

Firstly, for context I have been a landlord, home owner, apartment owner and a renter so have experience in all of those positions. I have also done this in countries other than Australia so have knowledge of other systems in addition to ours.

Previous outgoing inspection report information should be available to new tenants. This will prevent the racket that goes on undetected with agents charging outgoing tenants to complete cleaning/fixing tasks (eg additional window cleaning, filling small holes etc) which then never actually get fixed. This process is currently hidden and not transparent at all and needs to be. Agents should have to prove to outgoing tenants that the work was completed, the cost matching either what has been taken from their bond or the amount they were asked to pay.

There should be more independence in the process. For example, in going and outgoing inspections in other countries are conducted by third parties to ensure impartiality. The property owner pays for the incoming inspection as part of their re-advertising fees, the occupier pays for the outgoing inspection at the end of their tenancy.

When applying for a property, a tenant has to agree they will accept the property as seen. Often prospective tenants only have minimal time in a property and maybe don't see everything, especially if they are racing to another inspection. Tenants are unwilling to tick the box saying they won't accept this condition as they then feel their application will not be considered. The problem this causes is when an issue then comes to light on moving in day, the agents merely refer back to the box that was ticked and wash their hands of fixing the issue. Similarly, a prospective tenant feels they must say they will take the property at the earliest time and have to tick a box for this on their application. Even though this may mean them paying double rent for a number of days. I believe there should be a standard minimum time unless agreed to be less by both parties, without prejudice. No undue pressure should be brought to bear.

Periodic inspections during tenancy should not be more than every six months in the first two years of tenancy and providing there are no serious issues within this time, only annual inspections should be allowed. In addition, any issues deemed likely to require a portion of the bond to be withheld at the end of the tenancy should be made clear to the tenant within 7 days of any periodic inspection. This information should also include approximate costs of fixing the issues and the tenant given the opportunity to rectify the issue there and then. When a tenancy has been five years or longer, expected wear and tear should be allowed, you should not have to hand back the property necessarily in the state you received it. Five years is an acceptable length of time to expect carpets to be worn down in places and perhaps the occasional paint chip.

Pets - should be allowed generally speaking. The current laws around noise and waste affecting other dwellers of the block or location if not sufficient to cover this should be amended to cover this. No additional bond should be sought. Bonds are substantial as they currently stand. A limit on the number of larger pets is a possibility.

Bonds - transfer of bonds should be allowed. Possibly at a rate of 50 - 75% to ensure monies can still be recovered by previous landlord. An independent fund should be in place to cover instances above this figure needs to be deducted. People who default on this scheme multiple times can be excluded from the scheme. Regulations around the timing of disputed bond releases need to be firmer and clearer.

There is an opaqueness to the whole process of tenant selection. Though problem may only be perceived rather than be real it is very hard to feel so powerless throughout a transaction, which often involves the biggest expenses in a persons budget.

All the above only works if it is effectively monitored and there is a simple process for reporting issues. Anonymity should be an option for the tenant as well. Plus they should not be required on any future rental applications to have to disclose they have reported issues in previous tenancies.