



goodlord

The Renters' Rights Act

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE

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Introduction

The Renters' Rights Act is the most significant reform the private rented sector (PRS) has seen since the Housing Act 1988.

Introduced to Parliament on September 11, 2024, the Act has wide-ranging implications for landlords, tenants, and letting agents alike.

The Act achieved Royal Assent and became law in October 2025. Different parts of the Act will become effective in a phased roll out over the next few years.

While key parts of the Act (the abolition of Section 21 and ASTs) will be implemented on May 1, 2026, others, like the PRS database, will become a working reality later.

Armed with knowledge about all aspects of the Act, you'll set yourself up for success in the new landscape.

“The Renters' Rights Act is one of the most dramatic pieces of legislation the Private Rented Sector has seen since the 1980s. Concerned landlords are looking for expert guidance as they navigate this new terrain. Agencies that embrace the change and position themselves as experts in compliance will set themselves up to thrive under the new rules.”



William Reeve,
CEO at Goodlord

The Renters' Rights Act at a glance:



The abolition of Section 21 “no-fault” evictions.



Expanding grounds for possession in Section 8.



Periodic tenancies replace Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs).



Section 13 notices becoming the sole mechanism to increase rent.



Ending rental bidding wars.



Introducing a landlord ombudsman.



Creating a PRS landlord database.



Applying the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law to all properties.



Prohibiting discrimination against renters with children or those on benefits.



Landlords can't “unreasonably” deny a tenant's pet request.

This is intended as a guide only, and does not constitute legal advice. For more information visit [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and publications.parliament.uk

First published on September 29, 2025. Updated on December 03, 2025.

Timelines

The UK General Election



July 4, 2024

Labour beats the Conservatives at the ballot box before the Renters Reform Bill passes.

The Renters' Rights Bill is born



Sept 11, 2024

The government introduces the Bill to parliament.

House of Commons third reading



Jan 14, 2025

The government passes several amendments, including a ban on rent in advance.

House of Lords second reading



Feb 4, 2025

Peers debate the key principles of the Bill.

House of Lords committee stage



April 22 - May 15, 2025

Following a line-by-line examination of the Bill, the government rejects 339 proposed amendments.

House of Lords report stage



July 1 - July 15, 2025

The government passes an amendment removing landlords' ability to require tenants with pets to purchase pet insurance. A range of amendments proposed by Peers also pass.



Timelines

House of Lords third reading



July 21, 2025

The Lords stage comes to an end.

Consideration of amendments



Sept 8, 2025

The Commons considers the Lords' amendments.



'Ping Pong' period

The to and fro of amendments to Bills between the House of Commons and the House of Lords begins.

Royal Assent



October 2025

The Bill achieves Royal Assent and becomes the Renters' Right Act. First round of implementation dates announced.

Implementation



December 27, 2025

New enforcement measures and investigatory powers for local councils come into effect.



May 1, 2025

The first round of implementation begins. Section 21 and ASTs abolished.



Late 2026

Phase 2 of implementation. The PRS Database goes live and the Government launches the PRS Ombudsman.



2027

Phase 3 implementation. The Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law will be applied to private rental properties.



01

Abolition of Section 21 “no-fault” evictions

The Renters' Rights Act abolishes Section 21 evictions, which allow landlords to regain possession of their property quickly.



Proposed changes

Landlords will now have to rely on expanded Section 8 grounds to evict tenants. Both mandatory and discretionary grounds have been updated.

By abolishing Section 21, the government aims to end “arbitrary” evictions. In their view, this will provide renters with more security and stability, enabling them to establish a sense of belonging in their community.

This means that Section 8 notices will become the primary mechanism for evicting tenants now that the Renters' Rights Act has become law.

As part of these reforms, **the government is introducing new mandatory grounds while also revising discretionary grounds to help landlords take their properties back** “where there is good reason”.

Here's what they look like:



Download our bitesize Section 21 two-pager and share it with your teams.



MANDATORY GROUNDS



Ground 1 (Amended) - If the landlord or family member wishes to move into the property. This can only be done after the tenancy has exceeded 12 months.



