



Zoë Garbett AM
Chair of the Housing Committee

Sir Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

19 March 2026

Strengthening renters' awareness and understanding of their rights in advance of the introduction of Phase 1 measures of the Renters' Rights Act on 1 May 2026

Dear Sadiq,

The London Assembly Housing Committee has been conducting an investigation on the implementation and monitoring of the Renters' Rights Act ('the Act') in London. This set out to examine how the Act can be implemented and adhered to in London, with a particular focus on:

- local authority enforcement capacity and resourcing;
- renters' and landlords' awareness of their rights and responsibilities;
- monitoring the impact of the Act; and
- actions that you as the Mayor of London can take to support the implementation and monitoring of the Act.¹

We held two formal evidence-gathering meetings in January and February 2026, where we heard from representatives of four renters' organisations, the National Residential Landlords Association, three local authorities in London, housing policy experts, the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development, the GLA Housing Policy and Strategy Team, and the London Regional Lead at Operation Jigsaw. We also received 15 submissions in response to our call for evidence from stakeholders in the private rented sector (PRS).

¹ London Assembly Housing Committee (2025), '[Implementing and monitoring the Renters' Rights Act in London](#)'.

We are currently preparing a report, which will outline our findings in detail and set out recommendations to you as Mayor and the Government. Since our report will be published after the Phase 1 measures introduced by the Act come into effect on 1 May 2026, we wanted to write to you on the priority issue of renters' awareness and understanding of their rights.

Key preliminary findings on renters' awareness and understanding of their rights

The Act contains significant changes to the rights and responsibilities of private renters and landlords in London, including the end of section 21 evictions, the shift to periodic tenancies, and bans on rental bidding and advance rental payments. It is essential for renters to know their rights and be able to act on them, especially in case of unlawful behaviour by non-compliant landlords. However, our investigation highlighted that awareness of the Act is low, renters lack the confidence to exercise their rights, and without clear communication, the Act risks being undermined from the outset.

Renters' awareness of their rights will be crucial for the successful implementation of the Act, but this is currently limited. Recent polling conducted by the TDS Charitable Foundation highlights that 65 per cent of renters in London had either not heard of the Act or did not understand what it means for them.² An evaluation of similar reforms introduced in Scotland in 2017 found that after five years, less than 1 per cent of tenants had used their new rights to formally challenge unfair rent increases.³ Dr Jennifer Harris (Head of Policy, Research and Social Impact, TDS Group) stated that the success of the reforms in Scotland was "severely undermined by lack of awareness" of renters' rights and responsibilities.⁴ It is essential that we learn from this experience and ensure this is not repeated in London.

Although awareness and understanding of renters' rights is generally low, it is lowest amongst already marginalised groups. Alva Gotby (Member Solidarity Organiser, London Renters Union) highlighted how private renters are a diverse group with many different needs, and additional efforts are required to access those who are least likely to use their new rights.⁵ Dr Jennifer Harris outlined how low-income renters, disabled people, and migrants are some of the groups of renters that are least aware of their rights.⁶ Academic research has also found that those in receipt of benefits, renters from minority ethnic backgrounds, households with children, and renters aged 65 or older are some of the groups most at risk of harms associated with unaffordability, insecurity, and poor property conditions in the PRS.⁷

Even when renters understand their rights, they may not feel confident enough to use them. Ben Twomey (Chief Executive, Generation Rent) highlighted how recent polling conducted by Generation Rent found that "two in five renters in London said they would not be confident taking action against their landlord due to disrepair or concerns over illegal behaviour."⁸ We heard from Dr Jennifer Harris that the complexity of redress pathways can also limit renters'

² London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 9 February 2026, p. 12.

³ Indigo House and Nationwide Foundation (2024), [RentBetter: Research on the impact of changes to the private rented sector tenancy regime in Scotland](#), Wave 3 Final Report, Summary, p. 7.

⁴ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 9 February 2026, p. 12.

⁵ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 20 January 2026, p. 14.

⁶ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 9 February 2026, pp. 12-13.

⁷ Rhodes, D. and Rugg, J. (2018), [Vulnerability amongst Low-Income Households in the Private Rented Sector in England](#).

⁸ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 20 January 2026, p. 21.

ability to exercise their rights. These include ombudsman schemes, three adjudication schemes for disputes regarding deposits, the County Courts, the First-tier Tribunal, and the forthcoming new PRS Landlord Ombudsman.⁹ Dr Harris explained that renters “find it really difficult to know where to go and what to do if they need to raise a complaint.”¹⁰ She added that “there is lots of information out there, but it is difficult for tenants because there is a lot there” and it is “full of technical jargon.”¹¹ Paul Williams (National Organiser, ACORN) explained that “knowing your rights is one thing but unless you have the means to enforce them and assert your rights, it is meaningless.”¹² Providing information on new laws alone will be insufficient if renters do not feel able to act, so it is also important to signpost renters to supportive organisations.

