








Scottish  
Property  
Centre

# Lettings made **simple**

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Being a landlord can be a challenge. We are here to help you with every aspect of successfully letting your property.

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This guide has been created to give landlords practical and sensible guidance in looking after their property investment. It is not a legal document.

**If you have any questions about lettings or property management in general, please feel free to contact your local branch.**

# Welcome,

**My name is Craig Smith and I'm a Director here at Scottish Property Centre.**

We created the **Lettings made simple** guide to help landlords feel more confident when it comes to renting their property.

Being a landlord carries many legal obligations and responsibilities and we want you to feel informed, confident, and comfortable with the letting process.

We've been involved in the local property market since 2004. During this time we've built up a great reputation and we've helped hundreds of landlords rent their properties successfully.

It's a privilege to be able to do so and one that we do not take for granted – ever.

We hope you find the guide helpful and if you have any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or a member of our team.

**Thanks for reading and here's to your success as a landlord.**



**Craig Smith,  
Director,  
Scottish Property Centre**

\*Disclaimer: The information in this guide does not constitute legal advice.

## Eight things to consider when choosing a **letting agent**

At first glance, the letting agency business is a very competitive one. And with so many different agents to choose from, finding the right one to let your property can be bewildering.

That's why we came up with the **Lettings Made Simple** guide for landlords – to make your life easier.

### Here are eight things to consider before you instruct a letting agent to market and possibly manage your property.

**1) Do they have a track record in renting properties like yours?** Ask for evidence of properties similar to yours that they have let and achieved a good monthly rent on.

**2) Do they have client testimonials?** A good agent will always have landlords and tenants who will vouch for them or who have positively reviewed them.

**3) Do you like them?** You'll be working closely with the agent you choose, so it's important that you like and trust them. If in doubt, go with your instinct.

**4) Fees and costs.** Remember the old saying, 'If you pay peanuts you get monkeys'? Well, it's never truer than in the world of letting agencies. Those agents who offer very low fees are often desperate for business. These rock-bottom commission fees are often at the cost of you receiving the service and care you deserve.

**5) Where do they advertise their properties?** Most tenants begin their search on the internet. So, ask the agents which portals they advertise on. It's also worth asking an agency how its marketing strategy differs from its competitors to attract the best tenants. Ask, 'What makes your agency stand out from the crowd?'

**6) What kind of contracts do they offer tenants?** Ask the agents about the lease they offer to tenants. Are they using the current Private Residential Tenancy (PRT)? Have they added any additional clauses? Check what tie-ins they have for you as a landlord. A good letting agent is always open and transparent so this won't be a problem.

**7) Are the agents experienced experts in the legal compliance of managing / letting a property,** therefore avoiding any potential ramifications for non-compliance / negligence that you, as the landlord, may have to face.

**8) Are they registered?** All agents must be on the Letting Agent Register and following the Letting Code of Practice.



## The stepping stones to a **successful letting**

### 1. **Get Valuations**

So, you have a property to rent. We suggest calling in three different agencies to help you determine a realistic rental value.

### 2. **Choosing an Agent**

Look out for experience, integrity, and proven success.

### 3. **Marketing Matters**

How and where your property is marketed contributes greatly to your rental success. We use many different platforms to attract viewers to your property. The more interest there is means you can receive higher rents and benefit from a bigger selection of tenants to choose from.

### 4. **Presentation, Presentation, Presentation**

If you want to attract quality tenants at the best price, it's imperative that your property is clean, well maintained, and nicely presented.



### 5. **Offers**

Once quality tenants have been found and the rental price agreed, we will carry out all the necessary work including: Collecting references, arranging tenancy agreements, collecting the initial deposit and rent, and arranging for a thorough check in and inventory.

### 6. **Completion**

Once all the above has been carried out and is in full order, you can release the keys to your new tenant.

### 7. **Property Management**

We offer different tiers of service. From let only, where we will find you a quality tenant and carry out the introductory work, right through to full property management. This means you can sit back and relax knowing that we're taking care of everything.

