



The Ethical Property Foundation has published a new study revealing that thousands of voluntary organisations across England may be forced to shut down within months unless local authorities provide them with fairer and longer-term tenancy agreements.

Of thousands of charities that rent from local authorities in London, over 500 had 'insecure tenancies' which means their landlords can evict them with little notice.

These 'tenancies at will' have now been found to be in widespread use, putting thousands of smaller charities and the most vulnerable at severe risk, including those that provide support for food banks, veterans, minorities, children, and young people.

The Ethical Property Foundation - a nationwide property advice charity for the third sector - made the remarkable discovery following a series of freedom of information requests to all 32 London local authorities as well as samples to councils across all regions of England.

Outside of London, more than 150 charities across nine English councils were found to have these risky, insecure tenancies, including Newcastle, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole.

Overall, the study indicates that many charities are affected - each with staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries, plus thousands more unincorporated groups and clubs.

According to the study, the local authorities that use the insecure tenancies the most are:

- **London:**
 - Haringey (89)
 - Brent (79)
 - Greenwich (67)
 - Tower Hamlets (34)
 - Richmond-on Thames (32).
- **Outside of London:**
 - Newcastle (40)
 - Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (30)
 - Stoke on Trent (21)

- Cheshire East (20)
- Brighton and Hove (18)
- Sunderland (15).

Antonia Swinson, Chief Executive of the Ethical Property Foundation said:

“Small local charities are currently under severe pressure to meet soaring needs in their communities.

“Yet without security of tenure, they are effectively squatters in their buildings: no security, no rights, no future. If they are evicted, grant funding and donations spent on making improvements are lost and they could face complete collapse.

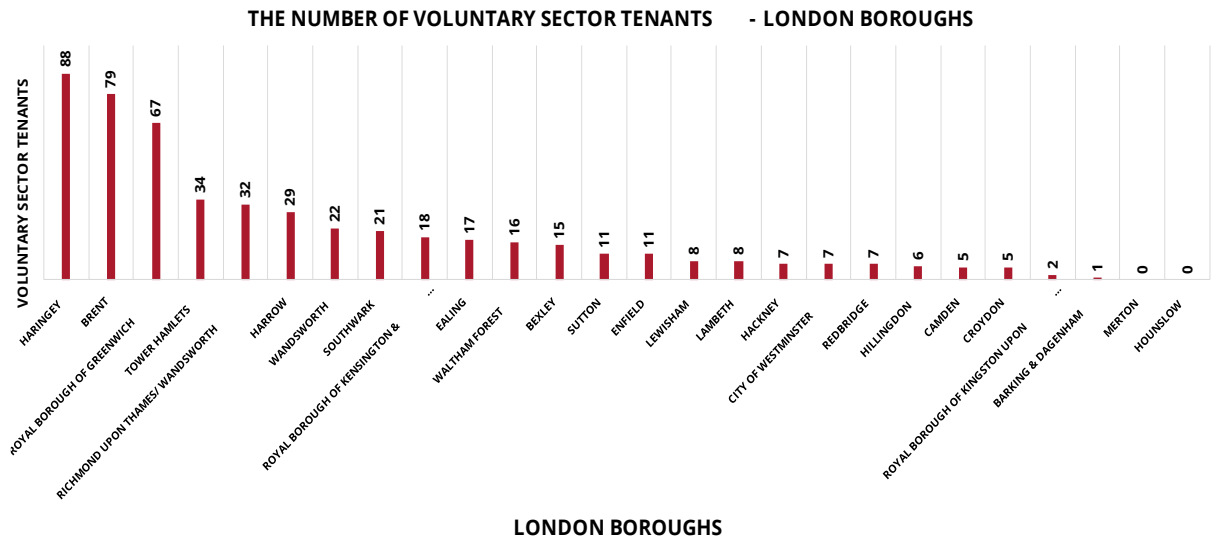
“It’s a David and Goliath situation. The voluntary sector and local authorities must urgently wake up to the danger these insecure tenancies pose to the future of charities.”

Many charities have rented from local councils for years, at low-cost peppercorn levels of rents. But over time, these leases can become out of date and turn into insecure tenancies-at-will.

However according to EPF, tenancy at wills are increasingly also being granted as long-term lettings to charities, without any professional advice and background negotiations taking place.

See the FOI Results below.

TAWs – London Boroughs



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TAWs – Outside London

