THE LETTINGS HUB
the home for lettings

Infosheet | Landlord Obligations And Selective Licensing



Last week, Chancellor Rachel Reeves found herself in the headlines for an unfortunate mistake.

After moving into 11 Downing Street, she began letting out her own home in South London - but she failed to apply for a selective licence; a requirement of her local authority. The oversight highlights how easy it is for even experienced landlords to fall foul of licensing rules, especially as more councils expand their schemes.

Reeves' situation serves as a timely reminder that letting out a property in England comes with a long list of legal responsibilities - from safety certificates and tenant protection to licensing and eviction compliance. Missing one of them, even unintentionally, can lead to serious consequences including fines, rent repayment orders, and even criminal sanctions.

In this guide, we outline the key responsibilities your landlords must meet - and take a closer look at selective licensing, the rule that caught the Chancellor off guard.

Property Safety And Maintenance

1

GAS SAFETY

Landlords must ensure that all gas appliances, fittings, and flues are installed and maintained by a Gas Safe registered engineer. An annual gas safety check is required, and tenants should receive a copy of the gas safety certificate within 28 days of the check.

2

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

The electrical system and any provided electrical appliances must be safe. A qualified person must conduct an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) at least every five years.

3

FIRE SAFETY

Landlords are required to install a smoke alarm on each storey of the property and a carbon monoxide alarm in any room with a solid fuel-burning appliance. Furniture and furnishings must also meet fire safety standards.

Energy Efficiency

1

ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE (EPC)

An EPC must be provided to tenants when the property is marketed, with the property achieving a minimum EPC rating of 'E' to be legally rented out (unless it is exempt).

Tenancy Deposits



1

DEPOSIT PROTECTION

Any deposit taken from a tenant must be protected in a government-approved tenancy deposit scheme within 30 days of receipt, along with providing prescribed information about the scheme to the tenant.

Right To Rent checks

1

In England, landlords must verify that tenants have the legal right to rent property in the UK by checking original documents that confirm the tenant's immigration status.

Providing Key Information

1

'HOW TO RENT' GUIDE

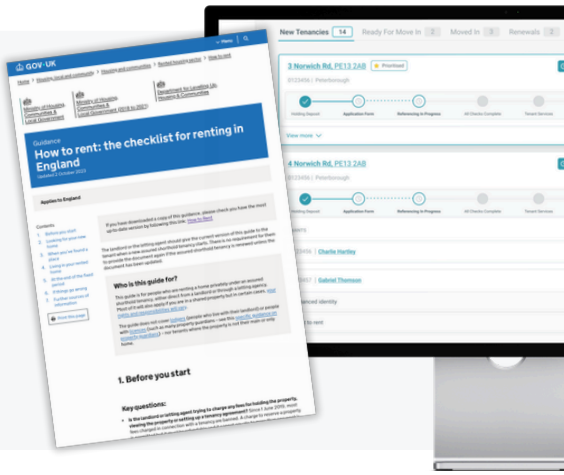
At the start of a new tenancy, landlords must provide tenants with the latest version of the government's 'How to Rent' guide.

If a new how to rent guide has been released, then this must be supplied when a renewal is entered into or the agreement goes periodic.

BOX Clever

Any updates to the 'How to Rent guide' are automatically be added to BOX, keeping our agents safe and making it easy for you to stay on the right side of the regulations.

BOOK YOUR FREE DEMO



Repairs And Maintenance

Landlords are responsible for maintaining the structure and exterior of the property, including roofs, walls, and windows.

Ensuring that installations for water, gas, electricity, sanitation, and heating are in proper working order is a landlord's duty.



1

AWAAB'S LAW

Awaab's Law is set to be introduced to the Private Rental Sector, which will change a landlords and agents requirements concerning responding to urgent health hazards, including reports of damp and mould.

Rent Increases And Evictions

1

RENT INCREASES

Landlords must follow legal procedures for rent increases, providing appropriate notice and ensuring the increase is fair and in line with market rates.

2

EVICTIONS

Proper legal processes must be followed for evictions, including serving the correct notices and obtaining a court order if necessary.

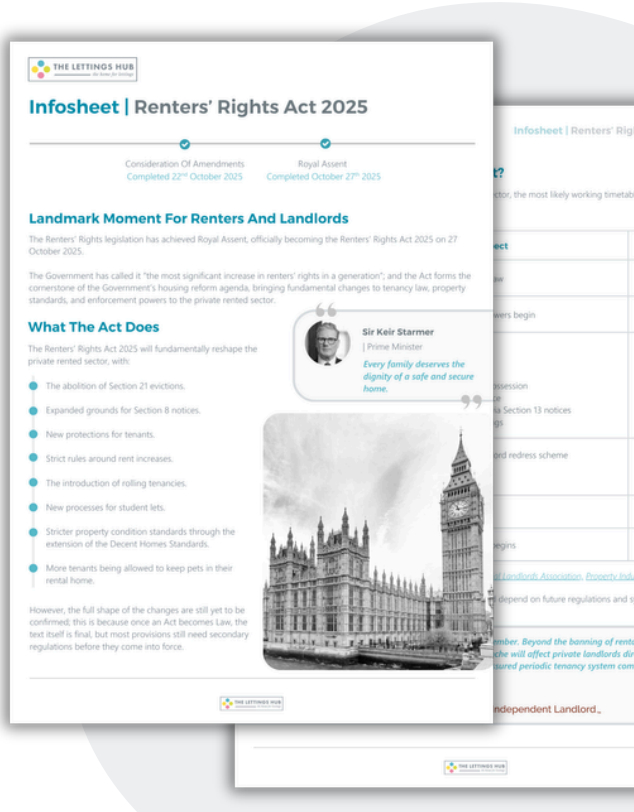
New Legislation

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 will change how rent increases and evictions will take place, so it's crucial to make sure your landlords know what the changes are, and the implications for getting it wrong.

