

Residential Lettings – Reminders

There have been a number of changes to the legislation governing residential lettings over the last year. Below is a reminder of the measures landlords must ensure are in place:

1. Carbon Monoxide Alarm and Smoke Alarm Test Charts

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 came into effect on the 1st October 2015. This requires smoke alarms to be installed on each storey of a residential property and a carbon monoxide alarm to be installed in any room which contains a solid fuel burning appliance.

2. Legionnaires Risk Assessment

The Health & Safety Executive advises that those 'in control of premises' including landlords of residential property have a legal duty to ensure that the risk posed by legionella bacteria is properly assessed and controlled. The HSE advises that all water systems require a risk assessment which establishes whether any control measures are required.

3. Boiler Service Certificate

An up-to-date Gas Safety Certificate must be supplied in relation to any gas appliances provided by the Landlord. An annual check by a recognised gas engineer is required and certificates must be copied to the tenant within 28 days of the inspection.

Whilst the regulations apply to gas appliances it is considered best practice to undertake annual checks of any type of boiler including oil fired appliances.

4. Tenancy Deposit Scheme Guidance Leaflet

Landlords letting residential properties on Assured Shorthold Tenancies have been required to protect tenancy deposits in an authorised Tenancy Deposit Scheme since 6th April 2007. All tenants must be provided with a copy of their Tenancy Deposit Scheme Certificate and guidance leaflet within 30 days of the Landlord receiving the deposit.

5. Fixed Electrical Installation Periodic Test Report and Certificates

Whilst there is no regulatory requirement, it is considered good practice to obtain a report on the safety of electrical installations provided by the Landlord every five years or when there is a change in tenant.

6. Government 'How to Rent' Guide

The Deregulation Act 2015 has introduced the requirement for landlords to give to the tenant a copy of the Government Guidance called "How to rent: the checklist for renting in England" for any tenancies commencing after 1st October 2015.

7. Energy Performance Certificate

Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's) which assess and records the energy rating of a building are required when a residential property is constructed, sold or let. A copy of the EPC must be made available free of charge to the tenant of a property.

BPS Update

2016 Payments

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has announced that they aim to make 90% of 2016 payments by the end of December 2016.

Entitlement Statements are no longer being sent as hard copies. Towards the end of the year it should be possible to view them using the online system. Hopefully the ability to transfer entitlements using the online system will also return at this stage.

Countryside Stewardship

Philip Hammond has announced funding for agri-environment schemes will remain open until the UK formally leaves the EU. This means Natural England will be able to offer Countryside Stewardship Agreements this autumn and most probably next autumn too.

Natural England has confirmed the following numbers of Countryside Stewardship applications were received by 30th September 2016 deadline for a 1st January 2017 start date:-

Higher Tier - 954 applications (a 48% increase compared with applications received last year)

Mid Tier - 3770 applications (a 37% increase compared with last year).

The numbers of agreements received, offered and accepted for a 1st January 2016 start date were:

Higher Tier - 493 received, 436 offered and 413 accepted

Mid Tier - 2538 received, 2115 offered and 1894 accepted

Business Rates – Revaluation of Property

The Valuation Office Agency have completed the revaluation of ratable values for rated properties and the updated values have now been published in draft at www.gov.uk/voa/revaluation.

The new values reflect changes in the property market since 2008. We would recommend you check the details held online are correct and if any changes need to be made the Valuation Office Agency should be notified by the 30th November 2016.

56th ANNUAL HAY & STRAW AUCTION SALE

TUESDAY 10TH JANUARY 2016

At 2.30pm

In the Loyd Lindsay Rooms, Ardington, Wantage, Oxon OX12 8PS

Entry forms available from the office or www.adkin.co.uk
All enquiries to Philip Pocock or Jenna Wald (01235 862888)