

Landlords could be banned from rent hikes under radical SNP clampdown which could also give tenants the legal right to keep pets and redecorate their rented homes

Landlords could be banned from hiking their rents under a radical **SNP** clampdown which could also give tenants the legal right to keep pets and redecorate their rented homes.

Humza Yousaf's SNP/Green government has proposed to implement long-term market controls which could see local authorities handed powers to create rent caps as low as zero per cent.

The plans were outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Bill which was published on Wednesday. If approved by Members of the Scottish Parliament, the Bill will become law.

The Bill will mean landlords cannot refuse 'reasonable' requests for tenants to keep animals or make changes to a property, such as painting walls.

In a move industry leaders fear will see more private landlords leave the sector, the Bill also proposes the introduction of rent control areas, capping how much can be charged.



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TRENDING

The legislation states rent rises would be capped during, and between, tenancies.

It comes after ministers were warned that thousands of properties have vanished from the rental market amid growing 'anti-landlord rhetoric' from the Scottish Government

Ministers say the policy will create a 'fairer' housing sector, resulting in fewer people reaching the point of homelessness.

But the Bill is already facing a backlash from landlords who insist it will 'do nothing' to improve the private rented sector for them or tenants.

John Blackwood, chief executive of the Scottish Association of Landlords, said: 'The rent control proposals, as has been seen in places like Ireland which has similar measures, will see reduced investment and more landlords leaving the sector, leading to higher costs for tenants.'

'The effects of Scottish Government policies in the private rented sector are already being felt, with rising costs reducing supply and placing more pressure on council and housing association properties.'

Scottish Property Federation director David Melhuish said the Bill comes just 24 hours after the Scottish Government released statistics showing a significant fall in new home starts.

He said 'every effort must be made to address the supply crisis by building more homes of all tenures'.



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John Blackwood, chief executive of the Scottish Association of Landlords, said the proposals would see more landlords leaving the sector

Mr Melhuish added: 'There is no solution to the housing crisis that does not involve greatly increasing the supply of new homes for sale and rent. This Bill will be a disappointment to those seeking to build new rental homes in Scotland.'

He said investors 'will remain uncertain of what the future rent control system will look like until potentially late 2026'.

Scottish Conservative housing spokesman Miles Briggs said the proposals fall 'far short' of what is needed to tackle Scotland's housing emergency, adding: 'Homelessness levels have soared and a record number of families are living in temporary accommodation. Nothing in this Bill will help to address those issues.'

Mark Griffin, Scottish Labour's housing spokesman, said: 'Scotland is in the grip of a housing crisis, with new housing association properties being produced at the slowest rate since Margaret Thatcher.'

Defending the Bill, tenants' rights minister Patrick Harvie said 'a fairer, well-regulated rented sector is good for both tenants and landlords'. He said: 'Tenants benefit from improved conditions and security, while good responsible landlords will thrive when their good practice is recognised by regulation.'