

Housing Rights

Private Rented Sector

**SHAPING THE SECTOR:
THE FUTURE OF PRIVATE RENTING**

Marking 10 years of our landmark event

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The Speakers

#PRS23



[Professor Paddy Gray OBE](#)

[@Paddygray1](#)

Paddy Gray is an established academic and has wide experience of academic and applied research. He is currently an Ambassador for the Housing Safety and Well Being Task Force set up by Aico.

Paddy Gray is an established academic with over 400 publications. In 2010 he became the first Irish President of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). He is Chair of Wheatley Foundation in Scotland, and Vice Chair of Wheatley Homes Glasgow. He also Chairs Tuath Housing, and iCare Housing, and is a board member of Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) Ireland. He also Chairs the Private Rented Tenants Voice. In 2017 he was named the top housing power player in the UK. 2019 awarded an OBE. 2021 appointed to the new Housing Commission in Ireland. He was named Property Personality of the year at the Belfast Telegraph Property Awards 2023.



[Kate McCauley](#)

[@K8McCauley](#)
[@HousingRightsNI](#)

Chief Executive, Housing Rights

Kate is the Chief Executive of Housing Rights, Northern Ireland's leading specialist housing advice organisation. Since 2015, Kate has worked in a variety of roles within Housing Rights leading the policy, research and development services prior to becoming Chief Executive in February 2023. With over 15 years' experience working in housing and within the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland, Kate previously worked in a grassroots human rights project focused on socio economic rights and has served on the Boards of a number of organisations in the sector. Her background is in law and human rights and she is especially interested in innovation to prevent homelessness and in the empowerment of marginalised groups.



[David Polley](#)

[@communitiesNI](#)

Director of Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities

David's area has responsibility for the development and implementation of most aspects of policy in relation to the Supply of Housing in tenures other than social housing, as well as the design and implementation of a programme of strategies aimed at improving housing supply. Work that Housing Supply Policy is responsible for includes:

- Role and regulation of the private rented sector
- Affordable Housing
- Shared neighbourhoods under Together: Building United Communities (TBUC)
- Homelessness
- Housing supply across all tenures
- Affordable warmth scheme



[Jordan Buchanan](#)

[@Propertypal](#)

Chief Operating Officer, PropertyPal

Jordan Buchanan is the Chief Operating Officer at PropertyPal, acting as the spokesperson for the company and a trusted subject matter expert on all UK and Northern Ireland economic and housing matters. Jordan is member of the Board of Directors in Co-Ownership, Northern Ireland's shared ownership provider and a Committee Member at the National House Building Council for Northern Ireland. Jordan previously lectured in Economics in the Ulster Business School and is a regular commentator across a range of media outlets.



Kieran McQuinn

@ESRIDublin 

Research Professor, Economic and Social Research Institute

Kieran McQuinn is a Research Professor at the Economic and Social Research Institute who works on the quarterly economic commentary (QEC) and housing related projects. His research interests include house prices, economic growth and household finance. He spent over 11 years working in the Irish Central Bank where he had management positions in the research and financial stability areas. He started his career in University College Cork and then joined Teagasc, the Irish agriculture and food development authority, where he worked for over 5 years as a research economist. Dr. McQuinn has a PhD in economics from NUI Maynooth.

Dr. McQuinn has published in a broad number of international and domestic journals and is adjunct professor of economics at both Trinity College Dublin and University College Cork. He is also a current council member of both the Economic and Social Studies and the Economic and Social Research Institute.



Dr Brigitte Anton

@PurlsofColour 

Renters' Voice

@Rentersvoice

Dr Brigitte Anton is a volunteer activist with Renters' Voice, a project for people renting from a private landlord or letting agent who want to improve things for private tenants in Northern Ireland. She has been a tenant all her life, growing up in co-operative housing in Germany, and living in rented accommodation of differing quality in Belfast. Brigitte holds a PhD in Modern History from Queen's University, Belfast, and has worked in policy research and on social justice campaigns on housing, Universal Credit, and immigration.



Jenni Millar

@jenniactivst 

Renters' Voice

@Rentersvoice

Jenni is a member of Renters' voice, Depaul support worker and a CFNI Champion for change. She is reading for an LLM in Human Rights law and sits on two All Party Groups on housing and homelessness. She is a staunch advocate for renter's rights and secure, safe, affordable and high standard accommodation for everyone.



Kellie Armstrong MLA

@Kelmba 

@allianceparty

Alliance Party

Kellie Armstrong MLA is the Alliance Party Spokesperson for Communities, Housing and Public Administration and represents the Strangford Constituency. First elected to the NI Assembly in 2016, Kellie has served on the Committee for Infrastructure, Assembly and Executive Review Committee (AERC) and the Audit Committee. In the last mandate Kellie was Vice Chair of the Committee for Communities (2019-2022) where she worked on the Private Tenancies Act ensuring tenants' voices were included in the consultation process.

