Renters' Rights Act | What Changed On 27th December 2025?



On 27 December, a significant set of changes came into force that are set to change how the private rented sector is regulated and enforced in England.

While much of the sector attention has been focused on the upcoming Renters' Rights Act, these first set of changes are less about future policy and more about how the rules are enforced right now. In short, local authorities now have stronger, faster and more flexible powers to act against non-compliance in the private rented sector.

For landlords and letting agents, this is important: enforcement will no longer be slow, reactive or exceptional. It is set to become routine, proactive and easier to apply.

A Shift In Enforcement

The changes that took effect on 27 December don't introduce new obligations for landlords; instead, they strengthen local authorities' ability to enforce existing standards, whilst also preparing the way for the wider reforms coming with the implementation of Renters' Rights Act.

Historically, councils have often faced barriers when taking action, including:

- Costly and time-consuming court processes.
- Limited staffing and resources.
- High thresholds for producing evidence.

The new powers now in place are designed to remove many of those barriers, leading to a regulatory environment where action is easier to take, quicker to deliver, and harder to ignore.

Stronger Civil Penalties, Without Court Action

One of the most significant changes is the expanded use of civil penalties.

Local authorities can now impose substantial financial penalties for a wide range of housing-related offences without needing to take action through the courts. The penalties can be applied where the council is satisfied that an offence has taken place, based on evidence gathered through inspection and investigation.

This applies to issues such as:

- Failure to comply with improvement or prohibition notices.
- Poor property conditions or unresolved hazards.
- Breaching licensing requirements.
- Failure to engage with enforcement action.

Civil penalties are designed to be:

- Faster to issue.
- Less resource-intensive for councils.
- A credible alternative to prosecution.

For landlords and agents, this means enforcement action can follow much more quickly, and can expect financial consequences even if criminal proceedings aren't pursued.



Expanded Use Of Banning Orders And The Rogue Landlord Database

These most recent changes also strengthen councils' ability to escalate action against repeat or serious offenders; meaning; local authorities now have greater scope to:

- Apply for banning orders, preventing individuals from letting or managing property.
- Add landlords and agents to the Rogue Landlord Database for a broader range of offences.

When landlords or agents are included on the database, the consequences can be severe, and lasting, including:

- Restrictions on operating in the sector.
- Increased scrutiny across local authority boundaries.
- Significant reputational damage.

This move reflects the wider aims of the policy: not just to correct poor practice, but to remove consistently un-compliant agents and landlords from the sector altogether.

Greater Focus On Property Standards And Early Intervention

Another key element of the new changes is a stronger emphasis on earlier intervention around property conditions.

Local authorities are now better equipped to act on issues such as:

- Damp and mould.
- Excess cold.
- Structural disrepair.
- Unsafe or unhealthy living conditions.



Again, this sits squarely with the broader direction of travel, where delays in addressing hazards are no longer considered acceptable.

However, the emphasis is set to be increasingly on prevention, not reaction. Crucially, councils do not need to wait for conditions to deteriorate to extreme levels before stepping in.

Increased Scrutiny Of Letting Agents

While landlords remain legally responsible for their properties, the new enforcement landscape places greater scrutiny on letting agents.



Local authorities are expected to:

- Look more closely at how properties are managed day to day.
- Determine whether agents are supporting compliance, or enabling poor practice.
- Look for clearer audit trails, records and evidence of action.

Agents who simply pass information between tenants and landlords, without demonstrating active involvement or advice, may find themselves under increased pressure.

In practice, this means that processes, documentation and consistency matter more than ever.

Preparing The Ground For The Renters' Rights Act

The strengthened enforcement powers introduced on 27 December are widely seen as the infrastructure that will support the Renters' Rights Act once it is fully implemented; with the first changes due from 1 May.

This first of the reforms to be implemented including:



- The abolition of Section 21 notices.
- The end of fixed-term tenancies.
- A ban on accepting rent in advance.
- Restrictions on rent increases.

However, without effective enforcement, the reforms would be difficult to deliver in practice. Therefore, these changes have intended to ensure that local authorities are better equipped to uphold the new rules from day one.

What This Means In Practice



For landlords and letting agents, the message is this: The compliance risk has increased, not because the rules are entirely new, but because enforcement is now more likely, faster and is more robust.

In practical terms you can expect:

- Issues are less likely to be overlooked by local authorities.
- Any unacceptable delays in addressing problems carry greater risk.
- The financial and reputational consequences are more likely to have an impact.

This reinforces the importance of implementing strong processes around Legal compliance and record-keeping, together with having clear escalation routes when issues arise.

A Changing Environment



The changes that took effect on 27 December mark a clear turning point.

Local authorities have been given the tools to act more decisively, and the private rented sector is moving towards a model where good practice is expected, not optional.

For landlords and agents who already take compliance seriously, these reforms should offer reassurance that standards are being applied more consistently across the market. For those who do not, the risk of inaction has increased significantly.

Understanding these changes - and responding proactively - is now an essential part of operating successfully in the private rented sector.

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 Act 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.

