

Landlords play vital role in helping tenants create a home, say experts

January 28 2021



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A new study from UK housing experts has found that landlords play a significant role in tenants' ability to feel 'at home.'

The report, led by Dr. Kim McKee of the University of Stirling and funded by SafeDeposits Scotland Charitable Trust, has published seven vital things landlords and letting agents should do to support their tenants to make their rented property a [home](#).

The findings, which include: investing in property quality, carrying out repairs quickly and well, not discriminating against potential renters who rely on benefits, and being open to families with children or those with pets, feature in [new guidance](#) for the Private Rented Sector.

Dr. McKee, a Senior Lecturer in Housing and Social Policy at the University, said: "We know the ability to feel 'at home' is crucial for tenants' health and wellbeing and where they feel 'at home,' they are more likely to look after the property and stay for longer, which clearly benefits landlords and letting agents too.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus the need for everyone to have not just a roof over their heads, but to live in a property that feels comfortable and does not cause them stress. After reviewing the [research evidence](#), we produced a guide outlining the seven most important things that landlords should think about to help tenants feel at home and in turn, support their wellbeing."

The research project, "[Making a House a Home in the Private Rented Sector](#)," was supported by Dr. Steve Rolfe, also of the University of Stirling, Dr. Tom Simcock and Julie Feather from Edge Hill University, and Dr. Jenny Hoolachan from Cardiff University. The team reviewed two-decades worth of research during the 10-month study.

A changing sector

The private rented sector in Scotland has grown significantly since the 2007 Global Financial Crisis and now makes up one in every seven

households. The sector has also become increasingly diverse, with more low-income households and families with children renting privately, while tenants are also renting privately for longer periods.

John Duff, Chairman of the SafeDeposits Scotland Charitable Trust, said: "We recognize the importance to everyone that tenants fully embrace their selected house as their home, and are delighted to have supported this important work by Dr. McKee at the University of Stirling and her colleagues.

"Helping to develop the private rented sector is a cornerstone of the SafeDeposits Scotland Charitable Trust's work through investing in projects such as this."

Dr. Tom Simcock, a research fellow in the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit at Edge Hill, said: "In the current climate where we are all being encouraged to stay at home, it's vital that tenants can feel safe and comfortable and this study highlights the role that private landlords have to play in supporting the wellbeing of their tenants."

Provided by University of Stirling

Citation: Landlords play vital role in helping tenants create a home, say experts (2021, January 28) retrieved 9 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2021-01-landlords-vital-role-tenants-home.html>

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