

Dear Landlord

Take the opportunity to learn more about Rent Smart Wales activities, updates from Welsh Government and make the most of useful resources from partner organisations.

LEGISLATION

Holding Deposit Pitfalls

Some landlords and agents take a small deposit from a prospective tenant to secure a property. This allows the landlord or agent to check the suitability of a tenant and it serves as a guarantee that the tenant is committed to taking on the property.

The maximum deposit amount is set in law at the equivalent of one weeks' rent. Any amount higher than this is deemed a prohibited payment and enforcement sanctions can be applied.

From **28th February 2020** landlords and agents will also be required to provide the tenant with prescribed information at the time the holding deposit is taken. This includes property address, contact details for landlord / agent, contract duration, rent due and more.

[Legislation >](#)

[Regulations >](#)

[Guidance >](#)

NEWS

Agent obstructing Rent Smart Wales audit prosecuted

Cardiff-based letting agent receives fines in excess of £4,500 for failing to provide essential information requested by Rent Smart Wales in a recent audit.



[Read article >](#)

SAFETY REGULATIONS

Sprinklers in new and converted properties

Sprinklers are Automatic Fire Suppression Systems that activate within minutes of a fire breaking out. Their fundamental purpose is to save lives and reduce the risk of damage to your property.

In 2016, Welsh Government issued new guidance around the requirement for sprinklers in new and converted houses and flats.

The table below provides a useful summary.

Property description	Conversion activity	Planning permission required?	Building regulations approval required for change of use?	Sprinklers required?
New build	---	✓	✓	✓
Existing domestic property	To self-contained flats	✓	✓	✓
Existing domestic property	To shared house without locks on bedroom doors	✓*	✗	✗
Existing domestic property	To shared house with locks on bedroom doors	✓*	✓	✓

*A change of use will occur where the property falls within the definition of a HMO defined in Section 254 of the Housing Act 2004. Additional requirements above and beyond Approved Document B may be required in HMOs that require a licence.

[View guidance >](#)

FREE RESOURCES



Is your property meeting the Minimum Energy Performance standard?

Don't forget, all let property covered by the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard legislation (unless an exemption is registered) has to be rated E or above from 1st April 2020.

Rent Smart Wales is working with Welsh local authorities to cross check data from the EPC open data source to identify rented property that either have no EPC registered, or have a rating of F or G. This information will be used to target further improvement activities which will include enforcement action.

If your property is currently empty and you are not planning to let it, you do not need to improve the property until you decide to rent it out.

Find out if your property is covered by this legislation [here](#).

[More information >](#)



Fees Ban Matrix

The Tenancy Deposit Scheme has developed a matrix which shows the difference between the Fees Ban requirements in England and Wales. Download your copy [here](#).

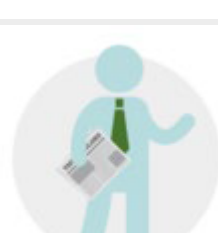
[View matrix >](#)



Universal Credit support

The Department for Work and Pensions continues to improve the support available for claimants and their landlords. View the latest Housing Queries Routeway [here](#).

[More information >](#)



Upcoming Landlord Forums

Landlord Forums provide an ideal opportunity to learn more about developments in the industry and to meet and share best practice with other landlords in your area.

[View upcoming events >](#)

STATISTICS

Rent Smart Wales data

The data landlords provide at Registration is now being analysed to develop a picture of the private rented stock in Wales. Over the next few issues we will share some highlights.



Did you realise...

- Letting and managing agents manage 54% of the stock
- 5% of Welsh landlords live outside the UK
- 12% of rental properties are managed by both their landlord and an agent
- Conwy has the highest proportion of HMOs

[View RSW statistics >](#)

Updated privacy policy

We've completed an annual review of our privacy policy. View the changes that may affect you [here](#).