

# What options are open to tenants on notice?

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WHAT can tenants do when their landlord decides to make their occupation unbearable because they challenged a notice to vacate?

Let us take the case of a landlord who issues a notice on the basis that he wants to renovate the building.

The tenants attempt to negotiate an extension of the notice period. Alternatively, they propose that renovations be undertaken while they are still in occupation.

A vacant flat provides a third option; renovating the flats individually by rotating the tenants.

Tenants argue that short term tenancies are almost impossible to secure and a financial burden. There are added costs for transporting their property or for storing it.

The temporary relocation would lead to further inconvenience for the families in respect of work and schooling. They are therefore willing to make sacrifices by

allowing renovations while they occupy their flats or move into the vacant one in the building.

The landlord is adamant that renovations can only be undertaken once he has vacant occupation of all the flats.

Tenants refuse to move out and the landlord disconnects the water supply.

What can the tenants do? They can take collective action by approaching the court for urgent relief. Once the court grants the order for the reconnection, the sheriff will effect it with the help of a plumber, if the order is so prayed.

They could also have the water reconnected themselves and deduct the costs of repairs from their rentals. Should the costs of repairs exceed the month's rentals, tenants can set off the costs against the rentals.

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