



Home Office

# Research with landlords, letting agents and tenants

(part of the Right to Rent evaluation)

Research Report 84

IRIS Consulting

October 2015

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# Acknowledgements

This research was conducted by a team from IRIS Consulting who comprised John Harvey, Marilyn Tyzack, David Barnes, Raj Kumar, Roger Jarman and Stephen Stringer. We are very grateful to the support received at all stages of our work from the Home Office Science research team and in particular to Rebecca Linley, Miriam Davidson and Andrew Zurawan.

We would also like to express our thanks to all those who participated in the research and especially to those individuals who helped to recruit tenants, landlords and letting agents to take part in our focus groups.

Disclaimer: 'The views expressed in this report are those of the authors, not necessarily those of the Home Office (nor do they represent Government policy).'

# Executive Summary

This report forms part of the evaluation of phase one of the Right to Rent scheme, which was introduced as part of the Immigration Act 2014. The scheme requires landlords of privately rented accommodation to conduct checks on new tenants to establish their right to rent in the UK. Phase one of the scheme was implemented in Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton from 1 December 2014. The evaluation covers the first six months of the scheme's operation, with other research activities being carried out by Home Office Science and BDRC Continental. This evaluation strand reports on:

- the scheme's impact on landlords and letting agents, tenants and the housing market;
- the process of the scheme's implementation, from the perspectives of landlords, letting agents and tenants.

## Overview

The following research activities were carried out.

- An online survey with landlords owning properties in the phase one area. All 114 respondents let self-contained properties.
- An online survey with tenants living in the phase one area. This had 68 responses, 90 per cent (60 out of 67) of which were from students.
- In addition, ten focus groups conducted with current and prospective tenants (including students), landlords and letting agents in the phase one area.

## Awareness and communications

- The majority (61%, 70 out of 114) of landlords said that they were informed about the Right to Rent scheme. The less well-informed landlords tended to be those owning fewer rental properties.
- Much lower levels of awareness were found amongst tenants; 68 per cent (46 out of 68) of tenants said that they were poorly informed or uninformed about the scheme. In the focus groups, relatively few tenants said that they were aware of the scheme.
- In the landlords survey, the most frequently cited information source about the scheme was their membership of landlords or letting agents' organisations (55%, 53 out of 96).
- Of tenants who had some awareness of the Right to Rent scheme over half (56%, 22 out of 39) had received information from their university accommodation service.

## Experience of the Right to Rent scheme

- Only a small subset of those responding to the landlords survey had direct experience of the Right to Rent scheme's checking requirements. Nearly half (46%, 52 out of 114) of landlords had not had any new tenancies starting since the scheme's start date. Of landlords with new tenancies starting since the scheme's introduction, 44 per cent (27 out of 62) always used a letting agent to find new tenants, with a further 24 per cent (15 out of 62) sometimes using an agent.

- Based on this subset, 74 per cent (26 out of 35) of landlords had conducted checks on prospective tenants; 20 per cent (7 out of 35) said that checks had not been carried out, with 6 per cent (2 out of 35) saying that they did not know.
- Among landlords nearly half (46%, 12 out of 26) thought it very easy or easy to do the checks with another 38 per cent (10 out of 26) thinking it neither difficult nor easy.
- Among tenants who had started a new tenancy or looked for rented accommodation since the scheme's introduction about half (52%, 12 out of 23) did not know if their right to rent had been checked. Around a third (35%, 8 out of 23) of tenants were aware that a check had been done and 13% (3 out of 23) said that it had not been done.
- Evidence from the focus groups with landlords and letting agents suggested that when they check prospective tenants, the Right to Rent checks are integrated into the normal vetting and referencing process without being separately identified to tenants.
- This was confirmed in the focus groups with tenants, where few were aware that any extra checks had been done, apart from the usual forms of ID checks needed to rent a property.

## Impacts on tenants

### Documentation

- Before the scheme 51 per cent (18 out of 35) of landlords always requested photo ID while 31 per cent (11 out of 35) said that they never requested this. Since the scheme has been introduced the proportion of landlords always requesting photo ID increased to 81 per cent (26 out of 32) with a corresponding decrease to 6 per cent (2 out of 32) never requesting photo ID.
- It appears that some landlords and letting agents may be routinely asking all prospective tenants to provide a passport, which was reported to have caused some issues for a small number of British citizens. This was largely mentioned by landlords and letting agents in the focus groups rather than by tenants. Landlords and letting agents said that this had led to some delays with new tenancies and some frustration from prospective tenants.

### Discrimination

- The focus groups with landlords identified a very small number of examples of potentially discriminatory behaviour or attitudes. These related to:
  - attitudes towards prospective tenants with time-limited leave to remain in the UK;
  - a preference for tenants whose right to rent was seen as easy to check (for example, international students);
  - a preference for 'low risk' tenants, who landlords felt they did not need to have a Right to Rent check.
- A focus group with letting agents identified one reported example of someone being refused a rental because they had less than a year's leave to remain in the UK.

### Potential benefits and concerns for tenants

- Most tenants (88%, 60 out of 68) said that they had not noticed any benefits from the Right to Rent scheme.
- Most tenants (81%, 55 out of 68) said that they had no concerns about the scheme.
- Most landlords (83%, 95 out of 114) said that they were not aware of any concerns by tenants about the scheme.
- In the focus groups no tenants said that they felt they personally had been treated

unfairly when it came to renting their property, but some felt that there may be potential for unfair treatment resulting from the scheme.

## Deterrent effects of the Right to Rent scheme

- There was some limited evidence from the focus groups that illegal migrants' access to privately rented accommodation in the phase one area was being restricted.

## Impacts on landlords and letting agents

### Practicalities of conducting Right to Rent checks

- Based on the small numbers of landlords who had done Right to Rent checks, 62 per cent (16 out of 26) said that it took them more than 20 minutes to do a check, 19 per cent (5 out of 26) said that it took between 20 minutes and an hour, and 15 per cent (4 out of 26) said that it took over an hour.
- Nearly half (46%, 12 out of 26) of landlords said that they found it easy or very easy to carry out Right to Rent checks. Another 38 per cent (10 out of 26) said that it was neither easy nor difficult and 15 per cent (4 out of 26) found it difficult or very difficult.
- From the landlords survey and the focus groups with landlords and letting agents, there appeared to be a mixed picture on the ease of doing the checks.
  - Many agents and landlords said that they had little difficulty in assimilating the Right to Rent checks with their normal vetting processes.
  - However, there were some specific practical aspects of the checking regime that had implications for landlords and agents, such as scheduling and conducting re-checks for tenants with time-limited visas.
  - Some small-scale landlords mentioned specific practical difficulties, such as keeping these copies and tenants' personal information securely.

### Burdens on landlords and letting agents

- Most landlords (71%, 25 out of 35) said that there had been some increase in their workload and 6 per cent (2 out of 35) said that their workload had increased a lot; 17 per cent (6 out of 35) said that there had been no effect.
- In the focus groups with agents, some felt that the scheme put a disproportionate burden on them as small businesses, whereas others felt that the Right to Rent checks were easily done alongside other tenant referencing.

### Potential benefits and concerns for landlords and letting agents

- Most landlords (84%, 96 out of 114) had not noticed any benefits of the scheme.
- Around half of landlords (52%, 59 out of 114) had concerns about the scheme. A similar proportion (48%, 55 out of 114) said that they had no concerns. The issues identified by those expressing concerns were:
  - additional work for landlords (76%, 45 out of 59);
  - checks delaying the tenancy start date (51%, 30 out of 59);
  - not understanding the immigration system (49%, 29 out of 59);
  - vulnerable groups being disadvantaged as they do not have the required information (42%, 25 out of 59);
  - properties being left empty (37%, 22 out of 59).

## Impact on the housing market

### Rental costs, turnover and availability

- The scheme appears to have had little impact on rent levels or the turnover and availability of privately rented accommodation in the phase one area.
- Nearly half of landlords (46%, 53 out of 114) said that rents had not changed as a result of the scheme. A similar number (45%, 51 out of 114) did not know what the effect had been on rents.
- Around two-fifths of landlords (42%, 48 out of 114) said that there had been no effect on private rental turnover and 47 per cent (54 out of 114) said that they did not know if there had been any effect.
- Over half of landlords (51%, 58 out of 114) said that they did not know if there had been an effect on the availability of rented accommodation and 36 per cent (41 out of 114) said that there had been no effect.

### Rogue landlords

- A small number of respondents to the landlords survey (9 out of 18, 50% of those who saw positive impacts) felt that that the scheme would help tackle rogue landlords.
- However, in the focus groups, some landlords, letting agents and tenants considered that Right to Rent checks were only being done by 'responsible' players in the private rented sector.
- In the focus groups, some landlords and agents were concerned that tenants who could not provide the required documentation would be diverted into exploitative housing situations.

# 1. Introduction

In March 2015 IRIS Consulting was commissioned to carry out specific strands of evaluation research into phase one of the Right to Rent scheme. Other strands of the evaluation were conducted by an internal Home Office Science research team and by other external contractors (mystery shopping activity focusing on discrimination issues). The specific research activities carried out by IRIS were:

- online surveys seeking views from landlords and current and prospective tenants in the phase one area of the scheme;
- ten focus groups conducted with current and prospective tenants, landlords and letting agents in the phase one area.

## 1.1 Policy context

Legislation contained in the Immigration Act 2014 put in place a requirement for landlords to make checks on a new tenant's residency status. The policy of requiring checks on tenants sits alongside other steps that have been taken to restrict and discourage illegal immigration. The Right to Rent scheme replicates the long-standing requirements for employers to check the immigration status of those they are about to employ. Under the Right to Rent scheme all applicants for privately rented housing have to prove their entitlement through documentary evidence. Landlords or letting agents who rent to illegal migrants without conducting Right to Rent checks will be liable to civil penalty action. Certain parts of the housing market are exempt, such as homeless hostels and student halls of residence, where further regulation is not regarded as appropriate or necessary.

