



Dear Councillor Susan Brown,

In the face of the Coronavirus, we the Oxford Tenants Union, ask that you take urgent action to safeguard the third of Oxford's population who rent their homes. Immediate protections must be put in place for those in the private rented sector, and tenants of Oxford City Council and Housing Associations.

Renters in Oxford are being forced to make potentially lethal decisions between public safety and keeping their homes. Oxford City Council must act quickly and decisively to reassure renters that they will not lose their homes as a result of the Coronavirus. Doing so will enable us to act to keep ourselves and our communities healthy and protect our ability to recover from this crisis.

Susan, as you know, one-third of Oxford's citizens live in rented accommodation, including many of those most vulnerable to the impacts of the Coronavirus. Rents in Oxford are amongst the highest in the UK making this a particularly urgent problem in our city.

Oxford Tenants Union are today calling on you, as leader of Oxford City Council to show leadership by adopting the following measures;

1. Make a public commitment to all Oxford City Council tenants that no one will lose their home as a result of the Coronavirus and enact an immediate rent freeze for tenants unable to work due to Coronavirus and its impacts.
2. Following Chancellor Rishi Sunak's announcement of lenders offering 3-month 'mortgage holidays', to reach out to private landlords to encourage them to offer 'rent holidays' to tenants unable to work because of the coronavirus and its impacts.
3. Halt all evictions for Housing Association or Council tenants and act swiftly to intervene to prevent Section 8 and Section 21 evictions in the private rental market.
4. Provide emergency funding to low-income renters, or those in precarious employment to encourage them to stay home and slow the spread of this infectious disease.
5. Put in place emergency legislation to ensure private-renters living in shared accommodation are forced to self-isolate in line with Boris Johnson's guidance on whole-household 14-day isolation will receive additional support on top of statutory sick pay in order to be able to pay their rent.

We understand this must be a difficult time and we offer our full support for making such measures.

Regards,

Members and supporters of the Oxford Tenants Union

[Oxfordtenantsunion.wordpress.com](https://oxfordtenantsunion.wordpress.com)

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