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Renters’ Rights Act: Revisited – What it means for your landlord clients

As the rental market continues to evolve, it has never been more important for landlords to stay on top of legislative change.

One of the most significant changes introduced on 1 May 2026 was the Renters’ Rights Act. First announced as part of a wider push to improve standards in the private rented sector, the Act introduced a number of changes that have significantly reshaped how tenancies are managed across England.

As these changes continue to take effect, we're revisiting what they mean for your landlord clients, outlining the key provisions, and highlighting how landlords can navigate the evolving regulatory landscape with confidence.

What is the Renters' Rights Act?

The Renters' Rights Act is a law surrounding rented homes, temporary accommodation and supported accommodation. The changes have had a significant impact on both landlords and tenants alike.

What does the Renters' Rights Act include?

The legislation introduced the following key changes:

Abolish Section 21 evictions

According to the latest figures, 4.6 million households in England have assured shorthold tenancies (ASTs). That equates to 19% of all households in the country.[1] However, these ASTs offered no security for the tenant long term. Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 stated that private landlords could repossess their properties without having just cause from the tenant. This was referred to as a ‘no-fault’ eviction.

The Renters' Rights Act abolished this and made all tenancies periodic, allowing tenants to feel more secure in their tenancy agreement. It also allows tenants to challenge bad practices and unfair increases in rent, as they no longer need to fear unfair evictions.

Landlords may still evict tenants as long as they have valid reasoning.

Changes to rent increase regulations

The Act states that landlords can only increase the cost of rent once per year in accordance with the market rate. They must give tenants two months’ notice, and tenants are able to challenge any increases they deem unfair via a tribunal.

This also helps prevent backdoor evictions when a landlord raises the rent by an excessive amount to effectively force a tenant to leave.

Introduce a new Ombudsman and Database

While this was not part of the initial implementation, further measures are expected to continue rolling out through 2026 and 2027.

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To provide an impartial resolution for complaints raised by tenants, a new Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman is being introduced.

This is in addition to a Private Rented Sector Database, which aims to provide both landlords and tenants with the information they need to make informed decisions about their tenancy agreement. All landlords will need to be registered on this database.

The end of ‘rental bidding’

Under the law, landlords and agents are prohibited from accepting offers above the advertised rent. They must publish the asking rent clearly when listing a property.

No blanket ban on pets

The Renters’ Rights Act gives tenants the opportunity to request permission to keep a pet in the property. Landlords can no longer impose a blanket ban on pets unless they have a valid reason and must consider each request on a case-by-case basis. More information on the conditions of this is expected to follow.

Improve living conditions

The Act also introduced a Decent Homes Standard (DHS), establishing clear standards on living conditions. Landlords whose properties are deemed substandard could face penalties and prosecution. This overlaps with Awaab’s Law, which came into effect in October.

To prevent discrimination

It is now illegal for agents and landlords to discriminate against tenants, helping to ensure all applicants are treated fairly when searching for a place to live.

How are the changes to the Renters' Rights Act impacting tenants and landlords?

The changes introduced by the Renters' Rights Act have the potential to improve rental conditions for tenants significantly.

For your landlord clients, however, the Act has introduced some uncertainty. Landlords need to remain up to date with ongoing developments to ensure continued compliance, adapt to new requirements and avoid potential legal disputes.

For your landlord clients, the focus is now on understanding how the changes apply in practice and ensuring they remain compliant with the new regulatory landscape. Keeping abreast of developments and seeking appropriate advice where needed can help landlords manage their properties with confidence.

How will this impact your landlord clients' insurance?

The Act allows landlords to include appropriate insurance requirements within tenancy agreements where tenants keep pets. This could mean that either the tenant must have their own insurance, or the landlord can add it to their existing landlord insurance policy and charge the additional cost back to the tenant.

This is intended to cover damage caused by pets to the property. Where insurance does not cover the damage, for example scratching or staining, the landlord may be able to recover costs via the deposit or through the courts in line with wider rules.

Wish to find out more:

Let's talk

Call us on **01273 477784**

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