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The Voice of Leaseholders

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Federation welcomes the report in to the Private Rented Housing market.

The FPRA broadly welcomes the recommendations to improve the Private Rented Sector for both tenants and landlords that has been published today.

The independent review into the Private Rented Sector (PRS), headed by Julie Rugg of the University of York, recommends a new drive to improve the quality of the sector through:

- Introducing a light touch licensing system for landlords and mandatory regulation for letting agencies, to increase protection for both vulnerable tenants and good landlords.
- Introducing a new independent complaints and redress procedure for consumers, to help end long drawn out disputes.
- Tax changes to encourage good landlords to grow, including changes to stamp duty to encourage them to buy more properties.
- Looking at ways for the PRS to be more accommodating towards households on lower incomes, including considering more support for landlords prepared to house more vulnerable people.
- Local authorities taking steps to better understand the sector and support good landlords whilst tackling poorly performing landlords and promoting tenants' rights.

Federation Chairman Bob Smytherman today welcomed the report and said the Government must do all it can to improve the sector for both landlords and tenants and we will now carefully consider the report in detail.

Bob Smytherman said:

“Leaseholders in the private rented sector play a really important role in the current housing market and it’s crucial that we have a high quality sector that works well for both landlords and tenants.”

“This report has provided a comprehensive and authoritative look into the issues our sector faces, as well as a number of practical recommendations we would wish to see implemented.”

“Whilst many people are satisfied with their experience of renting, there is still much more to do to protect the most vulnerable tenants from those unscrupulous landlords in our sector?”

“At the same time, this report shows we all need to look at how we can raise our standards and improve the services across the board in the private rented sector.”

Bob added:

"I hope we can now move to a new agenda for the industry and look to establish policies that work with the strengths of our sector."

"I also hope this report will signal the Government’s intention to seek a better working relationship with our sector, now we have an evidence base to inform policy it will be interesting to see what will happen next?"

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Notes to Editors:

1. Julie Rugg and David Rhodes were commissioned by the Government in January 2008 to look at what problems tenants and landlords face in the Private Rented Sector.
(Full Report attached)
2. The review looked at a range of issues including the professionalism of landlords, the quality of properties, and problems in private renting.
3. Julie Rugg joined the Centre for Housing Policy at York University, in January 1993. She has completed work including qualitative research on young people's housing biographies, housing benefit and its impact on claimant and landlord behaviour, and aspects of the private rented sector.
4. David Rhodes ran the University of York Rent Index for a number of years. The index included open market information for England, Scotland and Wales, and has been published on a regular basis.
6. We welcome the Government's introduction of measures such as the Tenancy Deposit Protection scheme, which has safeguarded £1 billion of tenants' deposits.

The FPRA is a non-political, not-for-profit advice, support and lobbying organisation for our members who include private residential leaseholders, tenants' and residents' associations and residential management companies as well as those companies where the leaseholders together own the freehold of their own residential block.

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