



GENERATION RENT

The national voice of private renters

ANNUAL REPORT

2018



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Introduction

Generation Rent is now in its fifth year. Our Annual Report brings together our strategy, review of the past year, summary of our activities in the current year and an overview of our finances.

We hope this is a useful starting point for anyone who wishes to understand more about what we do and is interested in supporting or working more closely with us.

About Generation Rent

Generation Rent is the operating name of the National Private Tenants Organisation Ltd, which was established in 2013. Our mission is to make private renting secure, safe and fair.

We are a company limited by guarantee with a board of directors elected by members, and a full-time staff of three. We are not a charity as this would limit our ability to represent all private renters and to campaign as effectively as we want, but we do have charitable objects:

- To prevent or relieve poverty among private rented sector tenants who are in or at risk of poverty.
- To undertake educational activities and improve knowledge and expertise on the part of landlords, tenants, regulators and others so the quality, security, affordability and professionalism of management in the private rented sector is enhanced.

Our organisational goals are to	We will do this by
1. Give renters the same level of security that homeowners have	Campaigning for the government to pass legislation to restrict landlords' ability to evict tenants who are not at fault and to limit increases in rents, through Parliament, the media and helping renters to make their voices heard
2. Make every private rented home fit for human habitation	Finding ways to support improvement in enforcement among local authorities, equipping renters to exercise their rights, and identifying further necessary changes to the law
3. Make renters a powerful force in politics and markets	Supporting the development of local renter groups, promoting a political identity for private renters, and encouraging new services for the rental market that serve renters' interests

Our values

- Housing is most people's largest expense so we are ambitious for what you get for your rent
- We represent private renters from all backgrounds and rely on their participation in our work to ensure our achievements benefit all
- We are proudly on the side of renters, and back up our arguments with evidence
- We criticise poor policies and practices and give our support to good ones, regardless of whose they are

2018 in Review

2018 has been a hugely successful year for the campaign. Through our work - with activists, renter unions and other groups – we have made substantial progress in each of our core areas of focus. As a result, while there remains much to do, tenants can look forward to a safer, fairer and more secure private rental market.

First, a word about the organisation. We have made important progress in securing grant funding from three organisations – Trust for London, Oak Foundation and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation – for three years, starting in spring 2018. This has allowed us to take a more strategic approach to achieving the organisation’s goals. The funding also allowed us to recruit a third member of staff. Jacob Mukherjee joined in April as Campaigns Officer, while Hannah Slater stepped into the Policy Manager role previously held by Seb Klier.

We also saw our longest serving directors step down: Bernard Collier, Robbie de Santos and Shiv Malik. Ian Mulheirn took on the role of chair, and was joined by new directors Becky Ely and Jake White. With funding secured for the medium term, Dan Wilson Craw was formally appointed Director, having been interim since December 2016.

Security

Our big campaign has been to [End Section 21](#) and bring in [a new system of tenancies](#) that gives tenants protection from unfair evictions and unreasonable rent increases. We’re campaigning alongside ACORN, London Renters Union and New Economics Foundation, with our own [End Unfair Evictions](#) website. The centrepiece has been a [50,000-strong petition](#) which was delivered to the Ministry of Housing on 23 August.

The case for reform has gathered steam this year, and our research has played a critical role in that - demonstrating the link between no-fault evictions and [homelessness levels](#), the [continued risk of revenge evictions](#) and the shortcomings of [landlords’ objections](#), while our polling showed [public support for a fairer system](#). The abolition of Section 21 now has support from homelessness and poverty charities, the Times, the [Resolution Foundation](#) think tank, several local councils, the [Mayor of London](#) and [the Labour party](#).

The government published [its own proposals](#) for longer tenancies in the summer and thousands of renters responded to its consultation. We await the government’s decision once it has analysed the responses. We have kept the issue on the agenda and worked with Karen Buck MP to have the issue [debated earlier this month](#), when MPs from all parties agreed on the need for reform.

Fairness

A more immediate victory for our campaign is the long-awaited letting fees ban, which is nearly law. The Tenant Fees Bill was approved unanimously by both Houses of Parliament, but there has still been a lot of detail to get right. With Shelter and Citizens Advice, we have been scrutinising the Bill throughout the year and [pressing the government](#) to: tighten up exemptions where a tenant defaults on their agreement, reduce the cap on security deposits, and prevent abuse of holding deposits.

Earlier this month [the government accepted our case](#), so we’re hopeful that these vitally important improvements will make it into law, making a potentially huge difference to tenants’ lives. We now wait for peers and MPs to approve the final version. We expect the ban to be in place by spring 2019, and will be doing what we can to ensure that renters understand their new rights and how to enforce them.

