

KICK MY TENANTS WHERE IT HURTS

Exclusive By Robert Fairburn

reporters@dailyrecord.co.uk

A LANDLORD advertised for a manager with "the guts to kick someone between the legs as we evict them and their two-year-old child".

The job advert appeared on the website of Caduceus Investments, who rent out hundreds of houses and flats across Scotland.

The firm were looking for a part-time manager to look after 200 properties in Hawick, Roxburghshire.

Bosses said they were simply trying to inject some humour into the advert.

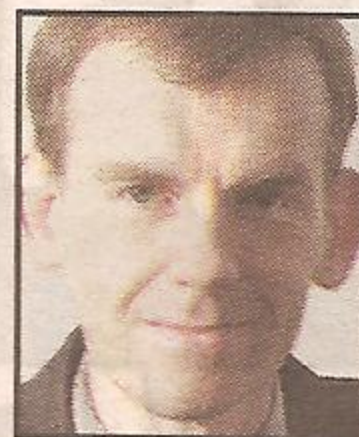
But it was branded despicable by a council chief, who said evictions were no laughing matter, especially when children were involved.

The ad has now been removed from the website.

But Mark Kennedy-Stewart, who runs the firm, in Falkirk, Stirlingshire, yesterday defended it.

The 40-year-old chartered accountant and ex-banker, who founded the firm in 2002, said: "The vacancy has been filled, that is why the advert is no longer on the website.

"I do not regret this at all. The wording was in italics which, I believe, makes it clear the reference to violent eviction was humorous.



SLATED: The Kennedy-Stewarts

Landlord's job ad for manager

Unpleasant

"Anyone who knows me knows I have a sarcastic sense of humour.

"But the fact of the matter is there are sides to the business which can be unpleasant and we often deal with people at the lower end of the social spectrum.

"The advert was designed to humorously convey that a wide range of people skills are required."

Kennedy-Stewart's Russian-born wife Anna is a partner in the business.

Speaking from their Edinburgh home, she added: "The problem is that some people in this country do not have a sense of humour."

Lesley Crozier, senior officer for social justice, equality and diversity with Scottish Borders Council, said the advert was "despicable".

She added: "It would appear to betray an utter contempt for tenants and, if this is a joke, it is a sick one."

Under new anti-social behaviour legislation, all private landlords must be registered with the council.

Crozier said: "Part of that process involves determining if a landlord is a fit and proper person and our partners in the police have a role to play."

A police spokesman said they were aware of the situation.