Read our infosheet on the full rundown of The Renters' Rights Act today!

DOWNLOAD NOW

RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT
BOX READY



Licensing Requirements

1

HMO LICENCE

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO): Renting to three or more tenants forming more than one household may require an HMO license, with specific requirements varying by local authority.

2

SELECTIVE LICENSING

Required for non-HMO properties in designated areas - even if they are let to a single household. Each licensed property must be applied for individually; however, licensing rules vary by local authority, so postcode checks are essential

SELECTIVE LICENSING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Selective licensing is a scheme that allows local councils to require landlords to apply for a licence before renting out their properties in certain areas. The aim is to improve rental property standards and reduce issues such as overcrowding, antisocial behaviour, and poor housing conditions.

As many as 47 English councils currently operate schemes and since December 2024, councils can introduce selective licensing without Secretary of State approval, meaning more areas could be designated over time

PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE CAN INCLUDE

- Civil penalties up to £30,000.
- Rent Repayment Orders (up to 12 months' rent).
- Inability to serve a Section 21 notice.

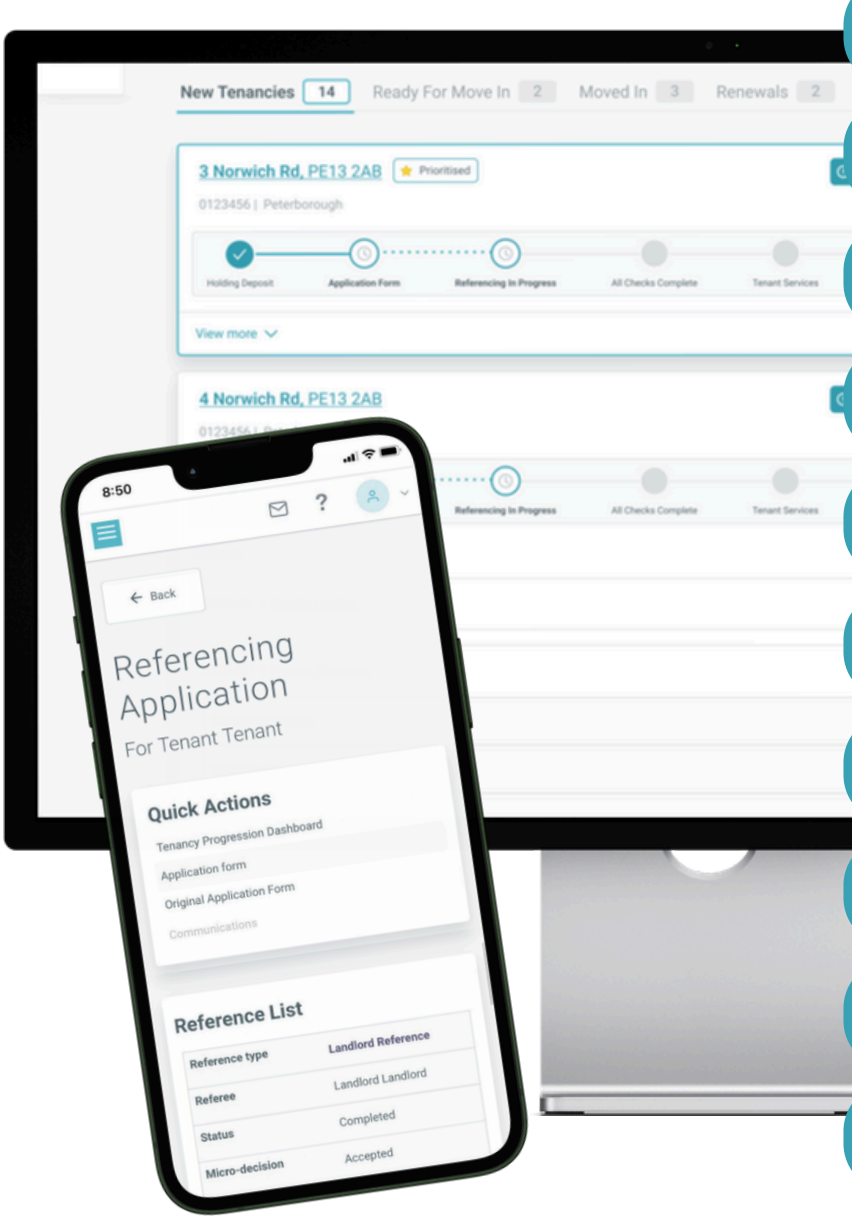
QUICK FACTS ON SELECTIVE LICENSING

- Applies even if the property is not an HMO.
- Every address is checked by postcode.
- Licence conditions often require evidence of gas safety, electrical safety, EPC, and proper tenancy management.



BOX FROM THE LETTINGS HUB the home for lettings

At The Lettings Hub, we're always here to support you through the ever-changing lettings landscape. With the Renters' Rights Bill introducing new regulations, staying updated is crucial. That's why we offer a variety of resources to help you navigate these changes smoothly. From webinars and blogs to tailored guides, our platform is packed with expert insights. Be sure to follow us on LinkedIn and bookmark our Renters' Rights Hub for the latest updates, tips, and advice.



- Tenant PreQualification
- Elite Referencing
- IDVT Know Your Customer
- Section 13 Rent Reviews
- Contract Updates
- Rent and Legal Protection
- Professional Guarantor
- Pet Damage Insurance
- Holding Deposit
- BOX Audit and Compliance