

**Discrimination and Inequality in the PRS - Case Study**

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| Location: | Swansea |
| Date (or from-to): | 01/12/2023 (January 2022) |

As told by Abiola

As an international student with two children, we found it extremely difficult to find a home in the Private Rented Sector for a number of reasons. First of all, we faced barriers because our income could not be easily vetted. But on top of that, some landlords and agencies that we encountered on our search would not give houses to people with young children, those who are Black, or unemployed people – even when these people could prove that they have the finances to pay for the house in question.

When told that we had been refused because our income could not be vetted, the main reason given was that this was because it was not in a UK bank account. However, to open a UK bank account you need proof of address, so we were caught in a catch-22 situation.

When I finally got a house offer, the agent called the landlord to meet with us. On seeing us, the landlord stated very clearly in front of us, “I don’t give houses to black people”. I and my partner were completely shocked and asked why, but she couldn’t give any reason. We tried to convince her that we have the finances to pay and are not bad people. There was also some encouragement from the agent on our behalf.

The landlord finally agreed to let us the house, stating that my face looks calm, and if we could provide a UK-resident guarantor who has a good job with good income. Thankfully, we had a family friend who was able to provide that.

This whole process was deeply shocking and distressing for us. Not only did we have a lot of trouble even getting a viewing or an offer, despite being able to afford the rent and bills, but when we were made an offer, we were faced with direct prejudice due to the colour of our skin. Additionally, the landlord in question is also an ethnic minority (Asian) who should understand the impact of direct racism, prejudice and discrimination, so this was very upsetting.