# Scottish Greens propose rent withholding amendment for housing repairs



The Scottish Greens have proposed a significant amendment to the Housing (Scotland) Bill aimed at strengthening tenants' rights regarding repairs and maintenance in the private rental sector. The proposal, championed by MSP Ms Burgess and supported by the housing rights group Living Rent, seeks to enable tenants to withhold rent if landlords fail to complete essential repairs within 30 days of notification.

Ms Burgess emphasised that the amendment is intended to address serious issues such as damp, mould, broken flooring, and problems with heating and hot water systems, thereby ensuring private housing stock is maintained to a safe and acceptable standard. Speaking to The Herald (Glasgow), she stated, “My proposals will make it easier for renters to stand up to rogue landlords and to get vital repairs done quickly.”

Currently, tenants who encounter significant property problems can only threaten to take their landlords to tribunals, a process Ms Burgess described as “time consuming and stressful”, with the burden largely falling on renters. Under the new amendment, landlords who act in bad faith would need to prove they have taken sufficient steps to resolve the issue in order to regain access to the withheld rent.

Ms Burgess further commented, “Renters should expect their homes to be maintained to the same standard as any other. But in some cases, there are landlords who simply feel it is okay to take rent and let their properties fester with damp, mould and serious problems that significantly impact health and wellbeing.” She highlighted the disparity where some landlords maintain properties well, but others neglect their responsibilities, leaving tenants to experience “a miserable experience.”

The amendment is part of a broader set of proposals from the Scottish Greens, including plans to increase the additional dwelling supplement tax on second homes, particularly in areas where new rent control zones might be established. The Greens propose raising this tax from the current 8% to 16% of the purchase price.

Scottish Association of Landlords (SAL) chief executive John Blackwood responded to the proposed amendment by calling for more effective enforcement of current laws rather than new legislation. He said, “What we need is robust enforcement of current legislation through landlord registration, to remove rogue and criminal landlords from the sector who give law-abiding landlords a bad name.”

The Housing (Scotland) Bill has attracted over 400 amendments and is currently under consideration by Holyrood’s local government, housing and planning committee. It contains measures that, if passed, would empower local councils to create rent control areas where rents could be capped at certain levels. One Scottish Government amendment proposes capping rent increases to the rate of inflation plus 1%, to a maximum of 6%.

The Scottish Government has also announced a deadline of 31 May 2027 for local authorities to make market assessments and recommendations on the introduction of rent control areas.

A Scottish Government spokesperson commented on the range of proposals, saying, “A number of amendments have been lodged by opposition MSPs at stage 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Bill and will be considered by the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee.”

Debate on the amendments is underway in committee, with the bill due to be voted upon at its final stage later this year in the Scottish Parliament chamber.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://greens.scot/news/greens-propose-long-overdue-council-tax-revaluation-to-make-wealthy-pay-more> - This article supports the broader housing reform initiatives by the Scottish Greens, although it specifically addresses Council Tax revaluation rather than the Housing Bill amendments.
2. <https://www.gov.scot/news/housing-bill-amendments-lodged-to-strengthen-tenants-rights/> - This source details amendments to the Housing (Scotland) Bill aimed at strengthening tenants' rights, which aligns with the proposed provisions for repair and maintenance.
3. <https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/tag/housing-bill> - Scottish Housing News covers various amendments to the Housing (Scotland) Bill, including those targeting tenant protections and rent controls.
4. <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/official-report/search-what-was-said-in-parliament/meeting-of-parliament-24-04-2025?meeting=16378&iob=139910> - This Parliament report does not specifically cover the amendments mentioned but reflects ongoing discussions around the Housing Bill in the Scottish Parliament.
5. <https://greens.scot/news/greens-bid-to-help-first-time-buyers-by-lifting-limit-on-council-tax-for-second-and-empty-homes> - The Greens' broader housing policy includes measures like raising taxes on second homes, which aligns with their overall strategy for housing reform.
6. <https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/142502.aspx> - This link provides information on the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, which is responsible for reviewing and debating the Housing (Scotland) Bill and its amendments.
7. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25121772.new-proposal-see-tenants-allowed-withhold-rent/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data