

First Time Landlord?

Here is your 10-point ESSENTIAL checklist

Renting out a house for the time can be scary.

What do you need to do?

What legislation do you need to abide by?

As a new landlord you need to learn all the legislation you could fall foul of as well as keeping your tenants safe.

To help you, please find a simple checklist below highlighting the basics for a first-time landlord.

PORTSMOUTH
PROPERTY



Best of Portsmouth

EXPERT ADVICE TO HELP YOU FIND THE BEST INVESTMENT PROPERTIES IN TOWN...

1. Safety Measures and Inspections

Your tenant's safety will be your top priority. You will need to conduct regular inspections of the property to ensure everything is ok and that your property meets all the standards as set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Here is a short list of some of the items you will need to check,

- The infrastructure of the building (walls, roofs, stairs, floors)
- Communal areas, eg staircase and hallways
- Plumbing, electrical, ventilations, elevators
- Hot water heating systems
- Rodents or vermin infestations
- Environmental contaminants such as lead, mould, or asbestos.

2. Energy Performance Certificate

An energy performance certificate reports how energy efficient your property is. They are needed whenever a property is built, sold, or let.

A copy of this report must be completed prior to advertising your property and a copy **MUST** be given to your tenant **PPRIOR** to them signing any contract with you.

An EPC contains information about a property's use and typical energy costs as well as recommendations about how to reduce energy use and save money. An EPC gives a property an energy efficiency rating from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient) and is valid for 10 years.

3. Gas Safety Certificates

As a Landlord you must have a Gas Safety Certificate covering every gas appliance in your rental property. It is a legal requirement, and each certificate must be renewed every 12 months. You must also remember to provide your tenant with a copy of this certificate within 28 days of the check being completed.

Letting a property that doesn't safely use gas is absolutely illegal and can be viewed as a criminal offence.

The penalty for renting a property without a gas safety check includes a substantial fine and/or imprisonment.

4. PAT & EICR

The Portable Appliance Test (PAT) ensures all portable electrical appliances in your property are tested and approved as safe to use.

The resulting PAT certificate documents the safety testing of portable electrical appliances e.g. fridge/freezer, washing machine, toaster etc.

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) assesses the safety of the existing electrical installation within a property and describes its condition. The assessment will cover consumer units (fuse boards), protective bonding, lighting, switches, sockets etc.

All new tenancies need an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) with a rating of 'satisfactory'.

Local authorities may impose a financial penalty of up to £30,000 on landlords who are in breach of their duties.



5. Legionnaires Disease

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella.

While uncommon, it is the responsibility of all landlords to assess their properties for risk.

A simple initial assessment will show if water systems in your properties are at risk. Most normal domestic systems are considered low-risk due to the regular usage and flow of water, limiting standing water.

Your tenants should be advised of any control measures put in place that should be maintained eg not to adjust the temperature setting of the calorifier, to regularly clean showerheads and tenants should inform the landlord if the hot water is not heating properly or there are any other problems with the system so that appropriate action can be taken.

6. Right to Rent

It is a legal requirement to thoroughly check a tenant's right to rent a property in the UK.

All prospective tenants over 18 years of age must be checked. It is also important that you or your agent meet the tenant in person before keys to the property are released.

You can check your tenant's immigration by assessing their identity documents.

These include:

- Passports;
- Identity cards;
- Permanent resident cards;
- Travel documentation (showing an indefinite leave status);
- Right to Rent document from Home Office Immigration;
- Proof of registration as a legal citizen.

Most of these checks you can do yourself. Alternatively, you can hire an agency to do any extra checks.

Once you've performed the check, you're legally required to report the tenant's affirmative/negative status.

"You could be sent to prison for 5 years or get an unlimited fine for renting property in England to someone who you knew or had 'reasonable cause to believe' did not have the right to rent in the UK." – Gov.uk

7. Licensing

Do you know if your property is classed as a House of Multiple Occupation?

The Gov.UK website defines an HMO as,

A [house in multiple occupation](#) (HMO) is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household' (for example a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. It's sometimes called a 'house share'.

If you want to rent out your property as a house in multiple occupation in England or Wales you must contact your council to check if you need a licence.


You could get an unlimited fine for renting out an unlicensed HMO.

8. Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Did you know Landlords have to install functional smoke alarms on every floor of their property?

Moreover, carbon monoxide detectors need to be installed in every room with a fuel-burning appliance.

When new tenants move into your property you should document that alarms have batteries fitted and are in good working order. Fire safety regulations are being tightened regularly as the government pushes for higher standards across the rental sector.



9. Deposit Protection

You must place your tenants' deposit in a tenancy **deposit protection (TDP) scheme** if you rent out your home on an assured

If you do not protect your tenants' deposit

Your tenants can apply to a county court if you do not use a tenancy deposit protection (TDP) scheme when you have to. They can do this at any time during the tenancy.

If the court finds you have not protected the deposit, it can order you to either:

- repay it to your tenants
- pay it into a custodial TDP scheme's bank account within 14 days

The court may also order you to repay your tenants up to 3 times their original deposit within 14 days of making the order.

At the end of the tenancy

The court may also decide that your tenants do not have to leave the property when the tenancy ends if you did not use a TDP scheme when you should have.

10. Check In

Rental properties must be clean when a tenant moves in, and a check-in records the state of the property at the time.

As a landlord, it's your job to provide your tenants with a clean and hygienic space to move into.

This makes both the move-in and move-out process run smoothly and minimises disagreements and delays when claiming for cleaning or damages at the end of a tenancy.

We advise a professional clean before the move-in date and an independent inventory at check-in to record the exact condition of all spaces inside and outside the property.

Conclusion

Whether you're a business professional, an avid investor or an experienced landlord, landlords have their work cut out for them.

If you think this is too much work, contact the team for details on our full management service.

Through this guide, we hope we've made the process easier for you. Are you ready to be a landlord?



For further information on the rental market in the Portsmouth area please contact Belvoir Portsmouth. Manager Samantha Bateman will be happy to advise you on Portsmouth

properties that have the potential to make the best investments for the rental market in this area.

Tel: 023 9273 5863

email: samantha.bateman@belvoir.co.uk

or visit: www.belvoir.co.uk/portsmouth

PORTSMOUTH
PROPERTY NEWS