



Winter newsletter

March 2021

Dear Landlord/Agent,

Our quarterly newsletters allow you to keep up-to-date with the latest Private Rented Sector developments, as well as participating in opportunities to influence housing policy in Wales.

Highlights in this issue include:

- New training options for re-licensing
- Rent Smart Wales overhauls tenant advice
- Debt respite for tenants
- Consultation: Ensuring Safer Buildings in Wales
- Financial help with EPC improvements
- Smart meters - be part of the movement



RENEWAL

New training options for licensing

Rent Smart Wales has recently marked its fifth anniversary with re-registration and re-licensing now underway. More training options are now available for licence renewal to cater for varying business needs and knowledge. This approach aims to encourage landlords to build and develop their knowledge base over time.

Those wishing to hone in on specific topic areas over the 5 year licensing period will have the option to complete **Continued Professional Development**.

Alternatively, those who prefer a comprehensive overview will still be able to complete the Complete course, the equivalent of a 1-day course, in one hit. This provides a re-cap of all letting and management essentials.

[View options >](#)

Please note: Rent Smart Wales will contact you in advance of registration/licence expiry. If you wish to check when your registration or licence is due to expire, view our public register [here](#).

Virtual classroom courses for renewal

If your landlord licence is due for renewal and you have outstanding training requirements, our upcoming virtual classroom course offers the benefits of in-person training with the opportunity to ask questions and interact with other delegates.

Upcoming dates:

- **Complete Landlord Course**
Date: Wednesday 24th March | Time: 9:30am - 3:30pm
[View course information >](#)
- **Understanding possession proceedings (CPD)**
Date: Friday 26th March | Time: 9:30am - 12:30pm
[View course information >](#)
- **Repair and safety (CPD)**
Date: Friday 26th March | Time: 1:30pm - 4:30pm
[View course information >](#)

TENANT ADVICE



Rent Smart Wales overhauls tenant advice

We constantly strive to improve access to good reliable information for all our stakeholders.

Our latest development is the overhaul and re-launch of our tenant support offer on the website. This now provides clear signposting to a range of advice and support services, including but not limited to, support with budgeting and affordability, mental health, resolving disputes and seeking assistance with securing repairs.

Tenants can now easily explore and compare support offered by different organisations, whether national or local government, charitable or voluntary.

[View tenant support >](#)



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

REGULATIONS

Debt Respite for Tenants

Breathing Space, a new statutory scheme approved by the Welsh Senedd in November, will commence on **4 May 2021**.

The scheme will give a person struggling with debt the right to legal protections from their creditors, allowing a window of time to better manage their finances, seek professional debt advice and reach sustainable solutions. All kinds of debts can be included in a moratorium, including rent arrears.

In summary the scheme will:

- provide protection by pausing enforcement action from creditors and freezing charges, fees and certain interest
- be available to anyone in problem debt residing in England and Wales who accesses debt advice and meets the eligibility criteria and conditions.

[Learn more >](#)



BUILDING SAFETY

Government Consultation - Ensuring Safer Buildings

The 2017 Grenfell tragedy was a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of poor build quality and resident safety not being prioritised.

Welsh Government has launched a White Paper which sets out proposals for comprehensive reform of legislation that contributes to building safety in Wales.

It focuses on legislative change across the lifecycle of buildings and tenures as well as setting out aspirations for culture change in the way buildings are designed, constructed and managed. Your views on these proposals are now being sought.

Deadline for responses: 12th April 2021.

[View more >](#)



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Are you EPC compliant?

You are likely to be operating illegally if your rental property has no Energy Performance Certificate or it is rated F or G. Local authorities have the power to serve

Fixed Penalty Notice (£5000) for this offence. However, there is assistance available in some circumstances. Act now to avoid consequences.

If your tenant is in receipt of certain means-tested benefits, free energy efficiency measures may be available through the Welsh Government NEST scheme.

Grant assistance to improve the energy performance of E, F or G rated properties is also available through Rent Smart Wales and you may be eligible if your property meets the criteria below:

- Property is currently tenanted
- Is without a central heating system
- Has an EPC rating of E, F or G
- Is within close proximity of the mains gas network

[RSW Scheme >](#)

[Nest scheme >](#)



Movement for sustainable change - Be part of it!

A new generation of gas and electricity meters could benefit both landlords and tenants.

Smart meters use wireless networks to replace existing gas and electricity meters and provide real-time information on energy consumption as well as an accurate figure of the expected fuel costs in a given period. This information is shown on an in-home display, allowing occupiers to understand how they are using energy, and the exact costs they can expect when they receive in their next bill.

How do these measures help landlords?

The Government has committed to a market-wide roll-out of smart meters. Landlords can expect no up-front cost as well as the following benefits:

- An end to estimated billing, allowing tenants to better forecast and manage their spending
- Help solve the problem of inherited bills from previous tenants
- Increased security with no requirement for annual in-person readings

Make the switch!

[More information >](#)

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Rhentü Doeth Cymru | Rent Smart Wales
Blwch PO / PO Box 1106
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF11 1UA



www.rhentudoeth.llyw.cymru
www.rentsmart.gov.wales