The aims of the Right to Rent scheme as described on its introduction were:

- to make it more difficult for illegally resident individuals to gain access to privately rented accommodation and so deter those who are illegally resident from remaining in the UK;
- to deter those who seek to exploit illegal residents by providing illegal and unsafe accommodation, and increase actions against them;
- to deter individuals from attempting to enter the UK illegally and undermine the market for those who seek to facilitate illegal migration or traffic migrant workers.

## 1.2 Implementation of the Right to Rent scheme

Phase one of the Right to Rent scheme was introduced on 1 December 2014 in five local authority areas of the west midlands, namely: Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

The scheme's implementation is being supported in a number of ways including:

- a helpline for landlords, letting agents and tenants;



- an online tool<sup>1</sup> for verifying if a property is in the phase one area or the prospective tenant has a right to rent;
- a case checking service for status verification of prospective tenants with complex immigration or nationality status;
- the code of practice<sup>2</sup> on illegal immigrants and private rented accommodation, which describes how to carry out checks and includes lists of acceptable documents for demonstrating a right to rent;
- a linked code of practice for landlords and letting agents on avoiding discrimination.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.3 Research aims

A broader evaluation of the Right to Rent scheme was conducted by Home Office Science, covering the first six months of the policy's implementation, of which this research is part. The broader evaluation assessed the impact of the Right to Rent scheme in the phase one area in terms of: immigration enforcement outcomes; compliance burden on landlords and agents; impact on the housing market and effects on tenants.

In addition there was an evaluation of processes, which will specifically report on the delivery of the scheme.

The strand of research covered in this report reflects work with landlords, letting agents<sup>4</sup> and tenants. In particular it looks at these groups' awareness of Right to Rent, their experience of the scheme and the impact it has had on them. A description of the research methods used in this strand of the research activity is at Annex A. All the individual strands of research activity were co-ordinated by the Home Office research team, who are producing a synthesis report bringing together all the different research strands.

## 1.4 Structure of the report

*Section 2* describes the methods and approach to the research with additional information on the methodology given in *Annex A*. *Section 3* reports findings about awareness of the Right to Rent scheme among landlords, letting agents and tenants. The experience of these groups with regard to the scheme's checks to date is described in *section 4*. *Sections 5 to 7* of the report discuss the impacts on tenants, landlords and letting agents, and the wider housing market. *Annex B* contains tables showing data from the landlords and tenants surveys.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Right to Rent* at: <https://eforms.homeoffice.gov.uk/outreach/lcs-application.ofml>.

<sup>2</sup> See *Code of Practice on illegal immigrants and private rented accommodation: Civil penalty scheme for landlords and their agents* at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/368622/draft\\_code\\_of\\_practice\\_on\\_illegal\\_immigrants\\_and\\_private\\_rented\\_accommodation.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368622/draft_code_of_practice_on_illegal_immigrants_and_private_rented_accommodation.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> See *Avoiding unlawful discrimination when conducting 'right to rent' checks in the private rented residential sector* at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/376789/Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_for\\_Landlords\\_web\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/376789/Code_of_Practice_for_Landlords_web_.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> As discussed later some research with letting agents was also carried out by Home Office Science researchers.

## 2. Research methods

### 2.1 Overview

The research methods used for this strand of evaluation activity are summarised in Table 1, which shows the three respondent groups alongside the methods of data collection and how many of these were used with each group.

**Table 1: Data collection methods, by type of respondent**

Respondent	Method	Number
Professional and informal landlords	Online survey	1
	Focus groups	3
Letting agents	Focus groups	2
Tenants, including students	Online survey	1
	Focus groups	5

As reflected in Table 1 a particular concern was to try to reach students within the wider tenant group and also more informal and/or small-scale landlords.<sup>5</sup> Less emphasis was given to letting agents, as Home Office Science conducted three pulse check surveys with agents during the course of the evaluation.<sup>6</sup> A fuller description of the research methods is provided at Annex A.

### 2.2 Surveys

The questionnaires for the online surveys involved a mix of compulsory and optional questions (with scope for respondents to add comments in free text format). They were designed to ensure that only those who rented or owned property in the phase one area were eligible to respond.

Links to the landlords survey were distributed through a range of organisations, some of which hold joint lists of landlords and letting agents. Home Office Science co-ordinated the distribution of the landlords survey, enabling the links to both the landlords survey and the Home Office's final pulse check with letting agents to be sent in the same message. This approach also ensured that Home Office Science could send the survey links to its internal mailing list of relevant Right to Rent contacts. The links to the tenants survey were posted on the IRIS website and distributed by email to local authority and other contacts in the phase one area. Details of

<sup>5</sup> The term 'professional landlord' is used to denote individuals with a property portfolio, compared with the more informal end of the market that would include those who rent out a room in their home or who let to friends/family or who let one property.

<sup>6</sup> See *Evaluation of the Right to Rent scheme: Full evaluation report of phase one*.

the surveys' distribution are included at Annex A. The survey link was sent out between 12 and 16 May 2015.

The landlords survey had 137 completed responses, 114 of which related to landlords with properties in the phase one area. The tenants survey had 70 completed responses, 68 of which related to tenants in the phase one area. As the tenants and landlords surveys were distributed through mailing lists and web-links, it is not known how many people received them, so it is not possible to calculate response rates. Apart from the initial screening to establish the location of relevant properties, subsequent survey questions were only asked of those letting or renting properties in the phase one area. Both surveys were open between 12 and 31 May 2015.

All 114 respondents to the landlords survey said that they let self-contained properties. Among these, four per cent of respondents (4 out of 114) also let to lodgers, but they did this in conjunction with letting at least one self-contained property. This means that the survey findings should not be seen as capable of being generalised to landlords who only sub-let or have lodgers. This may have particular implications when discussing, for example, the reach of the scheme into the informal sector.

The landlord respondents' properties were geographically located as listed below:

- 61 per cent rented properties in Birmingham (70 out of 114);
- 30 per cent rented properties in Sandwell (34 out of 114);
- 23 per cent rented properties in Wolverhampton (26 out of 114);
- 16 per cent rented properties in Walsall (18 out of 114);
- 13 per cent rented properties in Dudley (15 of 114).

In terms of order, if not proportions, this corresponds to the relative size of the private rental sector in each local authority (in other words Birmingham has by far the most people living in privately rented accommodation, then Sandwell and so on, according to 2011 Census data).<sup>7</sup> The majority of the respondents to the landlords survey also lived in the phase one area (61%, 69 out of 114 responses).

The tenants survey was less successful in its coverage of the different local authorities within the phase one area, with 91 per cent living in rented properties in Birmingham (62 of 68 responses). This is likely to be linked, at least partly, to the size of the higher education sector in Birmingham, as the survey was more successful in reaching students than a wider group of tenants. Amongst all respondents to the tenants survey 87 per cent (59 out of 68 responses) were in the 18–25 age group and 90 per cent (60 out of 67) were students. This has implications for the discussion of findings from the tenants survey, which should be read as primarily reflecting the views of the student community, rather than being generalisable to the wider tenant group. Details of respondents' ethnic backgrounds and nationality are contained in Annex A.

## 2.3 Focus groups

There were ten focus groups conducted with current and prospective tenants, landlords and letting agents in the phase one area during March, May and early June 2015. They took place in a variety of locations across the phase one area:

- Birmingham – two with student tenants and one with letting agents;

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<sup>7</sup> See Table QS403EW 2011 Census: Tenure - People at: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs403ew>.

- Sandwell – one with landlords, one with informal landlords and one with letting agents;
- Walsall – one with informal tenants;
- Wolverhampton – two with student tenants and one with landlords.

In many cases these focus groups were also attended by tenants, landlords or letting agents from other local authorities within the phase one area. The main exceptions to this were the four focus groups with students. Although no focus groups were held in Dudley, tenants and landlords living there were represented in the groups held in Sandwell. Seventy participants attended the focus groups.

The recruitment of participants to the focus groups presented some challenges given the specific nature of the target groups (such as informal tenants<sup>8</sup> and informal landlords). The recruitment of professional landlords, letting agents and student tenants presented less difficulty and for these the research team was assisted by professional landlord and letting agents' organisations, which provided contact information and disseminated information through their networks. Also local authority officers in the phase one area provided relevant contact information with landlords and letting agents and local venues for holding the focus group discussions.

In order to identify and enlist informal landlords and tenants the research team was able to use local contacts and knowledge as a starting point, and then employed snowball sampling to identify and recruit volunteers who fitted the definitions of informal tenants and landlords.

For tenants taking part in the focus groups the research team was able to offer small financial incentives to compensate them for their time, travel and any child care costs incurred.

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<sup>8</sup> The term 'informal tenant' is used to denote those living arrangements where someone typically rents from someone they know (such as a friend or a member of their extended family) and where a formal tenancy agreement may or may not exist.

## 3. Awareness and communications

This section reports findings about levels of awareness of the Right to Rent scheme, primarily among landlords and tenants. Letting agents' awareness is briefly discussed alongside the coverage of landlords. This is followed by a discussion of information sources and communication methods.