Having your property fully managed means we take care of arranging pretty much everything, including collecting rents, arranging safety checks, and ensuring maintenance and repairs are undertaken promptly and professionally.

Keep reading to discover what keeps many unprepared landlords up at night.



## Landlords and the legal and regulatory maze

Being a landlord is a responsible role and carries hundreds of legal obligations. Below is a brief summary of just some of the maze of laws and regulations.\*

### Consents to Let

Do you have permission from your mortgage lender to let the property?  
Does your buildings insurer know the property is let out and are you adequately covered?

### Tenancy Agreement

This is a very important contractual document in the lettings process. The Private Residential Tenancy (PRT) is the Scottish Government approved lease which provides the tenant with certain protections and gives the landlord grounds to regain possession.

### Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Properties in Scotland must have interlinked smoke alarms on each floor, main living area and a heat detector in the kitchen. It's a legal requirement that landlords also install carbon monoxide alarms where there is a solid fuel appliance. Don't forget to make sure they are installed in the appropriate places within the home.

### Gas Safety

Every gas appliance must be checked by a certified Gas Safe engineer before a tenant moves in and annually thereafter.

### Electrical Safety

The electrical wiring in the rented property must be checked and an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) produced by a qualified and certified NICEIC electrician to verify it's safety. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is also required on any items being left in the property with a plug.

### Energy Performance Certificate

As a landlord, your property must have one of these certificates assessing its energy performance.

### Tax on Rental Property Income

All rental income from property in the UK is taxable. If you are unsure of your liabilities, we recommend you contact a specialist tax accountant.

### Tenancy Deposit Scheme

For all PRTs, the tenant's deposit must be registered with a recognised deposit protection scheme.

### Inventory

Before the rental starts, a full inventory should be undertaken and supplied to the tenant.

Other rules and regulations to consider include:

- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- Legionella Risk Assessment
- Non-Resident Landlord Scheme
- Landlord Registration
- The Tenant Fee Ban
- Furniture and Furnishings Fire Regulations

We can help you safely navigate your way through this maze and keep you on the right side of the law.

## Your **FAQs** answered

### How much will it cost to let my property?

The main costs you'll need to consider when letting your property are:

**1) Legal requirements** – Check if these can be arranged by your letting agent. Costs will likely vary depending on the size of your property. You may require smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, EICR, PAT, EPC, gas check and legionella risk assessment. You will also need to pay for your Landlord Registration.

**2) An inventory and check in report** – this needs to be carried out before your tenant moves into the property. Again, costs vary depending on the size of the property.

**3) Commission Fee** – Varies in percentage per agency and could be for just finding a tenant or full property management. In addition, expect to pay an initial letting/marketing fee for all the advertising and paperwork involved in finding a tenant.

### Who will carry out viewings and when will they happen?

At Scottish Property Centre, we always aim to accompany all viewings during office opening hours.

### Should I be present at viewings?

In short, no. Our recommendation is that we conduct viewings with any prospective tenants. Only in some rare circumstances would you be asked to carry out a viewing, as many tenants feel more relaxed when the owner isn't there.

### I'm interested in having my property managed – how much does it cost?

The property management fee is charged as a percentage of the rental price plus VAT.

### How much deposit should the tenant give and what happens to it?

There is now legislation that caps the amount of deposit paid by a tenant which is a maximum of 2 month's rent. The deposit is to be paid before signing the tenancy agreement. Within 30 days of the start date of the agreement, the deposit should be registered with a tenancy deposit protection scheme.

Failure to protect the deposit and serve the required documents has serious implications for a landlord.

### Who is responsible for arranging an inventory?

You are responsible but at Scottish Property Centre we can organise an inventory for you.







### When do I receive my rent from the tenant?

You should receive your rent on the rental due date every month. The due date is usually the day the tenant moved in.



If you've got any questions about anything from this guide, give your local Scottish Property Centre branch a call for an informal, no-obligation chat.

We'd be delighted to help.

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