The voluntary and community sector plays an important role in informing and empowering renters to exercise their rights. Paul Williams argued that renters’ organisations have unique reach into communities that the GLA or local authorities may not be able to access.¹³ Alva Gotby explained how the work of these organisations enables renters to directly support each other, including by sharing information.¹⁴ This is borne out in data shared by the TDS Charitable Foundation, which shows that private renters in London are more likely than elsewhere in the country to receive information from renters’ groups, charities, or advice services (13 per cent versus 9 per cent).¹⁵ The Mayor’s awareness raising efforts around the Act should therefore signpost renters to the services provided by renters’ organisations, including unions and charities. To ensure they are adequately resourced to provide accessible support and advice, the Mayor should also re-commit to his 2024 manifesto commitment to provide “funding for groups such as renters’ unions.”¹⁶

Key considerations for raising awareness amongst London’s renters

The need for a London-wide approach to communicating the new measures in the Renters’ Rights Act is clear. In its submission to our call for evidence, the TDS Charitable Foundation highlighted that 90 per cent of London tenants expressed a desire for more information about how the Act affects them, which is higher than the national average of 82 per cent.¹⁷ Although we heard that some local authorities in London plan to run information campaigns from April,¹⁸ the capacity and preparedness of local authority PRS teams varies significantly.¹⁹ As Mayor, you have the potential to reach a wide number of Londoners across the capital, notably through your digital channels and advertising on the Transport for London (TfL) network.

You have committed to raising awareness of renters’ new rights under the Act on several occasions. Your Delivery Plan MD3396 (Improving London’s Housing Stock) contains a project entitled “Improving security and stability for private renters”. As part of this, you commit to “active use of all channels to publicise new rights to renters from Q4 2025-26 onwards

⁹ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 9 February 2026, p. 10.

¹⁰ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 9 February 2026, p. 10.

¹¹ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 9 February 2026, p. 10.

¹² London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 20 January 2026, p. 20.

¹³ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 20 January 2026, p. 20.

¹⁴ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 1](#), 20 January 2026, p. 20.

¹⁵ Written evidence submitted by TDS Charitable Foundation.

¹⁶ Sadiq Khan (2024), *A Fairer, Safer, Greener London for everyone*, p. 18.

¹⁷ Written evidence submitted by TDS Charitable Foundation.

¹⁸ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 2](#), 20 January 2026, p. 11-12.

¹⁹ London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 2](#), 20 January 2026, p. 3.

depending on Royal Assent and implementation timelines” of the Act.²⁰ In response to a Mayor’s Question on 6 June 2025, you stated: “My own web pages will also share information with Londoners about their new rights and of course I will use my social media channels and partnerships with key stakeholders to ensure that both renters and landlords know about the new rights and responsibilities.”²¹

Considering the evidence received during our investigation and your previous commitments as outlined above, could you please confirm that you will consider the following in your efforts to raise awareness of the new measures in the Act, both prior to and following 1 May 2026?

- Use all available Mayoral channels to communicate the new measures in the Act to renters, including digital platforms such as your webpages, social media channels, online property checkers, as well as assets in the TfL network. While Deputy Mayor Tom Copley confirmed that there are plans to update previous renters’ rights posters that were displayed on the TfL network, we also heard of constraints such as the availability of poster space.²² Could you please confirm that you will give priority to promoting the new measures introduced by the Act on your channels and the TfL network during the months of April, May, and June 2026?
- Align any information campaign with the timing of the Government’s national information campaign, which is expected to launch in April, to maximise impact.
- Focus communications on tangible measures introduced by the Act, such as the abolition of section 21 evictions, banning of rental bidding and advance rental payments, and the right to request a pet in the property, to engage renters on issues that will grab their attention.
- Ensure all communications around the Renters’ Rights Act are accessible, multilingual, and designed to engage London’s diverse renter population.
- Coordinate messaging with local authorities in London through the PRS Partnership, as well as renters’ organisations, and housing charities.
- Signpost Londoners clearly to trusted sources of information, support, and advice, including renters’ organisations, advice services such as local law centres, and other bodies operating in the voluntary and community sector.

Since the Government’s national information campaign for renters and the introduction of the Phase 1 measures of the Act will come into effect during the pre-election period for the London borough councils elections, all communications and information disseminated during this period should be in line with the GLA’s pre-election guidance.

²⁰ Greater London Authority (2025), [MD3396 Appendix 2 - Delivery Plan – Improving London’s Housing Stock](#), 28 July 2025, pp. 11-12.

²¹ Greater London Authority (2025), [MQT 2025/1723](#), 6 June 2025.

²² London Assembly Housing Committee, [Transcript, Panel 2](#), 9 February 2026, pp. 15-16.

Given the short time remaining until the Phase 1 measures of the Act come into effect, we would welcome your response to this letter. We look forward to sharing the full report from our investigation with you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zoë Garbett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'Z'.

Zoë Garbett AM
Chair of the Housing Committee