### 3.1 Landlords and letting agents' awareness of the scheme

The majority of landlords (61%, 70 out of 114 responses) said that they were well informed or informed about the scheme. Just under a quarter of landlords (23%, 26 out of 114 responses) said that they were poorly informed and 16 per cent (18 out of 114 responses) had not heard of the scheme

Awareness appeared to be associated with the size of a landlord's property portfolio. The less well-informed landlords tended to be those owning few rental properties as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Landlords' awareness, by size of property portfolio**

	Number of properties													
	1		2–5		6–10		11–20		21–50		More than 50		Total	
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Well informed	9	24	5	15	10	53	4	40	2	40	2	22	32	28
Informed	6	16	18	53	8	42	0	0	2	40	4	44	38	33
Poorly informed	11	30	6	18	0	0	5	50	1	20	3	33	26	23
Not heard of the scheme	11	33	5	15	1	5	1	10	0	0	0	0	18	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

The focus groups tended to support the evidence from the survey, with all the professional landlords having heard about the Right to Rent scheme, but most informal landlords being unaware of it.

It would seem reasonable to conclude that the higher levels of awareness found amongst larger scale landlords are connected to factors such as:

- membership of landlords' organisations (for example, the National Landlords Association and the Residential Landlords Association);
- being involved with other local or national networks or schemes;
- being more likely to use a letting agent.

Letting agents in one focus group agreed with this conclusion. They considered that the big lack of awareness was amongst those small-scale landlords who operated 'below the radar.' They commented that there was a large (but unknown) number of small-scale and informal landlords who do not use agents, are not registered on any databases and do not belong to a professional association.

All the letting agents taking part in the focus groups knew about the scheme. However, participants in the two focus groups had different perceptions of their levels of awareness. All the participants in one group felt well informed about the scheme. The consensus among those in the other group was that they were not very well informed about the scheme, although the subsequent discussion seemed to show considerable understanding of the scheme. Instead, these agents' assessment of how well informed they were may have been linked to their view that phase one of the scheme had been rolled out too quickly.

Further findings on letting agents' awareness are available in the Home Office's pulse check surveys.

### 3.2 Tenants' awareness of the scheme

Compared with the landlords survey, a much smaller proportion (6%, 4 out of 68 responses) of those completing the tenants survey said that they felt well informed about the Right to Rent scheme. Around a quarter (26%, 18 out of 68) of tenants said that they were informed with two-thirds saying that they were poorly informed or had not heard of the scheme (68%, 46 out of 68 responses).

These survey findings on awareness were reinforced by comments provided in the focus groups. Hardly any of the tenants said that they had heard about the Right to Rent scheme, but a small number of student tenants had heard of the scheme. These students were either studying law, which included landlord/tenant legislation, or were politics students who were aware of the issue and campaigns against the Right to Rent legislation. All the informal tenants (as defined above) taking part in the focus groups were unaware of the scheme.

### 3.3 Sources of information

The landlords survey asked where they had got information about the Right to Rent scheme. Membership of a landlords or letting agents' professional body was mentioned most frequently (55%, 53 out of 96 responses). This was considerably higher than for other options on information sources, with:

- 30 per cent (29 out of 96) citing information provided by the local authority;
- 29 per cent (28 out of 96) mentioning the Midland Landlord Accreditation scheme;
- 21 per cent (20 out of 96) citing the Gov.uk Right to Rent website;
- 17 per cent (16 out of 96) referring to local or national events;
- 16 per cent (15 out of 96) saying that they had got information from other sources;
- 15 per cent (14 out of 96) mentioning colleagues or their own organisation.

Of those 15 landlords who said that they had got information from other sources, 9 said (in write-in comments) that they had heard about the scheme from their letting agent. It may be that

some of those selecting the option of receiving information from a landlords or letting agents' professional body, or from colleagues, may have chosen these options as they were the closest option to getting information from their own agent. At a general level, the survey findings were borne out in the focus groups; most landlords and agents said that they had obtained information from their membership of a landlords or letting agents' organisation.

In the tenants survey, 56 per cent (22 out of 39) of respondents said that they had obtained information from their student letting service, reflecting the high proportion of students responding to the survey. Around a third (31%, 12 out of 39) cited their landlord or agent and 28 per cent (11 out of 39) word of mouth. Smaller numbers referred to news articles and the Gov.uk website (both 10%, 4 out of 39), leaflets (5%, 2 out of 39) and information from other websites (3%, 1 out of 39). Given the nature of the respondents to the tenants survey it is not surprising that university accommodation services were the most frequently mentioned source of information.

In the focus groups although very few tenants had any previous awareness of the Right to Rent scheme those who did tended to find out from their university accommodation service, letting agent or landlord. The information from the tenant survey and focus groups is consistent in indicating low levels of tenant awareness and reliance on third parties to provide relevant information.

### 3.4 Forms of communication

When asked how they would like to have been informed about the Right to Rent scheme, most landlords (76%, 86 out of 113) said by email, 42 per cent (47 out of 113) preferred a letter, 27 per cent (31 out of 113) would like to be informed via a trade organisation and 26 per cent (29 out of 113) through attending conferences.

A majority of landlords (58%, 66 out of 114) said that they knew where to get more information about the Right to Rent scheme. Most (73%, 48 out of 66) would go to Gov.uk for information about the scheme, 62 per cent (41 out of 66) to other online sources including professional bodies and 36 per cent (24 out of 66) to the Home Office Right to Rent Helpline. These findings appear to indicate a preference for using online sources for obtaining more information about the scheme, although this may not be generally the case for those who sub-let or have lodgers as they may not identify themselves as being landlords in the same way.

These survey findings indicate that for most respondents (both landlords and tenants) their most common source of information on such matters is a property professional or (in the case of landlords) a membership organisation followed by online sources. These findings were supported by information provided in the focus groups, although they may not be generalisable to small-scale or informal landlords.

When asked if they knew where to look for information about the Right to Rent scheme nearly half of tenants said that they did not know (49%, 19 out of 39 responses) with 36 per cent (14 out of 39) saying that they did know how to find out more information. Of those who said that they knew where to look for more information, most (71%, 10 of the 14 responses) said that they would get it from their university accommodation service and 64 per cent (9 out of 14 responses) from the Gov.uk website.

### 3.5 Reach of communications

Before the start of the Right to Rent scheme, the Home Office had worked with relevant stakeholders to publicise the scheme. This had been done through a number of regional and

national events, for example at private rental sector conferences and local authority landlords' groups and forums. A third (32%, 37 out of 114) of landlords had attended a local or national briefing event. Even accepting that the survey was probably more successful in reaching landlords who were members of local networks and/or national organisations, this provides some indication of the 'reach' of the communications and messaging on the Right to Rent scheme.

As discussed above there is a contrast in levels of awareness of the scheme between landlords and tenants. It needs to be noted that the tenants survey predominantly reflects the views of students. This is not, however, a reason to discount the findings of the tenants survey about levels of awareness. Other types of tenants, lodgers and sub-letters are unlikely to be any better informed than students and they are less likely to have contact with accommodation agencies, letting agents or other professional or membership bodies that could provide them with information about the scheme.

The survey findings about levels of awareness were borne out in the focus groups with many participants feeling that much more effort on communications needed to be made and targeted at small-scale/informal landlords and tenants in general. The following suggestions from letting agents made for overcoming this perceived information gap included:

*"The Government should adopt a 'belt and braces' approach: leaflets, emails, websites, social media – everything to get the word out there."*

*"The time has come for the Government to set up a portal for landlords, letting agents and tenants – just like DVLA have for motorists and HMRC have for tax queries."<sup>9</sup>*

One landlord focus group participant suggested that the Home Office site could be improved by having a brief simple summary with bullet points setting out the 'Right to Rent – how it affects you?'

Very similar messages were given by letting agents in their focus groups. All the agents considered that a publicity and educational effort should be directed at small-scale landlords who were unaware of the scheme. If the scheme was to be rolled out nationally then the lesson from phase one was that property professionals would cope well. The people who agents felt needed much more support and advice were the thousands of small-scale landlords who did not belong to any association and were not listed on relevant databases or mailing lists.

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<sup>9</sup> Here, it may be relevant to note the existence of the *How to rent* guide at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent>.



## 4. Experience of the Right to Rent scheme

This section of the report describes the experience of the Scheme's checking regime from the perspectives of, firstly, landlords and letting agents undertaking the checks, and, secondly, tenants whose right to rent has been checked.

### 4.1 Conducting Right to Rent checks

Just under half (46%, 52 out of 114) of landlords had not had any new tenancies starting since the start of phase one on 1 December 2014. Of those landlords who had new tenancies starting since the introduction of the scheme, 44 per cent (27 out of 62) always used a letting agent, with a further 24 per cent (15 out of 62) sometimes using an agent. This means that only a small subset of the respondents to the landlords survey would have had direct experience of the scheme's checking requirements.

Based on this subset, nearly three-quarters of landlords (74%, 26 of 35) said that Right to Rent checks had been conducted on prospective tenants. A fifth (20%, 7 out of 35 responses) said that checks had not been carried out, with five per cent (2 out of 35 responses) saying they did not know if checks had been done.

Given this level of interaction with the scheme, it is not surprising that only 15 per cent of landlords (17 out of 114 responses) had used the Home Office's online Right to Rent tool, which is designed to establish whether a check needs to be done and to then support landlords and letting agents with the checking process. Of this 15 per cent, nearly all (88%, 15 out of 17 responses) found the information provided helpful or very helpful. In the focus groups only a small number of participants had used the online tool. Those who had used it said that they found it helpful as a means of checking that what they had done was correct. The reasons why these landlords found this tool useful as expressed in the focus groups were:

- to double-check that what they had done was correct;
- to check on the validity/eligibility of some documents.

From the focus groups, letting agents appeared to have little or no experience of using the online tool.

The majority of landlords surveyed (96%, 109 of 114) had not used the Right to Rent helpline. Of the five respondents who had used the helpline their reasons for so doing were:

- to see if they needed to carry out a check (3 respondents)
- to ask about identifying genuine documents (2 respondents)
- to ask when to use the Landlords Checking Service (1 respondent);
- to ask how to do a check (1 respondent);
- to ask about types of acceptable documentation (1 respondent).

