



Defective Premises Act 1972

1972 CHAPTER 35

4 Landlord's duty of care in virtue of obligation or right to repair premises demised.

- (1) Where premises are let under a tenancy which puts on the landlord an obligation to the tenant for the maintenance or repair of the premises, the landlord owes to all persons who might reasonably be expected to be affected by defects in the state of the premises a duty to take such care as is reasonable in all the circumstances to see that they are reasonably safe from personal injury or from damage to their property caused by a relevant defect.
- (2) The said duty is owed if the landlord knows (whether as the result of being notified by the tenant or otherwise) or if he ought in all the circumstances to have known of the relevant defect.
- (3) In this section "relevant defect" means a defect in the state of the premises existing at or after the material time and arising from, or continuing because of, an act or omission by the landlord which constitutes or would if he had had notice of the defect, have constituted a failure by him to carry out his obligation to the tenant for the maintenance or repair of the premises; and for the purposes of the foregoing provision "the material time" means—
 - (a) where the tenancy commenced before this Act, the commencement of this Act; and
 - (b) in all other cases, the earliest of the following times, that is to say—
 - (i) the time when the tenancy commences;
 - (ii) the time when the tenancy agreement is entered into;
 - (iii) the time when possession is taken of the premises in contemplation of the letting.
- (4) Where premises are let under a tenancy which expressly or impliedly gives the landlord the right to enter the premises to carry out any description of maintenance or repair of the premises, then, as from the time when he first is, or by notice or otherwise can put himself, in a position to exercise the right and so long as he is or can put himself in that position, he shall be treated for the purposes of subsections (1) to (3) above (but for no other purpose) as if he were under an obligation to the tenant for

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that description of maintenance or repair of the premises; but the landlord shall not owe the tenant any duty by virtue of this subsection in respect of any defect in the state of the premises arising from, or continuing because of, a failure to carry out an obligation expressly imposed on the tenant by the tenancy.

- (5) For the purposes of this section obligations imposed or rights given by any enactment in virtue of a tenancy shall be treated as imposed or given by the tenancy.
- (6) This section applies to a right of occupation given by contract or any enactment and not amounting to a tenancy as if the right were a tenancy, and “tenancy” and cognate expressions shall be construed accordingly.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 4 modified (30.9.2003 for E., 30.3.2004 for W.) by [Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002](#) (c. 15), s. 181(1), [Sch. 7 para. 2](#); S.I. 2003/1986, art. 2(a); S.I. 2004/669, art. 2(a)

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