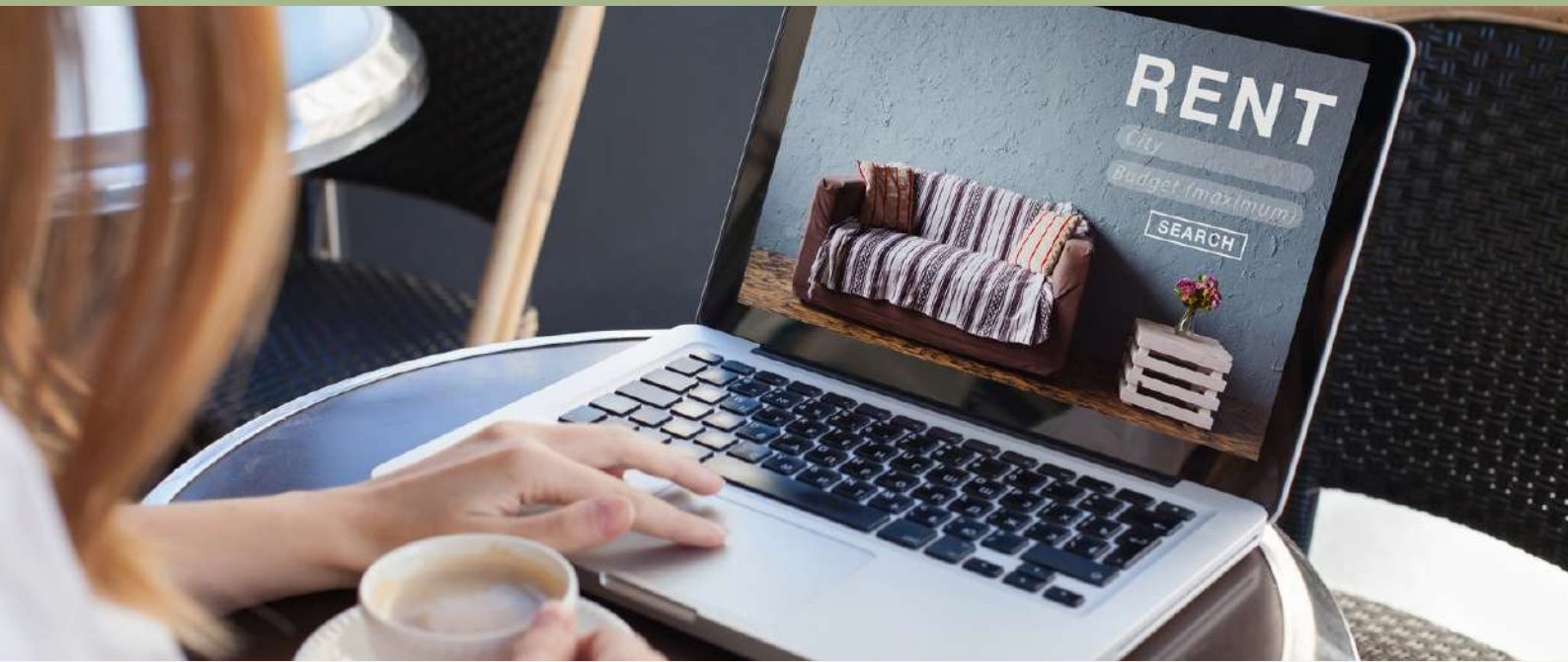




A guide to

RENTERS' RIGHTS BILL: WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU AS A LANDLORD



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Welcome,

Hi, my name is Martin, and I am the proud owner here at Patricia Shepherd Letting & Management.

We've been looking after landlords and their investments in the local area since 1997 so know the local property market inside out.

This new legislation is the biggest shake-up in rental law since 1988. I know it can feel like a lot to take in, and it's not always clear how it affects landlords like you. That's why I've put this guide together: to make things simple, practical, and relevant and how it may affect you.

At Patricia Shepherd, we've always stood for respect, honesty, transparency and professionalism. We work closely with landlords who care about their properties and value their tenants, just like you.

This guide is here to walk you through the main changes, answer the questions we're hearing most, and offer practical advice to help you stay ahead of the curve.

Whether you own one rental or manage a portfolio, I hope you'll find this guide useful and reassuring.

And if anything's unclear or you'd like to chat further, just get in touch. We're here to help.

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Thanks for reading,

Martin Jackson FARLA

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

Renters' Rights Bill: What It Means for You as a Landlord

You may have seen headlines about upcoming changes to the UK rental market. The Renters' Rights Bill, introduced in September 2024, is now moving through Parliament. It represents the biggest reform to English housing law since 1988, and most changes are expected to come into effect by mid-2025, with some starting as early as January.

This guide breaks down the key proposals and explains what they could mean for you as a landlord.

The Foundations of Reform

End of Section 21 'No-Fault' Evictions

Section 21 will be abolished. All tenancies will become rolling monthly assured periodic tenancies. Tenants can end the tenancy at any time with two months' notice, aligned with their rent date. These changes will apply to all existing and future tenancies.