In the focus groups some landlords reported mixed experiences in using the helpline, making comments like *“it took a long time to get through”* and *“I’m not sure the knowledge of the person at the end of the line was any greater than my own”*.

Many landlords (42%, 48 of 114) said that they had read the *Code of Practice on illegal immigrants and private rented accommodation*, although more (53%, 60 out of 114) had not read it. Of those who had read this code of practice most (73%, 35 out of 48) had found it helpful or very helpful. A lower proportion of (29%, 33 out of 114) landlords had read the other code of practice for landlords about avoiding unlawful discrimination when conducting Right to Rent checks in the private residential sector. Of those who had read it 78 per cent (25 out of 32 responses) found the information helpful or very helpful. In one sense, this level of interaction with the codes of practice may be seen as concerning, especially for the discrimination code. However, as noted above, many landlords responding to the survey had not yet had any new tenancies starting since the introduction of the scheme, and/or used letting agents to find new tenants.

Very few landlords responding to the survey had ever used the Home Office’s Landlords Checking Service (LCS) to check a prospective tenant’s right to rent, with 88 per cent (23 out of 26) saying they had not done so. This is probably unsurprising given that the Right to Rent scheme is based on landlords and agents being able to do the vast majority of checks themselves, with the LCS only being intended to deal with complex cases, for example, when a prospective tenant has a live application with the Home Office. The two respondents who had used the LCS<sup>10</sup> said that it was easy to complete the online checking form, which has to be submitted to the Home Office. In the two focus groups with letting agents only one participant mentioned using the LCS. The agent did not offer two applicants a tenancy, because the LCS decision was that that the two individuals did not have a right to rent.

## 4.2 Tenants’ experience of Right to Rent checks

A third (34%, 23 out of 68) of tenants completing the survey had started a new tenancy since the Right to Rent scheme had been introduced. A further 58 per cent (26 out of 45) had been looking for rented accommodation since 1 December 2015. Among these tenants (those who had started a new tenancy or looked for rented accommodation since 1 December) just over half (52%, 12 out of 23 responses) did not know if their right to rent had been checked, 35 per cent (8 out of 23) said it had been checked, and 13 per cent (3 out of 23) said that it had not.

Of the small number who were aware that Right to Rent checks had been made before they were offered their tenancy most (88%, 7 out of 8 responses), said that the checks had been done by the letting agents. The same proportion (88%, 7 out of 8 responses) said that they had to provide some form of photo identification, while a quarter (25%, 2 out of 8 responses) found it difficult to provide the right documentation for the Right to Rent check. One tenant wrote that they *“did not have a passport and they [the agent or landlord] would not accept a driving license.”*

None of the tenant respondents to the survey had been asked to pay for the checks done on them. This finding was tested in the focus groups with tenants; none of the student participants had paid any fees in obtaining their accommodation. This was explained on the grounds that letting agents who specialised in student lettings and who were on the local authority and university approved agents lists gave commitments not to charge students any administration or finder’s fees.

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<sup>10</sup> The remaining one respondent did not know if they had used the Landlords Checking Service.

However amongst the focus groups with informal tenants it was suggested that the charging of fees by some agents was common practice. This was not due to the Right to Rent scheme, but had been a long-standing practice – especially in areas where demand exceeds supply. This was one reason why informal tenancies tended to be with other family members or friends so as to avoid incurring such fees.

These survey findings were illuminated by the focus group discussions in which it became clear that tenants are generally unaware of the Right to Rent checks being done or the reason for them. When landlords (and letting agents) do checks on tenants the Right to Rent requirements are integrated with the normal vetting and referencing process without being separately identified to tenants. Virtually no tenants were aware that any extra checks had been done on them apart from the normal forms of ID required to rent a property. This indicates that the Right to Rent checks have not proved onerous for many prospective tenants.

The low levels of awareness of Right to Rent and the checking process amongst tenants means that very few tenants had any knowledge of how long it took to carry out the checks. However, the small number of tenants who expressed having had difficulties in complying with the need to provide right to rent documentation tended to be UK born people who did not have either a passport or driving licence available as a form of photo ID. For example, one respondent to the tenants survey commented:

*“It was a massive, completely unnecessary pain. I study a full time, intense degree course and leave my passport at home so that I don't lose it. I didn't have time to go home just to get it and didn't want my parents to send it via post.”*

## 5. Impacts on tenants

This section follows from the discussion of tenants providing documentation for Right to Rent checks in section 4.2, by discussing the impacts of this. It then covers the potential discrimination impacts that may be linked to the scheme, followed by a more general discussion of benefits and concerns for tenants.

### 5.1 Documentation

The *Code of Practice on illegal migrants and private rented accommodation* lists the documents (or combinations of documents) that are considered acceptable for demonstrating the right to rent in the UK. This evaluation therefore reflects on whether the nature of the documentation required to secure accommodation has changed as a result of the Right to Rent scheme, and, if so, whether this has presented any challenges for tenants.

Landlords were asked what documentation they requested from their tenants before and after the scheme was introduced. Before the scheme's introduction 51 per cent (18 out of 35) always requested photo ID while 31 per cent (11 out of 35) said that they never requested this. Since the scheme has been introduced the proportion of landlords always requesting photo ID increased to 81 per cent (26 out of 32) with a corresponding decrease to 6 per cent (2 out of 32) never requesting photo ID.

The detailed results on these before and after questions are shown in the comparison Table 3 below. As many respondents did not answer these questions these findings need to be treated with caution.

**Table 3: Comparison of types of documentation requested from prospective tenants**

	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
<b>Photo ID</b>							
Before the scheme	18	51	6	17	11	31	35
After the scheme	26	81	4	13	2	6	32
<b>Proof of current address</b>							
Before the scheme	17	50	10	29	7	21	34
After the scheme	19	63	7	23	4	13	30
<b>Proof of income</b>							
Before the scheme	19	60	7	21	8	24	34
After the scheme	18	60	8	27	4	13	30
<b>Other<sup>1</sup></b>							
Before the scheme	16	47	8	24	10	29	34
After the scheme	18	58	8	26	5	26	31

<sup>1</sup>For example birth certificate, written reference, National Insurance number/card.

Although the numbers in Table 3 are small, it appears a reasonable hypothesis that this apparent increase in the requirement to provide photo ID is attributable to the Right to Rent scheme. Indeed some of the student tenant focus group participants specifically said that they felt that things had changed when it came to securing accommodation for 2015/16 and commented:

*“There was definitely a different approach in December [2014] when we were looking for accommodation for next year compared to September. I even had an email direct from the letting agent setting out the changes in vetting because of the Right to Rent legislation.”*

In the focus groups landlords reported relatively few issues with documentation. However, it should be noted that many of these landlords specialised in the student market and there seemed to be relatively few changes for students’ (including international students’) documentation requirements. This was broadly confirmed by student tenants, although with exceptions like the focus group response above.

The apparent shift towards more landlords requiring photo ID noted in the landlords survey (see Table 3) since the introduction of the scheme appears to have had some implications for UK born applicants. One unintended consequence that appears to be associated with the scheme

(as identified in some focus groups and free text comments in the surveys) is that some landlords and letting agents are routinely asking potential tenants to provide their passport as well as other forms of identification, such as their birth certificate and/or driving licence. This is reported to have caused some difficulties amongst those UK applicants who do not have a passport and more, specifically, for students who have moved from home to university but left passports with their families for safe keeping, as in the example quoted from the tenants survey in section 4.2.

More generally, landlords in the focus groups said that documentation issues can also arise with young people on low incomes or older applicants who do not hold photo ID (specifically, a passport or driving licence). In one focus group, a landlord commented that *“many young UK people have drifted into city centres and don’t have birth certificates, having left home or lost touch with their families”*. In contrast people from outside the UK normally had all the required paperwork to hand (such as passports and visas).

This issue was identified by a number of landlords and letting agents in the focus groups and by one tenant in their comments in responding to the survey. In the focus groups, many landlords and agents said that they often now require sight of a passport from all applicants, including those who are from the UK. Some of these landlords and agents pointed out it is not possible to assume nationality from a person’s ethnic background. Also, because of a concern with avoiding racial discrimination, some landlords and agents said that it has become increasingly common to require sight of passports from everyone, not just from applicants who landlords or agents perceive to be from outside the UK. This is a positive finding in terms of the equal treatment of prospective tenants, whatever their perceived national background. However, in terms of the scheme, a wide range of documents (or combinations of documents) can be used to support a tenant’s right to rent.

In the focus groups, tenants reported very few issues with providing documentation. A number of the participants in the tenant focus groups were students, who were able to provide passports and visas. Other participants who rented in the informal market had not been asked for documentation. This (and, more generally, the qualitative nature of the research) means that the same lack of issues would not necessarily be found for a wider group of tenants.

## 5.2 Discrimination

Analysis of the survey data and qualitative information from the focus groups highlights a small number of statements (and in some cases misconceptions) about the operation of the Right to Rent scheme that could potentially result in discrimination within the housing sector. One example of this was a letting agent who, in a focus group, expressed the view that *“if the applicants were White and had a ‘Brummie’ accent, they didn’t need to put them through the [Right to Rent] process”*. No other participants in the focus group agreed with this view.

Other evidence of potential discrimination was evidence within a focus group of letting agents where they reported that they had landlords who had instructed them not to let to non-European Economic Area (EEA) applicants or to ‘any foreigners’. The agents taking part in the focus group were adamant that *“we won’t and don’t discriminate”*, but that landlords had acquired misinformation through the press and did not understand the scheme.

