

Shelter Scotland

t 0344 515 2447

f Fax

shelterscotland.org

Mr Iain Livingstone QPM  
Chief Constable  
Police Scotland

Date: 24 July 2020

Dear Mr Livingstone

I am writing to you as we are concerned about the number of illegal evictions cases which have been brought to our attention through our housing advice services. As you know illegal evictions are a criminal offence and we are keen to ensure that your officers are aware of this issue should tenants contact them.

Our advice to tenants if they are threatened with or experience an illegal eviction is to call the police as soon as possible to get support. This is particularly important during this health pandemic, where illegal evictions can result in tenants becoming homeless and at risk at very short notice.

These illegal evictions can happen in a number of ways: by evicting without following the correct legal processes; by a landlord changing the locks when the tenant is away from the property or by threatening violence or intimidation. In addition to this during this pandemic period new emergency legislation has been put in place to protect most tenants from eviction until October 2020, to ensure we do not see people pushed into homelessness.

Since lockdown began Shelter Scotland advisors have dealt with a significant number of illegal evictions cases, in these cases the eviction has either been threatened or carried out. For example, our housing advisors in Aberdeen have stopped 20 illegal evictions from happening since lockdown began. We offer advice and support to both tenants and landlords and have enabled the tenants to remain in their homes. However, we are concerned that many more evictions may be taking place, as tenants are often not aware of their rights, or where to get help, and illegal evictions often go unreported making it hard to quantify the real extent of the issue.

Until there's a home for everyone  
[shelterscotland.org](https://shelterscotland.org)



Shelter Scotland would be happy work with Police Scotland to further support tenants and stop illegal evictions happening in Scotland – both during coronavirus and afterwards. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

*Alison Watson*

Alison Watson  
Director  
Shelter scotland