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EDITION 3



PRIVATE

LANDLORDS & AGENTS

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Welcome to the Winter 2020 newsletter

We are now all working in a different way due to COVID-19.

This newsletter provides you with changes in the private rented sector and information that you should be aware of as a landlord and or letting agent.

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CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): ADVICE FOR LANDLORDS



The HSE have provided the following guidance for landlords.

Landlord Legal Obligations



Landlords have a legal duty to repair and maintain their tenants' homes as well as other matters such as proper insurance and the handling of Tenancy Deposits. **Details of those responsibilities, which must be confirmed when applying for landlord registration.**

Current guidance from the Government and the Health and Safety Executive is that **gas safety checks CAN AND MUST continue to be completed.** **Full guidance.**

It should be noted that the responsibilities placed on landlords have not been suspended by the Scottish Government. Landlords must therefore continue to take steps to maintain their properties and meet acceptable standards of management.

If you are renewing your registration and need advice on your responsibilities please contact us at privatelandlordregistrationunit@glasgow.gov.uk.

TENANT REFUSING ENTRY TO THE PROPERTY

If your tenant **DOES NOT** have any COVID-19 symptoms and is **NOT** self-isolating and they prevent a tradesperson from accessing the property, as a landlord you can apply to the Housing and Property Chamber for right of entry to the property. **Full details.**

The information includes a template that you can issue to the tenant, notifying them of the requirement to gain access to the property. **Notification to tenant for access.**

We would encourage landlords to keep a record of any repairs or maintenance which is necessary and the efforts they have made to discharge their responsibilities.



Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)



Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) may be available to those tenants who get Housing Benefit or a relevant award of Universal Credit, but need additional financial assistance to meet housing costs. [Get more information.](#)

An ongoing award could provide support for a tenant who:

- receives Housing Benefit but it doesn't cover all of the rent, or
- receives the housing element of Universal Credit but still can't afford housing costs, or
- is affected by the Benefit Cap, which reduces the amount of their Housing Benefit or Universal Credit award.

The period of award will vary according to individual circumstances, for example DHP could help while the applicant is seeking employment or aiming to find alternative accommodation. A one-off award might be appropriate where the applicant is at risk of losing their tenancy, for example as a result

of an unexpected financial crisis.

The applicant will receive a decision letter which will include details of the period of the award.

Depending on the circumstances, a DHP award can be paid to either the tenant or the landlord. Tenants can still apply for DHP when Housing Benefit or Universal Credit is being paid direct to their landlord. [Tenants should apply using the online application.](#)

Scottish Government provides funding to Local Authorities in Scotland to award DHP, and has made some additional funding available to support tenants under financial pressure during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Funding is limited, and it may not be possible to make a payment to everyone that applies.



New Arrears Service Launched



SafeDeposits Scotland (SDS) have launched a new service intended to help tenants and landlords who have experienced issues with rent arrears as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic – 'SDS Resolution'.

SDS Resolution is completely free and available to all landlords and tenants in Scotland's private rented sector, regardless of whether their deposit is protected by the scheme or not.

SDS Resolution is entirely separate from SafeDeposits Scotland's tenancy deposit handling and deposit dispute resolution procedures.

For further information, and steps on how to begin a resolution referral,

visit the [SDS Resolution website](https://www.safedepositsscotland.com/blog-admin/tag/private-rented-sector-scotland/) or follow this link <https://www.safedepositsscotland.com/blog-admin/tag/private-rented-sector-scotland/> which provides general helpful information.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

This [guidance](#) is useful in all cases of rent arrears, as it aims to support both the landlord and the tenant to manage the arrears and sustain the tenancy.





Are you looking for a letting agent to manage your property?



If you are thinking to employ a letting agent to look after your property you must check that they are **registered**. All letting agents are required to be registered with the Scottish Government and demonstrate that they meet a **code of practice**.

If you decide to use the services of a Letting Agent please ensure that you **update any properties on your Landlord Registration account** with the Letting Agent Registration Number (LARN).



Important guidance and support if you rent a property to students



The Scottish Government Guidance for university and college halls of residence and Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) has been updated and may include some helpful guidance for keeping your tenants safe.

This **guidance** has information on forming student households and sharing facilities, which are important for properties which may have shared living areas etc.

We would encourage you to make your tenants aware of the Scottish Government

advice which is available and amended from time to time. Additionally there may be other requirements placed on students returning to Glasgow after the festive break and we would hope you and your tenants familiarise yourselves with future guidance.



Have your say!

Landlords sought for interview on energy efficiency in the private rented sector



Citizens Advice Scotland is currently undertaking research into energy efficiency in the private rented sector and would like to invite you to take part in a structured interview (discussion) conducted by our energy policy team.

The Scottish Government is considering introducing minimum standards of energy efficiency in the private rented sector to help Scotland reach its carbon reduction targets. This interview will provide an opportunity for you to share your experience of energy

efficiency in the private rented sector ahead of potential regulation.

Your input is very valuable and will help us learn more about what barriers landlords face and what support would be most useful to you.

IN PARTICULAR, WE ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT:

- What barriers/opportunities to better engagement and improved standards of energy efficiency currently exist in the private rented sector?
- What support would stakeholders in the private rented sector, including (but not limited to) landlords, letting agents, tenants, and their representative organisations find most useful?
- What messaging works best for you? How would you like new regulations or support to be communicated to you?

The interview should not take more than half an hour. If you are interested in participating in an interview, please contact the team at cfuenergy@cas.org.uk and let them know if you would like to participate by phone or digitally through an app like Zoom.

If you are not comfortable participating in this research but know someone who might be interested, please share this information with them. If you would feel more comfortable completing an online survey about this information, [please follow this link](#).