The evidence from the focus groups also showed a lack of understanding among some landlords (but not letting agents) around the right to rent of prospective tenants with limited leave to remain in the UK. There were a very small number of suggestions that these landlords would not rent to such applicants and instead searched for tenants with a permanent right to stay in the UK. This included a landlord stating, in a focus group, that they had to turn down a

couple (an EEA and non-EEA national) as the non-EEA national only had eight months' leave to remain in the UK on their visa.<sup>11</sup>

Within the focus groups with landlords, there was a view that students were easier to deal with under the scheme as their immigration status will have already been checked by their educational establishment and so visas will be readily available for checking. Students were therefore seen as a low risk group, in terms of their right to rent. There were some very limited indications that some landlords appeared to be choosing not to conduct the Right to Rent checks. One respondent to the landlords survey was clear that they did not do checks as:

*“I only let to overseas students attending [a West Midlands] University. I have never had a problem. I have stopped doing checks nor do I ask for payment in advance. All confirmations are via email. This scheme would be a[n] administrative nightmare for me. It is simply not necessary.”*

In one focus group with letting agents, there was a view that some landlords had concerns about all international students, not just those from outside the EEA. In the same focus group, one agent described how some prospective tenants' first question was *“will you accept us?”* The agent understood this to mean that these prospective tenants had not been offered properties by other agents or landlords, although it was not clear whether this was because of the Right to Rent scheme.

Within the landlords survey, there were also some comments that an unintended consequence of the scheme is that tenants may feel discriminated as a result of the scheme, even if this is not the case:

*“My main concern is that applicants feel that they are being discriminated against when asking for such personal documentation, although we treat all applicants with the upmost respect I find that a lot of people haven't heard about the scheme so feel we are being difficult and in fact we are not; we are doing our job.”*

Taken collectively, there were a very small number of examples of potentially discriminatory behaviour by landlords (predominantly expressed in the focus groups), whether this was around:

- attitudes towards potential tenants with time-limited leave to remain in the UK;
- a preference for tenants whose right to rent was seen as easy to check (for example, international students);
- a preference for 'low risk' tenants, who landlords felt they did not need to check.

However, these kinds of instances of potentially discriminatory behaviour were not found in the focus group discussion with tenants.

The lack of evidence or concern shown by tenants about adverse discriminatory impacts may reflect the composition of the respondents to the tenants survey, which mostly comprised students. These, if foreign nationals, will tend to have all the requisite documentation to hand and be supported by local accommodation services that seek to smooth their way into available accommodation. It is worth noting that several of the foreign national participants in the focus groups expressed the view that checking on people's immigration status was quite normal and

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<sup>11</sup> Under the Right to Rent scheme, in this scenario the non-EEA national would have had a time-limited right to rent, with the landlord scheduling a re-check a year after the start of the tenancy.

something they would expect to be done when renting property in their home countries.

### 5.3 Potential concerns and benefits for tenants

Most tenants (81%, 55 out of 68) said that they had no concerns about the Right to Rent scheme. Of the 19 per cent (13 out of 68) who expressed concerns their concerns were:

- being treated unfairly (10 out of 12<sup>12</sup>);
- not being able to get a tenancy because they don't have the documentation needed (6 out of 12);
- checks delaying a tenancy start date (5 out of 12);
- increased costs for Right to Rent checks (4 out of 12).

In the focus groups no tenants said that they felt that they had been treated unfairly when it came to renting their property, but some said that they thought there may be a potential for the regulations to be used in such a way. The survey also provided one instance where a tenant reported that they had suffered delays because of a check, which took:

*“Several weeks because the letting agency were slow and required me to take a new copy of my passport as they did not think the first one was of a high enough resolution – but at this time my passport was being renewed.”*

As regards benefits from the scheme 88 per cent (60 out of 68) of tenants said that they had not noticed any. However, in the focus group discussions a number of potential benefits were cited such as:

- preventing illegal immigrants from accessing rented accommodation thereby making more properties available to legal applicants and at lower rents (mentioned by some tenants);
- standardising checks so that administration is faster and simpler (mentioned by some letting agents);
- the legislation being helpful for landlords because now they could justify their requests for documentation by saying that it was mandatory under the law (mentioned by landlords).

The majority of landlords (83%, 95 of 114 responses) said that they were not aware of any concerns by tenants about the Right to Rent scheme. Of the 19 landlords who indicated that there might be some concerns for tenants they specified these as being:

- the checks might delay the start of tenancies (53%, 10 out of 18<sup>13</sup>);
- people might be treated unfairly (47%, 9 out of 18);
- vulnerable groups might be disadvantaged because of not having the required documentation (47%, 9 out of 18).

Some landlords expressed general concerns about how the scheme might adversely affect tenants through having to provide a great deal of personal information, which could lay them open to identity fraud and exploitation in the housing market. For example, one landlord commented in the survey about:

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<sup>12</sup> One respondent did not answer this question reducing the base number to 12.

<sup>13</sup> One respondent did not answer this question reducing the base number to 18.



*“Disclosing lots of information making them [tenants] vulnerable to fraud and identity theft. Uncertainty of having a decent roof over their head. Tenancy refusal because of nationality but needing a place to live in and then being exploited.”*

## 5.4 Deterrent effects of the scheme

One of the aims of the Right to Rent scheme is to make it more difficult for illegally resident individuals to gain access to privately rented accommodation.

There was some limited evidence emerging from the focus groups that illegal migrants' access to the private rental sector in the phase one area was being restricted. Some letting agents and landlords reported that a small number of prospective tenants would put down the phone, rather than completing their enquiry, when asked about providing documentation and their immigration status. Additionally, agents in one focus group cited three examples of non-EEA migrants (or people they believed to be non-EEA migrants) who had been turned away as they could not produce passports or other acceptable identification. This could be seen as a sign of the scheme having an effect in restricting migrants' access to rented accommodation, but it is, of course, not known if these potential tenants were illegal migrants.

In addition, the discussion of the Landlords Checking Service (LCS) above (section 4.1) referred to a letting agent who did not offer a tenancy, because of the LCS's decision that the two applicants did not have a right to rent. In this case, the agent did not see this as a success of the scheme as he believed the individuals would move into the informal letting sector, where their right to rent would not be checked.

## 6. Impacts on landlords and letting agents

This section focuses on landlords and letting agents and assesses the scale and ease of doing Right to Rent checks and the impacts on landlords and agents' costs and workload.

### 6.1 Practicalities of conducting Right to Rent checks

In the landlords survey many landlords were unable to provide responses on the time taken on, or the ease of doing, Right to Rent checks. As discussed above, this was often because they had not yet let new tenancies in the phase one area since 1 December 2014 or because they used letting agents to find and check new tenants. Of the small number of landlords who did provide responses to these questions there was a prevailing view that the checks were not onerous and did not cause them much difficulty.

In terms of the extra time required to do the checks, nearly two-thirds (62%, 16 out of 26) of the landlords who responded to this survey question said that it took them no more than 20 minutes to do the Right to Rent checks. Just under a fifth (19%) said that it took them between 20 minutes and an hour to do the checks (5 out of 26) and 15 per cent (4 out of 26) said that it took over an hour. Landlords' responses to this question are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Time taken by landlords to do Right to Rent checks**

	n	%
No extra time	2	8
Up to 10 minutes	5	19
More than 10 less than 20 minutes	9	35
More than 20 but less than 30 minutes	4	15
More than 30 but less than 1 hour	1	4
More than 1 hour	4	15
Don't know	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

There were some write-in comments about the time taken to do checks. For example, one landlord observed that:

*“Demanding extra paperwork is time consuming. Taking a copy of a passport can be difficult as the landlord needs to take the passport away to get it copied. I wouldn't allow a stranger out of my sight with my passport.”*

When asked whether it was easy or difficult to do the checks nearly half (46%, 12 out of 26) said that they found it easy or very easy. Another 38 per cent (10 of 26) said that it was neither easy nor difficult and 15 per cent (4 out of 26) found it difficult or very difficult.

From the focus groups with landlords and letting agents, there appeared to be a mixed picture on the ease of doing the Right to Rent checks. In the focus group discussions, many agents and large-scale landlords said that they had little difficulty in assimilating the checks with their normal vetting processes. As one letting agent put it:

*“We always took personal identity details such as of birth certificates, NI numbers, car number plates, etc., so that we could trace them if they incurred rent arrears and to obtain an attachment of earnings.”*

Nonetheless there were some specific practical aspects of the checking regime that had implications for landlords and letting agents. One such area, raised in the focus groups with landlords and agents, was conducting re-checks for those on time-limited visas. This was particularly around the practicalities of knowing when the check was due and a concern that this could be overlooked. However, some agents said that they had systems that flagged up a tenant’s visa expiry date, if this was earlier than the end of the tenancy. Scheduling and conducting re-checks was therefore seen as an additional administrative task for landlords and agents.

Landlords, letting agents and tenants highlighted some specific issues that are particular to the student rental market. These included international students arranging tenancies whilst in their home country, before checks can be done, posing a possible risk of empty properties if the prospective tenant subsequently does not have the right to rent. Another issue is the difficulties for landlords of letting to multiple students where one student has a visa that expires prior to the end date of a typical annual student tenancy.

In one focus group with letting agents, there was a particular concern about having to do checks within 28 days of a new tenancy starting. Agents felt that this was impractical (as a tenant’s previous tenancy would have a notice period of a month or more), which could result in two checks being made on the same tenant in order to comply with this timescale.

In the focus groups and landlords survey, some small-scale and informal landlords expressed having some very specific practical difficulties, such as not having colour photocopiers to take the required copies of visas and keeping these copies and tenants’ personal information securely. They also mentioned their lack of confidence in knowing whether any documents presented were genuine. At a more general level, small-scale landlords also expressed a concern about their capacity to adopt changes in procedures, especially in obtaining information about the new legal requirements.

