

Russell & Butler

LANDLORDS INFORMATION PACK

Introduction

As a trusted and reputable company Russell and Butler Ltd are able to offer a professional service whatever your requirements as a Landlord may be. With our thorough local knowledge and expertise in the property market we can offer the very best to our clients.

As an independent company we are able to tailor our service to suit your exact requirements but essentially we offer two distinct service levels detailed herein;

Letting Only Service

1. Visiting your property, appraising the letting potential, advising on Tenancy Agreements and answering any questions you may have
2. Advertising and marketing the property
3. Receiving enquiries and accompanying prospective tenants wishing to view the property
4. Carefully selecting tenants by personal interview, in depth credit search and taking up references from employers (or accountants if self employed) and previous Landlords as appropriate.
5. Preparation of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement and relevant notices in accordance with the Housing Act 1988 (as amended 1996)
6. Preparation of an inventory by an independent inventory clerk
7. Collection of the first month's rent and dilapidations deposit

Full Letting and Management Service this includes all of the above, plus;

8. Collection of rent and payment to owners account
9. Chasing late payers as necessary
10. Inspecting the property every three months and reporting to Landlord where necessary
11. Instructing tradesman should any minor repairs or maintenance that are the Landlords responsibility be necessary
12. Arranging for the garden to be maintained if and as required
13. Dealing with any insurance claims i.e. obtaining quotations, completion of claim form and arranging for any insured repairs to be carried out
14. Caretaking of the property when empty between tenancies;
 - a) Inspect the property weekly
 - b) Collect/arrange redirection of mail
 - c) Arrange for the water system to be drained or central heating controlled during winter months
 - d) Act as key holder
 - e) Inform police that the property is empty
 - f) Arrange for cleaning if necessary

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- g) Arrange the payment of utility accounts
- 15. Advice on taxation
- 16. Arrange for the transfer of utility accounts to the tenants name

Marketing your Property

Details of your property will be sent out to prospective tenants via e-mail, text and post who have registered with us and actively seeking accommodation. In addition, the property will be advertised in the local press. It is our policy to erect "TO LET" boards since this can speed up the letting and assists prospective tenants in finding properties – if you do not wish for a board to be erected please let us know. Marketing of your property will also be made via our web site: www.russellandbutler.com, rightmove, NAEA, Vebra, Fish for Homes, Property Live.

Landlords' Insurance Policies.

We are able to arrange competitive insurance cover for all or any of the following:-

Buildings, Contents, Tenants Contents, Legal Expenses, Rental Warranty, Emergency repairs.

Rental warranty provides cover to reimburse any rent your tenant owes under the tenancy, and related legal fees. This cover provides total peace of mind and may be of particular interest to landlords who rely on rental payments to cover their mortgage. This can be arranged via ourselves and enclose an application form and schedule for your perusal.

Repairs

We are able to engage reputable tradesmen to carry out any maintenance, decorating and gardening that may be required. In addition, we can arrange for gas safety inspections and boiler maintenance. This service includes either submission of the accounts to the owners for payment by us from the funds held. Where the tenant is responsible for the repairs (due to damage caused by him) we will arrange payment of the account and this amount will be applied to the dilapidation deposit.

General

When the property is empty during the winter it is our policy to leave the heating on timer as opposed to draining down which can be fairly expensive, and a heated home is more inviting to tenants. The bill for heating during empty periods is the responsibility of the Landlord.

It is extremely rare that tenants refuse to leave when the owners require possession of the property. It is not generally possible to gain possession during the initial fixed term of the agreement (usually six months).

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However, after this period, the courts must grant a possession order provided that the necessary notices have been served on the tenant. There are also mandatory grounds where the court must grant a possession order (including during the initial term) such as non payment of rent. The vast majority of tenants pay the rent full and on time.

Whilst every reasonable precaution is taken in selection of tenants, we cannot be held responsible for arrears that may accrue during the tenancy. However if you opt for Home Let Loss of Rent & Legal Expenses Insurance you will be fully protected in the event of any default. It is often more convenient for prospective tenants to view properties at the weekends and during the evenings. Unlike many managing agents, we will arrange to meet tenants at these times where necessary.

Your obligations as a Landlord

There are certain regulations that you should be aware of when letting your property;

1. Fire and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988.

All new tenancies must comply with these regulations which require that:

- a) all upholstered furniture (e.g. beds, sofas, armchairs) must have fire resistant filling material.
- b) Upholstered furniture must pass a cigarette resistance test (except mattresses, bed bases, pillows and cushions)
- c) Permanent covers must pass a match resistance test.

Furniture manufactured after the introduction of the regulations in 1989 should all have labels attached. There are a few exemptions to the regulations notably that they do not apply to bed clothes, carpets or curtains. Further details are available on request.

2. Gas safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1994. All gas appliances within the property must be inspected, and generally serviced, at least once a year by a qualified GAS SAFE gas engineer who will not only check on the appliances but also the integrity of the supply and that the regulation regarding ventilation and flues etc. are complied with. On request, he will issue a Gas Safety Inspection Certificate which should be kept so that it is available to tenants or prospective tenant's for inspection.

3. Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 require that electrical appliances and the electric supply are safe. There is no statutory procedure for checking these items but an annual inspection by a qualified electrician is advisable.

4. Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 It is generally the responsibility of the Landlord to keep in good repair the external structure of the property including such items as drains, gutters, and internally, central heating and the installations for the supply of water, gas, electricity and sanitation.

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5. Smoke Detectors it is advisable that two be fitted prior to commencement of the tenancy.

6. Energy Performance Certificates- It is a legal requirement to provide an energy performance certificate (EPC) showing how energy efficient and environmentally friendly the property is. These are valid for 10 years assuming no alterations are made. We can arrange these on your behalf, fee applies.

Practical Advice.

Insurance You should inform your insurance company that the property is to be let. If you do not, the insurance may be invalidated.

Property Condition It is in your own interest to put the property in good decorative order. It will also normally be necessary to provide carpets, curtains and a cooker. There is little difference between rental values achieved in furnished and unfurnished property and contrary to popular belief there is now no difference in the type of tenancy created.

Gardens It is the responsibility of the Tenant to maintain the garden. It is advisable that you provide a lawnmower and basic garden tools.