huge demand for private housing too.

2) The system of credit checks for private rented property does not seem to be fair. As newcomers, these migrants will not have any credits on their file, so they are sure to fail their credit checks. Whilst we understand and appreciate that Landlords may have concern with the financial stability of their tenants, credit checks do not truly reflect one's financial stability. Professional migrants are sponsored by their employers to come and work here and they are high wage earners. This itself should be an assurance to landlords.

3) Flat rental rate is established based on whether the tenants require parking. Should a tenant take up the tenancy without parking, the parking space is then rented out separately.

4) A rogue letting agency who attempted to obtain approximately £5000 from his tenants, after our intervention he dropped all the charges. Upon further investigation we discovered, the tenant's deposit was not secured and the property was not listed under the Landlord Register Scheme. Tenants have reported it to the Council, however the Council has advised that due to the time limit, no action can be taken upon this letting agency. We have also had few other previous tenants who have come forward to report about the same letting agency making unlawful deduction of their deposits at the end of their tenancy.

I hope I have made the submission on time to be included in the Committee's report.

Please contact me at any time if you have any issues with the above.

Kind regards
Ana Chandran LLB Hons
Director & Chair
Belfast Asian Women's Academy