Overall, then, most landlords and agents appeared to feel that it had been relatively easy to assimilate the Right to Rent checks into their existing working practices, but there were some specific concerns, as explained above.

## **6.2 Burdens on landlords and letting agents**

The time taken, and practicalities of, conducting the checks, discussed in the previous section, may have a consequent effect in regards to landlords and letting agents’ workloads. In the survey, landlords were asked if the Right to Rent scheme had increased their costs and workload. As many landlords either used a letting agent or had not yet conducted a Right to Rent check they were unable to answer this question. Of the 35 landlords who answered this

question 15 (43%) said that it had had some impact on their costs while 13 (37%) said that it had none. The remaining 17 per cent (6 out of 35) said that they did not know what effect it had on their costs while 1 respondent said that it had a lot of effect on costs.

The aspects of the scheme that were affecting landlord income and costs were described as follows by some respondents to the landlords survey:

*“I have to physically meet with the tenant to check original ID, some don't have originals with them. There's more time and cost involved with this and it hits my bottom line.”*

*“Takes a lot of time to do checks; some tenants [are] put off so property stays empty for longer, so loss of income.”*

*“Loss of rent, people do not come back when faced with having to produce documents, but I suppose that is a good thing as they were probably illegal.”*

As regards the effect on workloads 71 per cent (25 out of 35) of landlords said that there had been some increase in their workload and 6 per cent (2 out of 35) said that it had increased a lot. The proportion of landlords saying that their workload had not increased at all was 17 per cent (6 out of 35); 6 per cent (2 out of 35) said that they did not know if there had been any increase. Of those landlords who said that the scheme had affected their workload:

- 85% (23 out of 27) said that additional work was needed to do checks;
- 74% (20 out of 27) said that extra work was needed to explain the scheme to tenants;
- 56% (15 out of 27) referred to having to check documents with which they were not familiar, and that this took longer;
- 52% (14 out of 27) referred to having to note when a follow-up check is due.

In the focus groups with landlords, some commented that the Right to Rent checks were not onerous because they were already careful about who they let their properties to, by doing extensive pre-letting ID checks. So, some felt that as responsible landlords (big or small scale) the introduction of the Right to Rent scheme had made little difference or extra work.

In the focus groups, some letting agents said that the burden on them as small businesses was disproportionate and they rejected the view that making checks on immigration status for letting property was analogous to employers having to check on people being entitled to work in the country. They felt that this analogy did not hold because most small firms will typically take on about two to three people per year, whereas small letting agencies had to achieve about one letting every week in order to survive, which amounted to over 50 checks per year. At the same time, it should be noted that a number of letting agents had also commented that the Right to Rent checks were easily assimilated with existing checks on new tenants (see section 6.1 above). The picture on agent burden is therefore a mixed one. Additionally, it is relevant to note that the only evidence from letting agents comes from the focus groups, with further evidence on impacts being available in Home Office Science's overall evaluation report.

A particular issue raised by some landlords and letting agents was not necessarily that the scheme caused them extra work, but that it could cause delays and give rise to frustration from some UK applicants. The 'aggravation' arising from checking UK born prospective tenants was a recurring theme in the focus groups with landlords and agents. Some of the comments provided in the landlords survey echoed this concern as in the examples below:

*“British tenants don't co-operate.”*

*“This scheme would work more easily if everyone in the UK had ID cards. It is difficult to know if documents are genuine.”*

*“Tenants don't understand why they have to provide documents because they are British. They think that the scheme should be only for foreigners!”*

## 6.3 Potential concerns and benefits for landlords and letting agents

The landlords survey contained a wide-ranging question covering landlords' concerns about the Right to Rent scheme. Just over half of landlords (52%, 59 out of 114) said that they had concerns and 48 per cent (55 out of 114) said that they had no concerns. The issues identified by those expressing concerns were:

- additional work for landlords – 76 per cent (45 of 59);
- checks delaying tenancy start – 51 per cent (30 of 59);
- not understanding the immigration system – 49 per cent (29 of 59);
- vulnerable groups being disadvantaged because they do not have the required information – 42 per cent (25 of 59);
- properties being left empty – 37 per cent (22 of 59).

When asked in the survey about the positive impacts of the scheme, most landlords (84%, 96 out of 114 respondents) were not aware of any positive impacts. For the 16% of landlords (18 out of 114 respondents) who were aware of positive impacts, they said that these related to:

- tackling illegal immigration (89%, 16 out of 18);
- tackling rogue landlords (50%, 9 out of 18);
- standardising checks by landlords and letting agents (44%, 8 out of 18);
- reputational benefits for landlords and letting agents (33%, 6 out of 18).

In the landlords survey in particular, there was a view held by many respondents that they felt that the scheme meant that they were carrying out a role that should be done by immigration officers. One respondent to the survey also made a connection to the potential impact that the scheme could have on relationships within the community:

*“If landlords were forced to act like Immigration Officers this could damage relations between different communities. The scheme could, therefore, store up problems for the future.”*

There were a smaller number of comments (expressed in both the landlords survey and the focus groups with landlords and letting agents) welcoming the scheme, saying that it would help to tackle illegal immigration. Some typical comments from the landlords survey were:

*“I am very supportive of the scheme, which further protects our borders against illegal immigrants. It is no trouble for me as a landlord to make these checks and I find the 'power' of legislation gives me added confidence when asking for proof of identity.”*

*“I don't mind the extra few minutes involved. I see it as my contribution to tackling the problem of unlawful immigration.”*

## 7. Impacts on the housing market

As well as discussing market effects in terms of rental prices, availability and turnover, this section covers views on exploitative, or rogue, landlords.

### 7.1 Rental costs, turnover and availability

Questions were asked of landlords and tenants about the effects that they think the Right to Rent scheme has had on private rented sector rent levels, turnover and availability.

Nearly half of landlords (46%, 53 of 114) said that rents had not changed (neither gone up nor down) as a result of the introduction of the Right to Rent scheme and 45 per cent (51 of 114) said that they did not know what the effect had been on rents. Much smaller proportions said that rents had increased (8%, 9 of 114 responses) and that rents had gone down (1%, 1 of 114 respondents).

Similar responses were given about the effects on turnover and availability of rented accommodation. Less than half (42%, 48 of 114) said that there had been no effect on turnover and 47 per cent (54 of 114) said that they did not know. On the availability of rented accommodation in the phase one area, 51 per cent (58 of the 114 responses) said that they did not know if there had been any effects; 36 per cent (41 of the 114 responses) said that there had been no effect and 11 per cent (12 out of 114) said that the availability had decreased. Just 3% (3 out of 114) landlords responding to this question said that the availability of rented accommodation had increased.

Among tenants there did not appear to be high levels of concern about adverse market impacts. When asked whether the Right to Rent scheme had made it more difficult to find a rented property just under two-thirds (63%, 31 out of 49) did not know while just over a third (35%, 17 out of 49) thought that it had not made it more difficult. These findings are based on fairly small numbers and so should be treated with caution.

These findings about the apparently negligible effect of the Right to Rent scheme on the housing market were amplified in some of the focus group discussions with some landlords and letting agents making the point that it was too early to discern any market impacts. As one landlord respondent to the survey commented:

*“Is this questionnaire being conducted too soon into the strategic development if landlords are to experience the process and tenants and landlords’ resistance to the requirements? When dealing with student academic year cycles it needs to be carried out after September 2015.”*

### 7.2 Rogue landlords

As noted in section 6.3, a minority of respondents to the landlords survey envisaged positive effects from the scheme in terms of tackling rogue landlords and reputational benefits for landlords and agents.

At the same time, some landlords, letting agents and tenants considered that the Right to Rent scheme was only being observed by the 'responsible' players in the private rented sector, while the 'rogue' elements were getting away with non-compliance. As one respondent to the landlords survey commented:

*“As a mechanism to deter immigration/further immigration I do not think this is an effective system. It puts unnecessary additional workload on responsible landlords who fail to appreciate why they are being asked to carry out the checks. I suspect that less organised, less responsible landlords/agents will be either unaware of the legislation or, if aware, will not bother to carry out checks.”*

Some participants in the landlord and letting agent focus groups expanded on the theme that the more exploitative end of the private rental sector was being boosted through the Right to Rent scheme as immigrants who were unable to provide the required documents were now being diverted into that sector. In a similar vein, these comments provided by landlords in the survey were that:

*“This has made no difference to the landlords [who] serially and intentionally rent rooms to tenants with no right to rent. The focus should be on enforcement of the few landlords [who] need to be brought in check and not a bureaucratic system that is designed to 'theoretically' change behaviours but does not capture those [who] set out to abuse the bureaucracy.”*

*“Can't see how it would have ANY positive effect on tackling rogue landlords; the scheme will just drive illegal immigrants even further underground and into accommodation provided by those who fly under the radar.”*

*“The Scheme [makes] bad landlords more attractive as they make it easy by not bothering [presumably to do checks].”*

In the focus groups, many agents and landlords felt that more tenants are now targeting the informal sector. This was not just due to the Right to Rent scheme, but was connected with the cumulative effects of other policies, such as the Housing Benefits restrictions (the Spare Room Subsidy) and tax avoidance incentives. Several agents and landlords expressed the view that the informal rented sector is expanding with an increasing number of absentee landlords who may tend to let to people from the same national background.

# Annex A – Detailed methodology

## Overview

The research methods used are shown in Table A1, with the three respondent groups alongside the methods of data collection and how many of these were used with each group.