New Grounds for Possession (Section 8 Updates)

Landlords will still be able to regain possession of their properties, but with restrictions. You can end a tenancy if you are selling or moving in yourself or for a close family member. These grounds can only be used after the first year of tenancy, with a four-month notice period. You cannot market or re-let the property for a year if you've claimed personal use.

Rent Arrears Protections

Evictions can only take place after three months of unpaid rent, and notice periods have increased from two weeks to four.

Decent Homes Standard

The same quality standards currently used in social housing will now apply to private rentals. Councils will have the power to enforce this, and non-compliance could lead to fines or rent repayment orders.

Awaab's Law

This introduces specific timeframes for landlords to address urgent health and safety issues like damp or mould. It doesn't change your duties, but it strengthens enforcement and tenant rights.



Top Landlord Tip:

Start keeping written records of all tenant communication. Clear documentation will help protect you under the new rules.



Registration, Regulation and Responsibility

Private Rented Sector Database

All landlords must register themselves and their properties on a government-run database. Councils will use this to track compliance. Penalties for not registering can reach £7,000 for a first offence and £40,000 for repeated violations.

Landlord Ombudsman Scheme

Every landlord—whether self-managing or using an agent—must register with the new ombudsman. This will help resolve disputes without going to court. Failing to join the scheme could result in significant fines.

Rent Increases

You'll still be able to increase rent using a Section 13 notice, but only once a year, and you must give two months' notice. Tenants will be able to challenge rent rises through an independent tribunal. Any increase must be reasonable and aligned with local market rates.

Rent Repayment Orders (RROs)

These will be expanded to include offences like failing to register with the ombudsman or database, misusing eviction grounds, or giving false information. Tenants or local councils can apply for a repayment of up to 12 months' rent in these cases.



Tenants' Rights and What Landlords Need to Know

Pets in Properties

Tenants will have the right to request pets, and you'll need a valid reason to refuse. If accepted, tenants must take out pet insurance. It will be considered an automatic part of the tenancy agreement unless reasonably declined. If a superior landlord prohibits pets, this can still be enforced.

Discrimination Ban

You cannot reject tenants simply because they have children or receive housing benefits. Even if a mortgage or insurance policy includes such restrictions, these will no longer be legally valid.



Bidding War Ban

Landlords will be required to publish a clear asking rent and must not accept offers above that amount. Councils will have the power to enforce this.

Council Enforcement Powers

Local authorities will be given stronger enforcement tools and will be required to publish annual reports on how they're ensuring landlord compliance.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?

At Patricia Shepherd, we're committed to helping our landlords prepare for the changes ahead. Here's how to stay ahead:

- Review your current tenancy agreements and identify any fixed terms that may be affected.
- Prepare for the transition to rolling tenancies and regulated rent increases.
- Check that your properties meet the updated Decent Homes Standard.
- Familiarise yourself with the upcoming landlord registration requirements.
- Keep records of all communications, rent payments, and property conditions.

Have questions or concerns? Our team is here to help.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I need to act now or wait until the Bill becomes law?

While the Bill is not yet law, it's wise to start reviewing your tenancies and preparing for the changes.

Will I still be able to regain possession of my property if I need to sell?

Yes, but only after the first 12 months of the tenancy, and you must provide four months' notice.

Will these changes apply to my current tenants?

Yes. Once the law takes effect, all existing tenancies will convert to periodic agreements.

Can I refuse pets in my property?

You can refuse if you have a valid reason on or if your superior landlord prohibits them, but in general, requests must be considered reasonably.

What happens if I don't register for the database or ombudsman?

You could face penalties of up to £7,000 for first offences and £40,000 for repeated breaches.

How will Patricia Shepherd help?

We'll help with everything from reviewing tenancies to ensuring you meet new compliance standards. Our goal is to take the stress out of these legal updates.

Let us know if you'd like this guide emailed, printed, or uploaded to your landlord portal.

For our fully managed landlords, there's no need to worry, we'll handle all of this on your behalf and ensure you remain fully compliant every step of the way.

NEED HELP ENSURING YOU'RE FULLY COMPLIANT?

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

- enquiries@patriciashepherd.co.uk
- 020 8255 5526
- www.patriciashepherd.co.uk

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My wife and I have been clients of Patricia Shepherd Lettings for more than two decades, renting out two properties. In all that time they have never put a foot wrong. I can thoroughly recommend the whole team. You can trust their advice to be the best, backed up by decades of experience. When legislation changes, as it has frequently, in relation to the landlord and tenant relationship, they are always up to date and looking out for the interests of both parties. Don't even bother yourself going elsewhere, these people are at the top of the tree. Larger organisations have staff that come and go quickly, but with Patricia Shepherd, rest assured you will be in safe hands. - Steven

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LETTING & MANAGEMENT