Kellie serves on the following All-Party groups: Housing (Vice Chair), Homelessness (Vice Chair) and Construction (Secretary)



Councillor Pete Wray
Ards and North Down Borough Council

@PeteWray11 
@uuponline

Pete Wray is an Ulster Unionist Party Councillor in Ards and North Down Borough Council.

Pete is the party spokesperson for 'The Arts' and he works closely with Andy Allen MLA who is the party spokesperson for 'Communities'.

Pete also manages 'Alternatives' in Ards and North Down, which is a community based restorative justice and mediation organisation.



Jamie Miller
Policy Officer, National Energy Action

@NEANireland 

Jamie is a Policy Officer and campaigner for the National Energy Action, the UK's leading Fuel Poverty Charity, working to ensure everyone has a right to a warm, safe and healthy home. Jamie has been with the organisation for three years and has led on the development of a number of key strategic documents including most recently the Northern Ireland Fuel Poverty Coalition's report on 'A New Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland.'



Tom Dinnen
Capacity Building Coordinator, Hosford House

@ebelfastmission 

Tom Dinnen is Hosford's Capacity Building Coordinator. He is setting up our new community led housing social enterprise, Hosford Community Homes which now has 2 HMOs, 5 houses, and 6 apartments underway. These will help house people who have been homeless and improve our financial sustainability. We plan to keep developing partnerships to grow our project.



Aidan Byrne
Manager, Hosford House

@ebelfastmission 

Aidan Byrne is the manager of Hosford, the Homelessness Service of East Belfast Mission. Aidan has worked in the homeless sector for almost 20 Years. During this time Aidan has managed temporary accommodation, homeless prevention, and housing services.



Maria Curran
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council

@lisburnccc 

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council is made up of 40 Elected Members, represents approximately 140,000 residents in 59,000 homes in the 200 square miles that it covers. The Council has responsibility for a range of areas of civic life such as registration of deaths, births and marriages, citizenship ceremonies, environmental health, emergency advice, animal welfare, community planning, building control and planning.



Karen Barr and Julie Lavery


@communitiesNI 

Private Rented Branch, Department for Communities / Head of Private Rented Branch, Department for Communities

Karen and Julie work in Private Rented Branch in the Department for Communities. Private Rented Branch have policy and legislative responsibility for the Private Rented Sector in Northern Ireland. The team embarked on a review of the role and regulation of the Private Rented Sector back in 2015 which culminated in a set of firm proposals for change in 2017. Since then they have introduced the Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 which contains the first phase of PRS reform. Sections 1- 6 have already commenced (1 April 2022) and work is progressing on the other parts of the Act. The team are now beginning to look at Phase 2 of PRS reform and Julie and Karen hope to use their breakout session as their first engagement exercise to consider what priorities need to be included in Phase 2.



Tom Darling
Campaign Manager, Renters' Reform Coalition

@rentersreformco 
@a_darling_tom

Tom Darling is the campaign manager of the Renters' Reform Coalition, a coalition of 20 organisations campaigning for the safety, security and improvements needed for England's 11 million private renters, through the Renters (Reform) Bill and beyond.



Alex Marsh
Professor of Public Policy, University of Bristol

@UoBrisSPS 

Alex Marsh is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Bristol and a Co-Investigator for the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence. Most of his research has focused on rental housing. He has a particular interest in futures and systems thinking and their implications for housing issues and housing strategies.



John-Mark McCafferty
Chief Executive Officer, Threshold

@ThresholdIRE 

John-Mark McCafferty is Chief Executive Officer with Threshold since 2017 and was a member of Ireland's recent Commission on Tax and Welfare. Prior, he was Head of Social Justice and Policy with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He was also a Board member of Cluid Housing and One Family, and a member of Ireland's National Economic and Social Council (NESC).



Timothy Douglas
Head of Policy and Campaigns, Propertymark

@PropertymarkUK 

Timothy Douglas is Head of Policy and Campaigns at Propertymark, the UK's largest professional body for property agents with over 17,500 members who display the Propertymark Protected logo. Timothy leads on the organisation's policy and campaigns activity across Westminster, the devolved administrations, and local authorities. He authored Propertymark's 'The Future of Renting' position paper and wrote Propertymark's best practice guidance to help agents operate during the pandemic. He also created the policy proposals for the 'Leasehold: A Life Sentence' research report. Before Propertymark, Timothy worked as a political advisor for Members of the European Parliament and for a former Minister in the House of Commons.



