



# SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

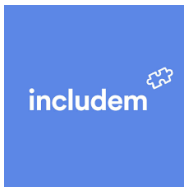
## Policy 6:

**The Scottish Government must strengthen rent controls\* for all young people in Scotland, including students and apprentices, and ensure that all young people are aware of their rights in relation to housing.**

*\*Rent control is a government policy that limits how much landlords can charge for renting out homes or apartments, and how much they can increase the rent over time.*

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## Endorsed by:



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## What's this all about?

Young people expressed concerns over the affordability of private housing, with the high cost of rent impacting their ability to save and invest in housing. Rent control would allow more young people to feel safe and secure in their homes. Furthermore, there is a large power imbalance between landlords and tenants, which rent controls would reduce. Young people who are studying full-time told us they are forced to work part-time alongside their studies to afford rent. This is affecting their mental health and causing them to miss classes so they can work enough to pay rent. Some young people who work full-time are still struggling to afford rent. Rent control would help students afford stable housing, helping them focus more on their studies. Some young people were concerned that the current housing and rental markets might be affected by more short-term lets and less secure access to

long-term rental options if the current system does not change. Young people call for more modern, safe, secure and sustainable accommodation that is affordable and fit for the future.

**“Rent is astronomical at the moment, and I can barely get by. We need rent controls now.”**

– Young woman aged 22-26, Glasgow

**“Rent is unaffordable and leads to many students travelling 50+ miles each day”**

– Young woman aged 14-17, Scottish Borders

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## What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- **Decision makers should increase national controls on rent to ensure young people can afford safe, secure and suitable housing.**

**“Rent for university students can be upwards of £800 per month resulting in young people having exorbitant debts and requiring them to work whilst studying.”**

– Young woman aged 14-17

- **Young people call for increased awareness and education for young people and landlords on tenants' rights, rent controls, and housing options that prevent exploitation and protect young people.**

**“I have been working since 18 – full time– I am now 25. I have earned a full-time wage due to an apprenticeship. I still do not feel financially stable enough to go onto the property market with my partner who also has a well-paying trade and has done since 18. I thought working young would have put me ahead of the game.”**

– Young woman aged 22-26, Glasgow

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## Evidence and Support

- The [Accommodations Cost Survey 2021/22](#) found that the average annual rent for purpose-built student accommodation in Scotland reached £6,853 in 2021/22, a 34% increase on pre-Covid levels (£5,111 in 2018). NUS Scotland noted that this is pricing students out of education.
- [Broke Students, Broken System](#) concluded that students are stuck in a cycle of poverty, with high rent being a significant contributor combined with unpaid or underpaid apprenticeships.
- In [Includem's Housing Report](#), 22% of young people and families said that the availability of housing was the biggest problem facing them and over half of them had needed help in finding somewhere to live.
- In Includem's report on '[Housing Young People's and Families Experiences](#)', many young people spoke about the difficulty in navigating complex systems, including the allocation system, and the impact that poverty has on their options.
- [Living Rent noted](#) that low-income renters – disproportionately young people, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, people of colour, and migrants—bear the brunt of this crisis – bear the brunt of the housing crisis and many tenants spend over half their income on rent.

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## What has SYP done?

The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes policies on improvements to the rented housing sector (including rent control system and improving the rights of tenants); protection of the right to property; introduction of Housing First policy for all of Scotland; better quality student accommodation; investment in welfare services in colleges and universities including housing support.