

It's important we find you suitable tenants for your property.

In order for us to do this, we expect our landlords to present the house in a certain way – the property needs to be ready for tenants to move straight into, with all fixtures and fittings in full working order. This will attract a more quality, long term tenant who is more likely to look after the property; ensuring it remains a good investment for you.

## Landlords Check List

### Do's

- ✓ The property should be cleaned throughout and presented to a good standard. This helps ensure the property is handed back in the same condition as when the tenants moved in.
- ✓ It's important that all safety checks are in place: EICR (electrical safety certificate), Gas Safety Check and EPC (Energy Performance Certificate).
- ✓ All fixtures and fittings should be in safe, full working order.
- ✓ The garden should be neat and tidy, free from rubbish with the grass cut and bins emptied.
- ✓ It's helpful to provide instruction manuals for all appliances, including the heating system; for us to include in the tenants moving-in pack.
- ✓ A smoke alarm needs to be fitted to each storey of the property and a carbon monoxide alarm should be installed in any room where there is a solid fuel burning appliance. It's strongly recommended that a carbon monoxide alarm is fitted near to any boiler.
- ✓ It's important that you inform your mortgage provider that you intend to rent your property, as they may enforce additional clauses within the tenancy agreement. If your property is a leasehold, i.e. a flat, you should also check the terms of your lease and obtain any necessary consents.
- ✓ You must ensure that you have adequate landlords' insurance for the building along with liability cover if needed.
- ✓ Tenants need to be provided with a full set of keys (one per tenant). If we are managing the property, we will also require a full set. It's a good idea to keep a spare set for yourself.
- ✓ If there are prepayment meters at the property, the top up cards/keys must be left for the tenants.
- ✓ As a UK landlord, it's your responsibility to inform the HMRC of the rental income you receive. If you live outside of the UK for more than 6 months per year, you are classed by HMRC as a 'non-resident landlord'. Please click on the link below for more information if you fall under this category:

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-uk-income-live-abroad/rent>

## Don't

- ✘ Do not leave any personal belongings in the house; including the loft or garage.
- ✘ Do not leave second hand furniture in the property, it can deter prospective tenants and it may not comply with the furniture safety regulations.
- ✘ Do not issue tenants start-up paperwork yourself unless you are fully up to date with the current legal regulations. If tenants are not issued with the correct documents at the start of the tenancy, it can invalidate an eviction notice if you want to gain possession at a later date.
- ✘ Sometimes we are asked why we charge for an inventory, and how much relevance the document has. We believe inventories are as important as the tenancy agreement itself. We provide detailed photographic inventories which protect our Landlords as much as possible in the event of any damage occurring during the tenancy.

## Important Legislation Safety Information

### Energy Performance Certificate

Under the Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Order 2007 from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 it is a legal requirement for all rental properties to have a valid EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) produced by an approved Domestic Energy Assessor. Failure to supply one is a criminal offence and punishable by fine. We must issue prospective tenant(s) with an EPC, either when they receive the marketing details, or when they first view the property.

### Electrical Safety Standards (2020)

These new Regulations require landlords to have the electrical installations in their properties inspected and tested by a person who is qualified and competent, at least every 5 years. Landlords have to provide a copy of the electrical safety report to their tenants, and to their local authority if requested (EICR).

This means that all landlords now have to do what good landlords already do: make sure the electrical installations in their rented properties are safe.

The Regulations came into force on 1 June 2020 and form part of the Department's wider work to improve safety in all residential premises and particularly in the private rented sector.

### The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 & The Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 1993

Regulations about fire-resistant furniture are very strict for rental accommodation and all relevant items have to meet the above regulations. As a general rule, any furniture made before 1988 is unlikely to comply and will need to be replaced before you let the property. Any items that contain upholstery should be checked including beds, headboards, pillows etc:

Items that are exempt from this legislation include:

- Sleeping bags duvets, pillow cases and blankets
- Carpets and curtains
- Furniture made before 1950

To check for the fire safety standards, look for a permanent label stating the regulation it conforms to. Bed bases and mattresses are not required to have this label attached, but they should have a label stating compliance with 'ignitability tests'. Look for the compliance code BS 7177 on these items for confirmation.

#### **Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994**

You are responsible for ensuring that all electrical installations and appliances within the premises comply with the above regulations. In accordance with this, you must ensure that all electrical equipment is safe, including appliances which should be PAT (portable appliance) tested.

#### **Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998**

Landlords are required by law to service all gas related equipment (including, but not limited to gas boilers, fires, heaters and gas water heaters) every 12 months by a Gas Safe registered engineer. You will need to provide us with a copy of a Gas Safety Certificate carried out no more than 12 months previously, a copy of which we must legally provide to the tenant. **Please note that no tenancy can commence until we are in receipt of a valid Gas Safety Certificate.**

#### **Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detector Requirements**

From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations require both smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to be installed in rented accommodation. The regulations state that there needs to be a working smoke alarm on each storey of the building and a carbon monoxide alarm is required in each room where there is a solid fuel burning appliance (e.g open fire or wood burner). It is highly recommended that if the boiler is located in a bedroom, a carbon monoxide alarm should be installed. Fines of up to £5000 can be levied for failure to follow regulations.

#### **Legionella Risk Assessment**

The bacterium *Legionella pneumophila* and related bacteria are common in natural water sources but may also be found in purpose-built water systems, such as cooling towers, evaporative condensers, hot and cold-water systems and spa pools. If conditions are favourable, the bacteria may grow increasing the risk of Legionnaires' disease and it is therefore important to control the risk.

As a landlord, it's your responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure your tenant is not at risk of Legionnaires' disease. We recommend you have a Risk Assessment carried out to ensure nothing has been missed which could potentially pose as a risk. The Risk Assessments cost between £60 - £80 depending on which assessor is used.

#### **Right to Rent Checks**

From 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 we are required to conduct 'Right to Rent' checks under Section 25 of the Immigration Act 2014 on anyone aged 18 or over who rents a property in the UK.

Landlords could be fined up to £3000 for letting a property to a tenant who is not legally allowed to rent in the UK. It is our responsibility to verify a tenants immigration status and the checks must be carried out 28 days before the start of the tenancy.