Ciara Ferguson MLA
Sinn Féin

@ciaraf44 

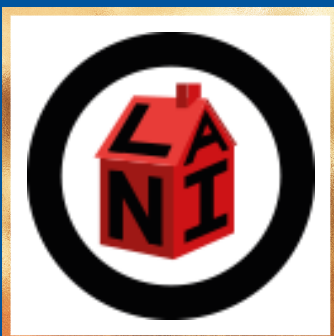
Ciara Ferguson is Sinn Féin Housing spokesperson. A Housing graduate, who began her career in the Housing Research Centre at Magee in the mid 1990s, and worked 30 years in the city in the fields of social research, urban regeneration and community development. Joined the Assembly in September 2021 and is the chair of the Housing All Party Group and Homeless All Party Group. She believes passionately in ensuring all our people secure homes that are good quality, safe, secure, sustainable and affordable.



Eamonn Hunt
Head of Tenancy Deposit Scheme

@TDSNI 

Eamonn has long history of working in private rented sector as part of tenancy deposit scheme established in 2013 and previously working within the property & lettings management sector. Eamonn's experience covers various aspects of the private rented sector.



Richard Smyth
Estate Agent

Richard Smyth is an estate agent based in Belfast, specialising in residential property management including HMOs, family and professional lettings. Richard is a Chartered Surveyor and also a LANI committee member.

AGENDA

09:00 - 09:30 Registration and refreshments

09:30 - 09:40 Welcome from Housing Rights' Chief Executive, Kate McCauley

09:40 - 09:50 Welcome from Chair, Professor Paddy Gray OBE

Section 1: Setting the context

09:50 - 10:05 David Polley, Department for Communities - 'The Private Rented Sector – Past, Present & Future'

10:05 - 10:25 Jordan Buchanan, PropertyPal - 'Navigating Uncertainty: Risk & Resilience at an economic crossroads'

10:25 - 10:45 Kieran McQuinn, Economic and Social Research Institute - 'Affordability in the Irish, Northern Irish and other UK housing markets'

10:45 - 11:10 Setting the context, a discussion:
David Polley, Department for Communities
Jordan Buchanan, PropertyPal
Kieran McQuinn, Economic and Social Research Institute

11:10 - 11:30 Coffee break

Section 2: Affordability

11:30 - 11:45 Dr Brigitte Anton and Jenni Millar, Renters' Voice :
'Cost of living in the private rented sector: The ongoing crisis & what needs to change'

11:45 - 12:30 Panel discussion: Affordability
Kellie Armstrong MLA, Alliance Party
Councillor Pete Wray, Ards and North Down Borough Council
Jamie Millar, National Energy Action
Dr Brigitte Anton, Renters' Voice

12:30 - 1:20 Lunch

Break-out Sessions

1:20 - 2:00 Sessions:
Aidan Byrne and Tom Dinnen, East Belfast Mission: 'Piloting community let housing solutions to homelessness'
Maria Curran, Lisburn and Castlereagh Council: 'Transfer of the landlord registration scheme to local councils'
Karen Barr and Julie Lavery, Department for Communities: 'PRS Reform Policy Refresh'
Tom Darling, Generation Rent: 'The Renters (Reform) Bill: how we got here and where to next'

Section 3: A fit for purpose private rented sector

2:05 - 2:30 Alex Marsh, University of Bristol - 'Regulatory change in the PRS: Impacts and evidence'

2:30 - 2:45 John-Mark McCafferty, Threshold - 'Making the private rented sector a safe, secure place to live for older people in the future'

2.45 - 3:00 Timothy Douglas, Propertymark - 'Unlocking the potential of the PRS'

Section 4: The Future of the Private Rented Sector and Reflections

3:00 - 3:10 Reflections on the private rented sector and what's next - Kate McCauley, Housing Rights

3:10 - 3:50 Panel discussion: The Future of the Private Rented Sector
Ciara Ferguson MLA, Sinn Féin
Richard Smyth, Landlord Association Northern Ireland
Eamonn Hunt, Tenancy Deposit Scheme Northern Ireland
John-Mark McCafferty, Threshold

3:50 - 4:00 Close and thanks

Private Rented Sector 2023

Marking 10 years of our landmark event

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Special thanks to our headline sponsor and long-standing supporter of our conference, TDS Northern Ireland.

Award-winning TDS are Northern Ireland's leading and only not-for-profit tenancy deposit protection scheme. TDS protect deposits for private tenancies and resolve disputes over their return.

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PropertyPal is the leading property portal in Northern Ireland, showcasing a diverse range of residential, rental, commercial and agricultural properties as well as land and sites. Dedicated to simplifying the home moving journey,

PropertyPal boasts the largest audience of local home movers and seekers, attracting over 130,000 daily website visitors and 300,000 followers across social media.

Additionally, PropertyPal is a key provider of research, data and commentary on the NI housing market.

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Electrical Safety First is a campaigning charity that aims to reduce deaths, injuries and accidents caused by electricity in UK homes. They work closely with Government, the electrical industry, manufacturers, retailers and consumer safety organisations to improve safety regulation and standards to help people stay safe in their homes.

Find out more about Electrical Safety First's work at:

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/