

TW PROPERTY INSIGHT

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EDITION 01

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YOUR INDEPENDENT LETTING AND SALES AGENT, TW PROPERTY PROVIDE A QUICK AND EFFICIENT SERVICE FOR ALL YOUR PROPERTY NEEDS.



Insight into ongoing updates in the market

Welcome to our 1st ever TW newsletter. With the market and regulations changing at such a pace at the moment we thought it would be good to try and summarise these changes in a user friendly way.

With more updates and changes to housing law as well as health and safety on the way we plan to run a newsletter every 3 to 4 months.

Market Update

WOW... The lettings market has truly gone off with a bang in 2015, with demand as high as ever and supply of all types of properties very low. This is causing rents to increase as well as giving us a real choice of tenant. I don't think in the last 11 years we have seen such a strong market and with the way we live changing all the time to a more transitional life style, renting for life will only become more common.

It is also a good time to review your existing rents, although we love the good tenants that pay on time every month and cause no trouble, do you know if their rents are behind market value??



For further information or advice, please speak to [Adam Pooley](#) on [01892 548049](tel:01892548049) or email adampooley@tw-property.co.uk

EPC Changes to keep tenants warm and cosy

Up to 1 million tenants renting from a private landlord can look forward to warmer homes that cost less to heat, under new government plans.

From April 2018, landlords will be required by law to get their leakiest properties to an energy efficiency rating of at least Band “E”. Estimates suggest that on average the difference in a heating bill from the least energy efficient properties and those with an energy rating Band “E” is £880.

“Fuel poor” households living in the least efficient privately-rented homes already need to spend on average around £1,000 more to keep warm compared to the average home.

All EPCs are stored on a national data base and you can find yours with your postcode at www.epcregister.com and the full regulation at; www.gov.uk/government/news/renters-and-landlords-to-enjoy-warmer-properties-and-cheaper-bills

Although 2018 seems a long way away, it’s worth planning improvements now.



The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - Legionella

With recent changes by the HSE to the legislation relating to the control of legionella, it now means that residential lettings are covered by Approved Code of Practice L8 and HSE 274.

For landlords, property owners and managers, legionella compliance is an essential organisational risk management process that must be clearly managed.

The consequences of getting it wrong can be serious, particularly for those individuals involved with an outbreak of legionnaires disease, including the responsible organisation and its staff.

The Health & Safety Executive’s Approved Code of Practice & Guidance (ACOP) L8 – “Legionnaires disease” - “The control of legionella bacteria in water systems”, and HSG274 Parts 1, 2 and 3.

This ACOP, often simply referred to as “L8” forms the basis around which the control of Legionella related risks are managed. It is enforceable under the following legislation:-

- Management of Health & Safety at work regulation 1999
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Failure to follow L8 and have a professional risk assessment carried out can be seen as failure to follow the above legislation.

What needs to be done?

In an attempt to control the risks from exposure to Legionella in man-made water systems HSE have issued the following for Landlords /Agents:-

- Landlords are now required to carry out risk assessments for Legionnaires disease, and if necessary, take action.

The Health and Safety Executive has released a revised Approved Code of Practice: Legionnaires disease: The control of legionella bacteria in water systems.

But as with all new guidance it’s not as simple as that, for further information or advice, please speak to [Justin Fletcher 01892 548049](mailto:justinfletcher@tw-property.co.uk) e. justinfletcher@tw-property.co.uk

Child Safety Regulations

New regulations with regards to blinds effect rented properties as well.

Agents & Landlords should check existing properties where blinds or tracks with cords are already fitted and if there is a long or loose loop arrange the fitting of a cleat or snap connector retrospectively to these items as a matter of urgency.

If a blind or curtain track is purchased new then it should contain a label regarding safety and compliance with the Standard together with a safety device installed to prevent strangulation of a young child by

a dangerous loop made of cord material or ball bearings.

When choosing new window blinds in houses or public buildings such as offices it is strongly recommended that the chosen blind is safe by design which means it does not use cords or chains to operate it; or if they are fitted then the cords or chains should be either concealed or fitted with tension cords or tension chains.

If an accident did occur the Trading Standards could take action for failure by an Agent or Landlord to have such devices fitted.



Guidance can be found at www.bbsa.org.uk



Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

On the 11th March 2015 The Government has announced that it will introduce regulations to make it compulsory for private rented property to be fitted with smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors.

The regulations are not expected to be in force until October 2015. They may of course become a casualty of the election but we will have to see. More than likely they

will go ahead either in the form announced or something similar. Either way it seems clear that 2015 and 2016 will be a period of increasing regulation in the private rented sector.

We will update all landlords once we have further information if and when the bill gets parliamentary approval.





The Immigration Act 2014

The aim of this legislation is to make provision about immigration law; to limit, or otherwise make provision about, access to services, facilities and employment by reference to immigration status; to make provision about marriage and civil partnership involving certain foreign nationals; to make provision about the acquisition of citizenship by persons unable to acquire it because their fathers and mothers were not married to each other and provision about the removal of citizenship from

persons whose conduct is seriously prejudicial to the United Kingdom's vital interests; and for connected purposes.

The pilot scheme has been running in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Dudley since the 1st December 2014. The act should have been rolled out across the UK in February, however, it is crucial that landlords and of course lettings agents are aware of their responsibilities.

That is the “Legal” jargon – but what is the current position for landlords and lettings agents?

Under Section 22 of the Immigration Act 2014 2, landlords

“must not authorise an adult to occupy premises under a residential tenancy agreement if the adult is disqualified as a result of their immigration status.”

There is a published list of acceptable documents which is too long for the Newsletter, but are available online or by contacting us.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- + The Deregulation Bill
- + Update on Prescribed Information
- + Amendments to Tenancy Deposit Legislation
- + Section 21 Update “Spencer V Taylor”
- + Update or changes to any of the information included within this newsletter

Don't forget these are only summaries and should not be taken as legal advice; feel free to give us a call if you require more information or clarification.

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