Another big cost involved when tenants move house is finding a new deposit when their current one is already tied up with their existing tenancy. We published [a report in March](#) on how the deposit protection system is working and how we should change it to allow passporting of deposits, and do something more productive with the £4bn of tenants' money (most of which lies in letting agents' bank accounts). We are now working with Ministry of Housing, the protection schemes and other industry groups to agree improvements.

Affordability

Although rents are falling in parts of the country, the sheer cost of the private sector continues to be too high for too many renters. In October the government finally agreed to [ease restrictions on councils' borrowing](#) so that they can build more homes and reduce reliance on private developers.

Another area of concern about affordability that has come on to the agenda this year is the unfair treatment of housing benefit claimants, implicitly sanctioned by lenders. Despite the current lack of social housing, a state-owned bank, Natwest, bans its buy-to-let customers from letting to people who claim housing benefit. We, Shelter, ACORN, London Renters Union and Living Rent Scotland – not to mention a landlord who was stung by Natwest's rules – [put pressure on the bank](#) to do the right thing. The bank is now reviewing its policy.

Safe homes

One in seven private rented homes is unsafe, containing hazards to health such as mould, carbon monoxide leaks and faulty electrics. [Our research in June](#) highlighted how most councils are leaving too many complaints from tenants unanswered and failing to take effective action when they find disrepair, despite their responsibility to enforce standards.

This is why we have been supporting another piece of legislation this year – Karen Buck MP's [Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) Bill](#), which lets tenants take a negligent landlord to court. It offers a back-up when a council is failing in its duty – or, for council tenants, when the landlord cannot enforce against itself. The Bill cleared its final hurdle in the House of Lords in the final week of the year and is now an Act!

In April the government launched its [Secret Landlord Blacklist](#) and gave councils powers to ban criminal landlords. But because only offences committed since April 2018 count, and the courts system is so slow, no landlords have been banned or blacklisted yet. For an indication, one of the country's most notorious landlords, [Judith Wilson, was convicted this month for failing to fix her tenant's hot water](#). But the incident took place in autumn 2017 so she remains free to continue letting properties out.

The government has at least agreed to follow [the Mayor of London's lead](#) and is looking at how to [open up the blacklist to the public](#). In the spring the Ministry of Housing consulted on whether to get all landlords to [register with a redress scheme](#). What would really help is for councils to introduce full 'selective' landlord licensing - [something we called on London councils to do in the run up to the May elections](#) – the government is currently reviewing existing schemes' performance.

Looking ahead

Priorities for 2019 include developing Generation Rent's non-campaign work, including initiatives to ensure that renters' recently won rights – and councils' new powers – can be enforced fully.

These include the letting fees ban, but also rights to rent reimbursement when landlords have broken the law.

We are currently following up on our research on local council enforcement, with a view to identifying best practice, and encourage underperforming councils to adopt it. This will also involve working with local activists, including renters' unions, to hold their councils to account.

We will be updating the website and as part of that improve the signposting and information we provide for tenants who need help. This involves working with start ups who are serving the rental market to ensure that their services have the best interests of tenants at heart.

Local renter groups play a crucial role in providing face-to-face support and campaigning against dodgy operators – we will support the development of these where we can.

The generous grant funding was awarded in part so that we would have the space to diversify our funding. At board level we have been looking beyond 2021 and developing our long term fundraising strategy will be a major part of our work in 2019.

December 2018

COMPANY NUMBER:
8731888

NATIONAL PRIVATE TENANTS ORGANISATION LIMITED

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

NOEL & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
4 PARLIAMENT CLOSE
PRESTWOOD
GREAT MISSENDEN
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
HP16 9DT

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT
TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ON THE PREPARATION OF THE UNAUDITED STATUTORY ACCOUNTS OF
NATIONAL PRIVATE TENANTS ORGANISATION LIMITED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

As described in the balance sheet you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 set out on pages 2 to 3 and you consider that the company is exempt from a report under section 477(1) of the Companies Act 2006. In accordance with your instructions, we have compiled these unaudited financial statements in order to assist you to fulfil your statutory responsibilities, from the accounting records and information and explanations supplied to us.

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Noel & Co.
Chartered Accountants
4 Parliament Close
Prestwood

Dated:12 June 2018

Great Missenden
Buckinghamshire
HP16 9DT

COMPANY NUMBER:8731888

NATIONAL PRIVATE TENANTS ORGANISATION LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2018

	2018		2017	
	£	£	£	£
Current assets	99,236		16,954	
Creditors				
Due within one year	(6,065)		(6,909)	
Accruals and deferred income	(90,562)		(7,940)	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
Net current assets		2,609		2,105
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Total assets less current liabilities		2,609		2,105
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Net assets		£ 2,609		£ 2,105
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Capital and Reserves		£ 2,609		£ 2,105
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with FRS 105.

For the year ending 31 March 2018 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

Approved by the board of directors on 16 June 2018 and signed on its behalf by:

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Ian Mulheim