

ALMA - Association of Letting and Management Agencies

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

In respect of housing enforcement issues, particularly as it relates to Rent Smart Wales, we are disappointed that our proposal to require Agents to become licensed before landlords was not accepted. We are sure that if it had been, both the awareness and the future enforcement of the legislation would have been clearer. A staged approach would have fulfilled a ~ learning curve~ and avoided the low level of Landlord registrations and Agent licences that have been achieved by 23rd November.

Unless adequate resource is given to enforcement and penalties are seen to be imposed, Rent Smart Wales will be a 'damp squib.' It is already clear that resources for enforcement are unlikely to cope.

We have a number of suggestions as to improving awareness and assisting in enforcement of RSW. To mention just a few, TDS (Tenancy Deposit Scheme) and DPS (Deposit Protection Service) have thousands of Landlord and property details that could be cross-checked against the RSW register. Also 'Rightmove', 'Zoopla' and 'On the market' should ban all properties that are being advertised by non-licensed Agents.

HMO licensing remains confusing with some local authorities' definitions being different to others and enforcement is very varied, particularly tardy in Cardiff.