**Table A1: Data collection methods, by type of respondent**

Respondent	Method	Number
Letting agents	Focus groups	2
Professional and informal landlords	Online survey	1
	Focus groups	3 (2 formal sector, 1 informal)
Tenants including students	Online survey	1
	Focus groups	5 (4 student, 1 informal sector)

As reflected in the table a particular concern was to try to reach students within the wider tenant group and also more informal and/or small-scale landlords. Hence five focus groups were held with tenants as a means of obtaining inputs from the full range of tenants (students and informal tenants from different neighbourhoods within the phase one area). Similarly three focus groups were held with landlords to include different sizes of property portfolio and the more informal sector.

## Surveys

### Design

The questionnaires for the online surveys involved a mix of compulsory and optional questions (with scope for respondents to add comments in free text format). The questions were designed to ensure that only those who rented or owned property in the phase one area were eligible to respond.

Both the landlords and tenants surveys were developed with the input of Home Office Science. In particular, the landlords survey drew on Home Office Science's existing pulse check surveys with letting agents.

Both surveys were uploaded onto SmartSurvey.

Copies of both questionnaires are available on request from Home Office Science.



## Sampling and distribution

Links to the landlords survey were distributed through a range of organisations. Some of these organisations hold joint lists of landlords and letting agents. Home Office Science co-ordinated the distribution of the landlords survey, enabling the links to both the landlords survey and the Home Office's final pulse check with letting agents to be sent in the same message. This approach also ensured that Home Office Science could send the survey links to its internal mailing list of relevant Right to Rent contacts.

The survey link was sent out between 12 and 16 May 2015, either on its own or with the link to the letting agents survey, depending on the nature of the lists held. As well as being sent to the Home Office's own contact list, the survey link was distributed by:

- private rental sector teams in phase one local authorities (in some cases these lists contained both landlords' and letting agents' details);
- the National Landlords Association;
- the Residential Landlords Association;
- Property Tribes (this list contained both landlords' and letting agents' details).

The link to the landlords survey was also posted on some of these organisations' blogs and websites, as well as on IRIS's website. In addition some local authority contacts publicised the landlords survey through private rental sector forums and meetings.

The landlords survey had 137 completed responses, 114 of which related to landlords with properties in the phase one area. The tenants survey had 70 completed responses, 68 of which related to tenants in the phase one area. Apart from the initial screening to establish the location of relevant properties, subsequent survey questions were only asked of those letting or renting properties in the phase one area. Both surveys were open for completion in the period 12 May to 31 May 2015.

The links to the tenants survey were posted on the IRIS website and distributed by email to local authority and other contacts in the phase one area. This distribution included:

- all letting agents registered on the 'Student-pad' websites in the phase one area;
- local authority officers responsible for private rented sector issues in the phase one area;
- all housing associations with private rented sector portfolios in the phase one area (as drawn from the *National Housing Federation's Directory of Members 2015*).

The option of advertising the survey link in local newspapers was considered but rejected on the grounds that it might be seen as distorting the response.

Of those tenants who completed the survey:

- over two-thirds (71%, 48 of 68 responses) were UK citizens;
- 16 per cent (11 out of 68 responses) were from outside the European Economic Area (EEA);
- 9 per cent (6 out of 68 responses) were from the EEA or Switzerland; 4 per cent preferred not to state their national background.

In terms of the tenants' ethnic background:

- 66 per cent (45 out of 68) of respondents were White;

- 18 per cent (12 of 68) respondents were Asian/Asian British;
- 7 per cent (5 of 68) were from Mixed ethnic backgrounds;
- 1 per cent (1 of 68) were Black/Black British;
- 7 per cent preferred not to state their ethnicity.

As the tenants and landlords surveys were distributed through mailing lists and web-links, it is not known how many people received them, so it is not possible to calculate response rates.

## Analysis

Frequencies and limited cross-tabulations of survey responses have been reported. The survey data were analysed by assessing the findings reported in response to each question. Every write-in comment was also analysed. Where these indicated a recurring theme or point of note, they have been referenced in the main report.

## Focus groups

### Design

Three semi-structured interview guides for use with landlords, letting agents and tenants were designed in conjunction with Home Office Science.

Copies of the interview guides are available on request from Home Office Science.

### Sampling and recruitment

There were ten focus groups conducted with current and prospective tenants, landlords and letting agents in the phase one area during March, May and June 2015. They took place in the following local authority locations across the phase one area, which are listed in Table A2.

**Table A2: Focus groups, by local authority location**

Area	Focus groups	Number
Birmingham	Letting agents	1
Birmingham	Students/tenants	2
Sandwell	Informal landlords	1
Sandwell	Landlords	1
Sandwell	Letting agents	1
Walsall	Informal tenants	1
Wolverhampton	Students/tenants	2
Wolverhampton	Landlords	1

Tenants and landlords from Dudley were represented in the groups held in Sandwell.

Overall, 70 participants attended the focus groups, with participants being drawn from across the whole of the phase one area. More specifically the landlords, agents and tenants had properties in the following neighbourhoods shown in Table A3.

**Table A3: Focus groups, by neighbourhood**

Local authority area	Neighbourhood
Birmingham	Great Barr, Selly Oak, Quinton
Dudley	Halesowen, Netherton, Stourbridge
Sandwell	Carters Green, Great Bridge, Oldbury, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury, West Bromwich
Walsall	Darlaston, Pleck
Wolverhampton	All Saints, Bilston, Heath Town, Willenhall

The recruitment of participants to the focus groups presented some challenges given the specific nature of the target groups (such as informal tenants and informal landlords).

The recruitment of professional landlords and agents and student tenants presented less difficulty and for these the research team was assisted by professional landlord and letting agents' organisations that provided contact information and who disseminated information through their networks.

Local authority officers in the phase one area provided relevant contact information with landlords and agents and local venues for holding some of the focus group discussions. In order to identify and enlist informal landlords and tenants the research team was able to use their local contacts and knowledge as a starting point and then employed 'snowball' sampling to identify and recruit volunteers who fitted the definitions of informal tenants and informal landlords.

## Running the focus groups

Venues for the focus groups were arranged in a mix of formal and informal settings, depending on the participants. These ranged from rooms in hotels and council offices to private homes and student refectories.

Group discussions were not recorded as it was felt that this might be off-putting for participants. However, detailed notes were taken.

For tenants taking part in the focus groups the research team was able to offer small financial incentives to compensate them for their time, travel and any child care costs incurred. It was agreed that these would take the form of shopping vouchers up to a value of £20. In practice the research team found reluctance from tenants to accept vouchers from a particular shopping outlet, so a pragmatic decision to offer a cash equivalent was taken.

## Analysis

A thematic analysis of the focus group notes was conducted. Three slightly different semi-structured questionnaires were used for each of the participant groups, i.e. tenants/students,

landlords and letting agents. Assurances were given about confidentiality and non-disclosure of any identifiable information or individual responses. Participants were assured that all data would be confidential and the final analysis and reporting would be aggregated to show common trends and themes. Consent forms were also circulated, with the content being discussed and agreed.

All the focus groups explored the same issues linked to the aims of the study and focused on levels of awareness, benefits and concerns and whether there had been any perceived or real problems linked to the implementation and application of the Right to Rent scheme. Clearly, it is not always possible to ensure that free discussions remain within the particular subject areas, but when reviewing and reporting on each of the focus groups it was ensured that all comments and remarks were included under the correct headings. A combination of summary and verbatim quotes aim to provide a real flavour of the discussions that took place.

# Annex B – Data tables

This annex contains data tables for the survey responses within each section of the report.

Some tables do not total 100 per cent as respondents could respond to more than one category.

## 2. Research methods

**Table B1: Landlords – In which of the following areas are the properties you let?**

	Response total	Response %
Birmingham	70	51
Dudley	15	11
Sandwell (Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury, West Bromwich)	34	25
Walsall	18	13
Wolverhampton	26	19
None of the above	23	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B2: Tenants – In which of the following areas is the accommodation you rent?**

	Response total	Response %
Birmingham	62	89
Dudley	1	1
Sandwell (Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury, West Bromwich)	2	3
Walsall	0	0
Wolverhampton	3	4
None of the above	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B3: Landlords – How would you describe your role as a landlord?**

	Response total	Response %
Let out a self-contained property or properties	110	96
Sub-let to tenants or lodgers in my own home	0	0
Both	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B4: Landlords – Do you live in any of the areas listed in the previous question?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	69	61
No	43	38
Prefer not to say	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B5: Tenants – What is your age?**

	Response total	Response %
Under 18	0	0
18–25	59	87
26–35	6	9
36–45	2	3
46–55	0	0
56–65	0	0
Over 65	1	1
Prefer not to say	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B6: Tenants – Are you ...? (Please select one box that best describes you)**

	Response total	Response %
In education	60	90
In full-time employment	3	4
In part-time employment	2	3
Retired	1	1
Self-employed or freelance	0	0
Looking after home or family	0	0
Long-term sick or disabled	0	0
Prefer not to say	0	0
Other (please specify):	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3. Awareness and communications

**Table B7: Landlords – How informed do you feel you are about the Right to Rent scheme?**

	Response total	Response %
Well informed	32	28
Informed	38	33
Poorly informed	26	23
Not informed – not heard of the scheme until now	18	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B8: Landlords – How many self-contained residential properties do you let?**

	Response total	Response %
1	37	32
2–5	34	30
6–10	19	17
11–20	10	9
21–50	5	4
More than 50	9	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B9: Tenants – How informed do you feel you are about the Right to Rent scheme?**

	Response total	Response %
Well informed	4	6
Informed	18	26
Poorly informed	17	25
Not informed – not heard of the scheme until now	29	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>



