



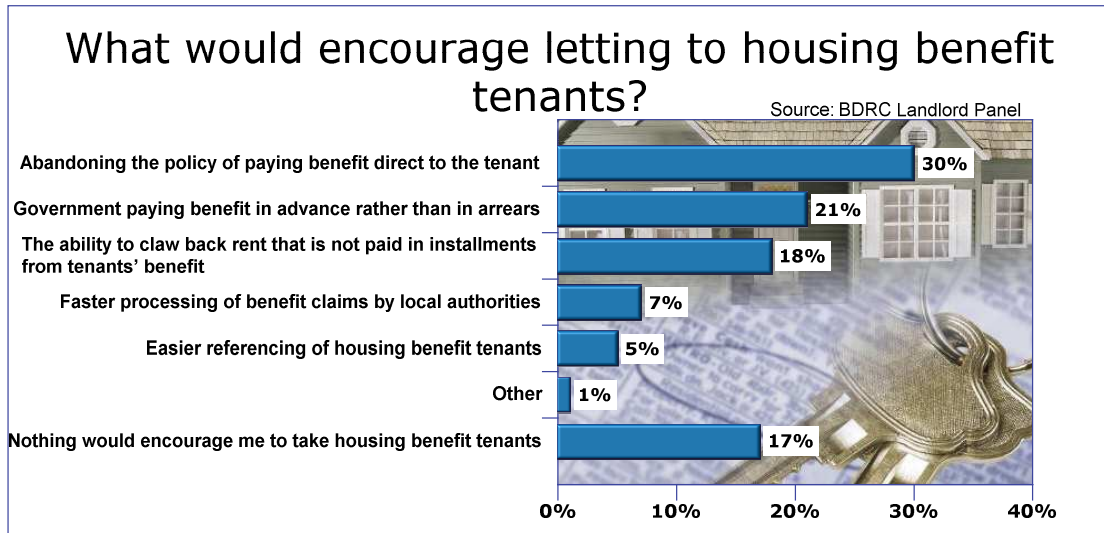
More of Britain's private landlords take housing benefit claimants as tenants

London 19th May 2009: More of Britain's private landlords are renting their properties to housing benefit claimants according to the latest Landlords Panel report from research agency BDRC (www.bdrc.co.uk). Private landlords are being squeezed in a number of ways: not only are Buy-to-Let mortgages increasing in cost and reducing in availability, but many private tenants are under increased financial pressure themselves and becoming unable to pay their rents. As a result, the number of private landlords who accommodate benefit claimants has more than doubled, from 9% in Q4 2008 to 20% by Q1 2009.

However there are a number of factors deterring more private landlords from considering benefit claimants as viable tenants. The top three reasons given are: not trusting them to look after the property (24%), a previous bad experience (15%) and not trusting them to pay the rent (10%).

The survey asked private landlords what reassurance they would need to encourage more of them to accommodate benefit claimants. This is especially pertinent in the current economic climate as demand for public housing increases and councils find they are unable to provide suitable housing, forcing would-be tenants to turn to the private sector. At 30%, top of the list was a call for the current government to reverse its policy of paying benefits direct to the tenant. One respondent said *"New DSS tenants get their rental money paid directly to*

them - not the landlords - and as a landlord you do not see it. It was a very bad move by the government to change this policy.”



Mark Long, Director at BDRCL, says “Our research has shown that whilst almost half of private landlords want to increase rents to improve profitability they also realise that it’s not the right time to do so. It seems that some landlords are therefore taking the opportunity to rent to DSS benefit claimants for the first time, despite the caution from some other landlords based on the bad experiences they have had.”

Ends

Note to editors

The tenth wave of the BDRCLandlords Panel was carried out at the end of the first quarter of the year in March 2009 and consisted of 507 x 30 minute online surveys with residential property landlords. Participants need to own at least one residential or holiday property in the UK. The majority had residential lets. The participants are measured against data from the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA) to ensure that the sample represents the total UK population of landlords by their letting portfolio. There have been nine previous waves of the BDRCLandlords Panel in October 2006,

February 2007, May 2007, August 2007, December 2007, March 2008 and June 2008, September 2008 and December 2008.

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About BDRC

Founded in 1991, Business Development Research Consultants is a leading full service market research agency. Working primarily for service organisations, the company specialises in hotels, finance, travel and tourism and mobile telephony. The acquisition of Continental Research at the beginning of 2008 added media and advertising, public sector and technology research expertise to the portfolio of market sectors covered.

Headquartered in London BDRC works internationally and has representation in South Africa and Asia. For more information, please visit www.bdrc.co.uk.