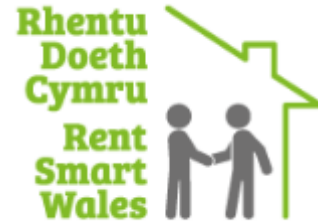


Rent Smart Wales:

Tenant Checklist



This checklist has been created to give some advice and useful tips on what to look out for and what questions to ask when you are about to start a tenancy agreement. It has been created with four different stages to get you off to a good start!

Finding a Landlord or Agent

When looking for a landlord, make sure they are registered with Rent Smart Wales by asking for their registration number or by contacting Rent Smart Wales. Please note: This is not enforced until November 23rd 2016. For more information please visit our website.

Is the landlord registered? Yes No

If your landlord is responsible for managing and letting the property and they do not use an agent, then check that they have a licence number with Rent Smart Wales.

Is the landlord licensed? Yes No

Agencies also have to be licensed with Rent Smart Wales – so if you have an agent, check that they have a licence number.

Is the Agent licensed? Yes No

Agencies must have client money protection to maintain a licence with Rent Smart Wales. Client Money Protection Insurance (CMPI) is an insurance that protects the money of landlords and tenants against theft or misappropriation by the letting agent whilst it is in their custody or control.

Check that the Landlord/Agent provides a telephone number and other correspondence details so that you can contact them easily. Ask them who you should contact about repairs and if they have an emergency contact number.

Person to Contact: _____

Contact Number: _____

HOUSE SHARE

- Take time to decide who you want to live with. Once you are in a contract it will be difficult to leave before it ends.
- If moving in with other people, think about whether it is best for you to be on an individual contract or a joining contract with others. If you are on a joint tenancy remember you are all jointly and severally liable. If you have a joint tenancy remember that if one of the tenants does not pay their share of rent, you are all responsible to ensure that rent gets paid in full.
- Is there enough storage space for all tenants?
- Are all entrances to the building secure? There may be several people who have access to your property.
- Make sure you know who these people are and why they will be entering the property. Who has access to your property may affect your insurance.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

- Does the house look cared for? **Yes** **No**
Is there any musty smell, smell of damp or signs of mould? **Yes** **No**
Also check for signs of pests and vermin.
- Is the house well ventilated? Are the windows openable? **Yes** **No**
- If renting a furnished property, check that the furniture is in reasonable condition. Do not forget you are paying for this through your rent. If your property is furnished, is the furniture in good condition? **Yes** **No**
- Check for central heating. Are there are radiators in every room? **Yes** **No**
- Is there double glazing throughout? **Yes** **No**
During winter months, your energy costs may rise significantly.



FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- If you are in receipt of housing benefit, check if the rent in the area is affordable? **Yes** **No**
- Always check your council tax band. **Council Tax Band** _____
- Do not be afraid to negotiate your final rent agreement if you are unhappy with something before you agree to the tenancy agreement.
- Make sure you consider added expenditure such as utility bills.

SECURITY CHECKS

- Are all your doors secure, and are all the locks intact? **Yes** **No**
- Is your garden enclosed? **Yes** **No**
Check all gates are secure. If there are any gates, check they do not open onto public footpaths.
- Are all your windows secure? Do all the handles work and do all the windows lock? **Yes** **No**
- Check that the Landlord gives you the keys to lock all your windows. **Yes** **No**

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Are there smoke detectors throughout the house such as on landings, in bedrooms, and within the kitchen? **Yes** **No**
- Is there a safe escape route in case of fire? **Yes** **No**
- Is there a current Gas Safety Certificate? **Yes** **No**
These are a requirement by law and are conducted on an annual basis.
- Ask for an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) this will tell you how fuel efficient the house will be and give you an indication about your commitment in fuel bills.
- It is a legal requirement that your landlord has an EPC.
Does your landlord have one? **Yes** **No**



The Tenancy Agreement

Make sure that any verbal agreements are put in writing, such as any promises made by the landlord with regards to decorating, supplying new furniture etc.

If you are dealing with an agent, ask them to provide information in writing about all fees they charge before, during and at the end of a tenancy.

Agency Fees £ _____

Do you have to pay a deposit? If you do, it should be held in a Government approved scheme. You should receive the information about where your deposit is being held within 30 days after handing your Landlord the deposit.

Deposit Amount £ _____

Check how much rent you have to pay in advance. This can be sometimes be quite substantial.

Rent in Advance £ _____

How long is the tenancy for? There is usually a fixed period of 6 or 12 months. If you want more security, you can ask for a longer fixed period of up to seven years. Many landlords are happy to offer longer tenancies.

Length of Tenancy: __ Years __ Months

If you are a student or part of a house share, are you able to live in the property over the summer period? In some cases you may have to pay half rent during certain times when vacant. **Yes** **No**

Do you need a guarantor? A guarantor is a third party, such as a parent or close relative, who agrees to pay your rent if you do not pay it. **Yes** **No**

Check if any bills are included in the rent. Make sure this is written into the contract and that it is clear which bills are included (gas, electricity, water, council tax). Please note you should call your energy provider with the meter readings on your move in date.

Make sure you understand what is expected of you e.g. are you expected to keep the garden maintained during your tenancy?

What happens if you need to cancel the tenancy agreement? Is there a cancellation fee? You may have to pay the remainder of the rent. **Cancellation Fee** £ _____

Does your agent/landlord have an out of hours service for times where you lose your keys, or if there is a major issue with the property? **Yes** **No**

Check if you are allowed pets/to smoke in the property/residential car parking if you require them.

Once you are a Tenant

Agree an inventory (or check-in report) with your landlord and, as an extra safeguard, make sure that you take photographs. This will make things easier if there is a dispute about the deposit at the end of the tenancy. If you are happy with the inventory, sign it and keep a copy.

Ensure you were given a copy of the tenancy agreement. Make sure it is signed as this is now a legal document. Make sure you read your responsibilities listed in the tenancy agreement and discuss anything you do not understand.

Create a notice board/make a note of the contact details for your agency and/or landlord

Check that you are given at least 24 hours' notice from a landlord (this should be in writing), an agent or anyone acting on their behalf to enter your property, even if it is to carry out repairs or maintenance. Sometimes landlords and agents insert additional clauses into the contract which state that they will enter your home without you being there, after they have given notice, if you do not respond. Are you happy with that approach? If not change the details in the contract before signing.

Check if you need a TV licence. Visit www.tvlicencing.co.uk or phone TV Licensing on 03007906131 for more information.

Your Landlord should have buildings insurance but this will not cover your personal belongings so it is worth looking into arranging your own contents insurance.



