

News story: An Inspection of 'Right to Rent' – Call for evidence

The Chief Inspector is seeking contributions from members of the public and stakeholders for his latest inspection

The ICIBI has begun work on an inspection of 'Right to Rent' (RtR). This concerns the measures in the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts intended to create a 'hostile environment' for individuals in the UK without valid leave by requiring landlords and letting agents to check the immigration status of prospective tenants before entering into a tenancy agreement.

The ICIBI will examine:

- planning for the initial introduction of RtR, including success criteria, and the identification and mitigation of risks and issues
- evaluation of Phase 1 of RtR (rolled out in Birmingham, Walsall, Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton from 1 December 2014) and how this informed the development of RtR, including sanctions for non-compliance
- evaluation of RtR sanctions (introduced from 1 December 2016)
- take up' of RtR measures by Home Office enforcement and casework teams, specifically the issuing of civil penalties, pursuit of criminal prosecutions, immigration controls and removals
- joint working and data-sharing between the Home Office and other government departments, agencies and other bodies

The evidence gathering process has started and the inspectorate's established stakeholder groups will shortly be asked for their input. However, the ICIBI is keen to receive written evidence from anyone who has knowledge and experience of any of the above areas. Please write to:

chiefinspector@icinspector.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that this inspection will not examine any unintended consequences of RtR, for example discrimination against would-be tenants, increased homelessness, or displacement. There have been reports by others on these issues, notably 'Passport Please' a study by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrant (JCWI), and there has also been media coverage. While they have raised important questions, the ICIBI does not have the capacity to conduct a meaningful examination of the unintended consequences of RtR at this time. However, this topic is likely to feature as the ICIBI continues over the next couple of years to look at the full range of 'hostile environment' measures the Home Office has introduced.

The deadline for submissions is 10 November 2017.