

Landlord's Guide

So, you have a property to let and you'd like Honey Lettings to find tenants for you?

How much involvement do you want?

We'll tailor a service to your needs but to give you an idea, we can start with a simple tenant introduction up to a full property management service, plus everything in between. We can discuss what's included in our different service levels to find the one that suits you best.

Legal requirements and legislation

This is ever changing so we'll explain what's needed to make sure you as a landlord and your property are fully compliant, including gas safety certificate, energy performance certificate, fitness for habitation check as well as furnishing and furniture safety regulations, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms. If there is a mortgage on the property you should check with your lender as you may need their consent to let the property.

Landlord contract

We will ask you to sign our contract, formalising your instructions for us to market your property. This will need to be signed by the legal owner/owners of the property. We will also need to see the Title Register document for the property to confirm you are the owners of the property.

Property Marketing

Websites like Rightmove and Zoopla have replaced the traditional agent's shop window, so it's vital that your property is found easily online and looks as appealing as possible. A full range of professional photos will be taken to maximise this opportunity, and floorplans will also be shown so potential tenants are able to see if the property layout works for their lifestyle.

Viewing requests can start immediately so it's important for the property to be ready. A freshly neutrally decorated, clean property, with a tidy garden will appeal to more tenants than one in need of some TLC.

Viewings

A member of the Honey Lettings team will accompany all viewings. In an ideal world, it's best if we have the place to ourselves so the applicants can take time and not feel they're intruders in someone's home. Where possible we give at least 24 hours' notice and we'll try to arrange this at a mutually convenient time.

Selecting a tenant

Ultimately, the decision is yours, but it's important we provide you with enough information to allow you to make that choice. A specialist reference agency will check, on our behalf, the applicant's affordability, credit history and previous letting background, if applicable, which provides us with a reference outcome.

Holding deposits

If a landlord would like us to take a holding deposit from an applicant we can do so at this stage. We are happy to discuss the pros and cons of holding deposits with you.

Tenancy Agreement

Our tenancies are processed through an online automated system to make the system fast and efficient. The technology used provides a full audit trail of all the documents enabling us to have essential compliance evidence. E-signatures are part of this process. Following the tenant fee ban legislation which came into force on 1st June 2019, it is vital that this part of property letting is conducted as quickly as possible.

Deposit

A deposit is collected from the tenant, and is usually a maximum of five weeks rent. This is held by the Deposit Protection Service (one of the government's approved schemes) under the terms and conditions of the DPS. We have a useful fact sheet on our website which explains how this works.

Rental Payments

The first month's rent will be paid by the tenant in advance and before the tenancy starts. Depending on the service level you choose, the rent will continue to be paid to us or directly to you. We'll transfer the rent directly to your bank account less our management fees and expenses incurred.

Utilities

The tenant is responsible for the payment of all utility charges such as gas, water, electricity, TV licence and council tax during the tenancy unless otherwise stated.

Insurance and Maintenance Contracts

As a landlord you must have insurance cover for the building – your tenant will need to take out insurance for their own possessions. If there are any maintenance contracts or warranties covering kitchen appliances, boiler, heating etc make sure you supply details of this to Honey Lettings and leave details at the property so the tenant is aware. A folder with instruction manuals or guidance to use all of these items should be left at the property.

Inventory

We cannot stress enough the importance of an accurate inventory report. When undertaken by an independent specialist it will provide details of the condition of the property at the start of the tenancy, supported by dated photographs. In the event of a future deposit dispute it can provide evidence to support a potential claim. Undertaken just before the tenancy starts Honey Lettings will advise you on how to prepare the property, so it's ready for the inventory.

All in working order

Ensure that you know everything is in working order before the tenancy starts. A check through prior to the start of the tenancy can avoid last minute repairs and save money – or worst still a delay in the start of a tenancy.

So, lots to think about

Lettings is our business – but we understand this could be a new experience for you and even for experienced landlords, things are ever changing. If there is anything further you need to know – we're always here to listen and answer any questions you may have – don't be afraid to ask. We're here to help landlords find suitable tenants and for tenants to find suitable homes!