**Table B10: Landlords – Where did you get your information about the Right to Rent scheme? (Select all that apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Information provided by membership organisations (such as National Landlords Association, Residential Landlords Association or letting agents' organisations)	53	55
Information provided by local authorities	29	30
Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme	28	29
Gov.uk on Right to Rent	20	21
Local or national events	16	17
Colleagues/my organisation	14	15
Other (please specify):	15	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	

**Table B11: Tenants - Where did you get your information on the Right to Rent scheme from?**

	Response total	Response %
Your university, college or student union	22	56
Estate agent/landlord	12	31
Word of mouth	11	28
Gov.uk	4	10
News (articles or programmes)	4	10
Leaflets	2	5
Other websites	1	3
Other (please specify):	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	

**Table B12: Landlords – How would you have liked to have been informed about the Right to Rent scheme? (Select all that apply)**

	Response total	Response %
e-mail	86	76
Letter	47	42
Via membership/trade organisation	31	27
Conferences	29	26
Other (please specify):	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	

**Table B13: Landlords – Do you know where to get information on the Right to Rent scheme if needed?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	66	58
No	34	30
Don't know	14	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B14: Landlords – If yes, where would you look for further information? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Gov.uk on Right to Rent	48	73
Other online content and guidance, for example from professional bodies or membership organisations	41	62
Home Office Right to Rent helpline	24	36
Other (please specify):	7	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	

**Table B15: Tenants – Do you know where to get information on the Right to Rent scheme if needed?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	14	36
No	19	49
Don't know	6	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B16: Tenants – Where would you look for further information? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
University, college or student union	10	71
Gov.uk on Right to Rent	9	64
Advice centres or law centres	6	43
Your letting agent	5	36
Your landlord	4	29
Other websites	4	29
Home Office Right to Rent helpline	1	7
Other (please specify):	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	

**Table B17: Landlords – Did you attend any of the Right to Rent briefing and information events that have been held?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	37	32
No	77	68
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4. Experience of the Right to Rent scheme

**Table B18: Landlords – How many of your tenancies started on or after 1 December 2014?**

	Response total	Response %
None	52	46
1	28	25
2–5	15	13
6–10	8	7
11–20	4	4
More than 20	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B19: Landlords – When you let your property do you use a letting agent?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes, always	27	44
Sometimes	15	24
No	20	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B20: Landlords – Have any Right to Rent checks been conducted on your prospective tenants?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	26	74
No	7	20
Don't know	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B21: Landlords – Have you used the online Right to Rent tool available from Gov.uk?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	17	15
No	95	83
Don't know	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B22: Landlords – Would you say that the information you have received using the online tool was ...?**

	Response total	Response %
Very helpful	5	29
Helpful	10	59
No opinion	0	0
Unhelpful	2	12
Very unhelpful	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B23: Landlords – Have you used the Right to Rent helpline?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	5	4
No	109	96
Don't know	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B24: Landlords – What was the reason you called the Right to Rent helpline? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
To see if I needed to carry out a check	3	60
To ask about identifying genuine documents	2	40
How to do a check	1	20
To ask about types of acceptable documentation	1	20
To ask when to use the Landlords Checking Service	1	20
To do a landlord's check	1	20
Other (please specify):	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	

**Table B25: Landlords – Have you read the code of practice on Gov.uk on illegal immigrants and private rented accommodation?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	48	42
No	60	53
Don't know	6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B26: Landlords – Overall, would you say that the information you received from the code of practice was ...?**

	Response total	Response %
Very helpful	12	25
Helpful	23	48
No opinion	12	25
Unhelpful	0	0
Very unhelpful	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B27: Landlords – Have you read the code of practice on Gov.uk for landlords: *Avoiding unlawful discrimination when conducting 'Right to Rent' checks in the private residential sector?***

	Response total	Response %
Yes	33	29
No	72	63
Don't know	9	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B28: Landlords – Overall, would you say that the information you received from the code of practice was ...?**

	Response total	Response %
Very helpful	4	13
Helpful	21	66
No opinion	5	16
Unhelpful	2	6
Very unhelpful	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B29: Landlords – Have you ever used the Home Office's Landlords Checking Service to check a prospective tenant's Right to Rent?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	2	8
No	23	88
Don't know	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B30: Landlords – How easy was it to complete the Right to Rent online checking form?**

	Response total	Response %
Very easy	0	0
Easy	2	100
Neither easy nor difficult	0	0
Difficult	0	0
Very Difficult	0	0
Don't know	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B31: Tenants – Have you started a new tenancy since 1 December 2014?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	23	34
No	45	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B32: Tenants – Have you looked for a new tenancy since 1 December 2014?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	26	58
No	19	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B33: Tenants – Was your Right to Rent checked by the landlord or agent before you were offered the tenancy?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	8	35
No	3	13
Don't know	12	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>



**Table B34: Tenants – Was the check done by a:**

	Response total	Response %
Landlord	0	0
Letting agent	7	88
Tenant referencing service or similar	0	0
Don't know	1	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B35: Tenants – What documentation/information did you have to provide?**

	Response total	Response %
Photo identification (for example passport, National Identity Card, driving license, UK Biometric Residence Permit, Asylum Registration Card)	0	0
Proof of current address (for example, bank statement, utility bill)	7	88
Proof of income (for example evidence of benefits payments, payslips)	0	0
Other (for example birth certificate, written reference, National Insurance number/card)	1	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B36: Tenants – How easy have you found it to provide the required documentation to complete the Right to Rent checks?**

	Response total	Response %
Very easy	1	13
Easy	2	25
Neither difficult nor easy	2	25
Difficult	2	25
Very difficult	0	0
Don't know	1	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

## 5. Impacts on tenants

**Table B37: Tenants – Do you have any other concerns about the Right to Rent scheme?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	13	19
No	55	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B38: Tenants – What do these concerns relate to? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Being treated unfairly	10	83
Not being able to get a tenancy because I don't have the documentation needed	6	50
Checks delaying tenancy start date	5	42
Increased costs for checks	4	33
Other (please specify):	2	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	

**Table B39: Tenants – Have you noticed any positive impacts of the Right to Rent scheme?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	8	12
No	60	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B40: Landlords – Are you aware of any concerns about the Right to Rent scheme from tenants or prospective tenants?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	19	17
No	95	83
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B41: Landlords – What do these concerns relate to? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Checks delaying tenancy starts	10	56
People being treated unfairly	9	50
Vulnerable groups being disadvantaged because they do not have the required documentation	9	50
Other (please specify):	5	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	

## 6. Impacts on landlords and letting agents

**Table B42: Landlords – How easy have you found it to complete the Right to Rent checks?**

	Response total	Response %
Very easy	5	19
Easy	7	27
Neither easy nor difficult	10	38
Difficult	2	8
Very difficult	2	8
I have not done a check	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B43: Landlords – To what extent has the scheme increased your costs?**

	Response total	Response %
A lot	1	3
Some	15	43
Not at all	13	37
Don't know	6	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B44: Landlords – To what extent has the scheme increased your workload?**

	Response total	Response %
A lot	2	6
Some	25	71
Not at all	6	17
Don't know	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B45: Landlords – In what way has the scheme affected your workload? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Additional work needed to do checks	23	85
Explaining the scheme to tenants	20	74
Having to check documents that I am not familiar with takes longer	15	56
Having to note when a follow-up check is due	14	52
Other (please specify):	4	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	

**Table B46: Landlords – Do you as a landlord have any concerns about the Right to Rent scheme?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	59	52
No	55	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B47: Landlords – What do these concerns relate to ...? (Indicate as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Additional work for landlords	45	76
Checks delaying tenancy start dates	30	51
Not understanding the immigration system	29	49
Vulnerable groups being disadvantaged because they do not have the required information	25	42
Properties being left empty	22	37
Other (please specify):	24	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	

**Table B48: Landlords – Are you aware of any positive impacts of the Right to Rent scheme?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	18	16
No	96	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B49: Landlords – Do these positive impacts relate to ...? (Select as many as apply)**

	Response total	Response %
Tackling illegal immigrants	16	89
Tackling rogue landlords	9	50
Standardising checks by landlords and agents	8	44
Reputational benefits for landlords and agents	6	33
Other (please specify):	3	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	

## 7. Impacts on the housing market

**Table B50: Landlords – What effect do you think the Right to Rent scheme has had on the cost of rented accommodation in the affected areas?**

	Response total	Response %
Rent has increased	9	8
Rent has not changed/not impacted by Right to Rent	53	46
Rent has decreased	1	1
Don't know	51	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B51: Landlords – What effect do you think the Right to Rent scheme has had on the turnover of rented accommodation in the affected areas?**

	Response total	Response %
Turnover has increased	2	2
Turnover has not changed/not impacted by Right to Rent	48	42
Turnover has decreased	10	9
Don't know	54	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B52: Landlords – What effect do you think the Right to Rent scheme has had on the availability of rented accommodation in the affected areas?**

	Response total	Response %
Availability has increased	3	3
Availability has not changed/not impacted by Right to Rent	41	36
Availability has decreased	12	11
Don't know	58	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B53: Tenants – Do you feel the Right to Rent scheme made it more difficult for you to find a property?**

	Response total	Response %
Yes	1	2
No	17	35
Don't know	31	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>



## Annex A – Detailed methodology

**Table B54: Tenants – Are you ...?**

	Response total	Response %
A UK citizen	48	71
A citizen of another European Union country or Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway or Switzerland	6	9
Prefer not to say	3	4
Other (please specify):	11	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table B55: Tenants – Please choose one option from those listed below that best describes your ethnic group**

	Response total	Response %
White	45	66
Asian/Asian British (for example, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani)	12	18
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	5	7
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1	1
Any other ethnic group	0	0
Prefer not to say	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

ISBN: 978-1-78246-909-4

ISSN: 1756-3666



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