Ground 1A (New) - If the landlord intends to sell the property. This can only be done after the tenancy has exceeded 12 months.



Ground 2 - If the mortgage provider wishes to repossess the property.



Ground 2ZA - 2ZD (New) - If the leasehold has ended and the landlord does not own the freehold.



Ground 4 - If a property was let to a student by an educational institution for a fixed term of 12 months.



Ground 4A (New) - For student landlords not affiliated with an educational institution who need the property for new student tenants before the start of the academic year.



Ground 5 - If a religious organisation owns the property and needs a minister of religion to live in it.



Ground 6 - If a landlord wishes to demolish or redevelop the rented property to the extent that the tenant cannot live there.



Ground 6A (New) - If the landlord needs possession to comply with enforcement action.



Ground 7 - If a tenant has passed away (this cannot be used if a surviving spouse is living in the property).



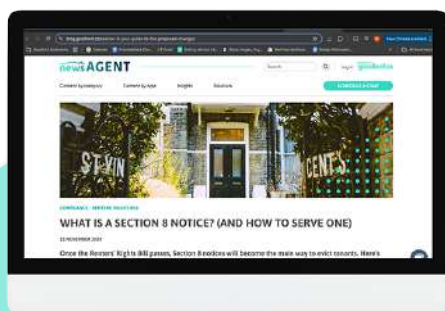
Ground 7A - If the tenant has committed “serious anti-social behaviour.”



Ground 7B - If the tenant does not have a right to rent in the property.



Ground 8 (Amended) - If the tenant is at least three months in arrears (or 13 weeks if rent is paid weekly or fortnightly).



Learn more about how Section 8 reform will affect you.



DISCRETIONARY GROUNDS



Ground 9 - If a landlord has provided accommodation that is like-for-like for the current tenancy.



Ground 10 - If the tenant is in rent arrears but less than Ground 8.



Ground 11 - If the tenant is constantly late in paying rent, but is not in rent arrears.



Ground 12 - If the tenant has breached the tenancy agreement, excluding rent payments.



Ground 13 - If the tenant has deteriorated or neglected the landlord’s property.



Ground 14 - If the tenant is a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours, or is using the property for illegal or immoral activity.



Ground 14A (New) - Social landlords can evict a domestic violence perpetrator if the victim has fled.



Ground 14ZA (New) - If the tenant or adult at the property has been convicted of an indictable offence during a UK riot.



Ground 15 - If the tenant caused damage to furniture provided by the landlord.



Ground 17 - If the tenant was given the tenancy with a “false statement.”



Ground 18 (New) - The tenancy is for supported accommodation, and the tenant refuses to engage in support.

Implications for stakeholders

Agents and landlords prefer Section 21 to Section 8 for several reasons. Here are the impacts of increasing the latter’s prominence.

INCREASED ADMIN AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR LETTING AGENTS

According to Goodlord’s State of the Lettings Industry report, **30% of surveyed agents struggle with their workload in 2025**. Section 8 notices are more complex than Section 21 notices, heaping more admin onto your team’s plate.

Furthermore, landlords often seek expert advice from letting agents. **The abolition of Section 21 increases the burden on you to understand the revised rules and deliver the service your clients expect.** To achieve this, you need to upskill all the staff in your agency.



22%

of agents said they did not feel confident serving Section 8 notices

Goodlord survey, State of the Letting Industry 2025

Citing the right grounds is key

Mistakes on a Section 8 notice are particularly costly. Courts reject notices with incorrectly cited grounds, prolonging an already cumbersome process.

For example, letting agents and landlords were already complaining of significant eviction delays in 2025. With no major court reform expected before the Renters’ Rights Act takes effect, these delays will worsen.

This is detrimental for:



TENANTS

Who’ll have to repay larger lump sums if the courts rule against them.



LANDLORDS

Who’ll have to deal with longer periods of rent arrears and property dilapidation.








AGENTS

Who need to provide an exceptional service to tenants and landlords to stay ahead in a competitive market.

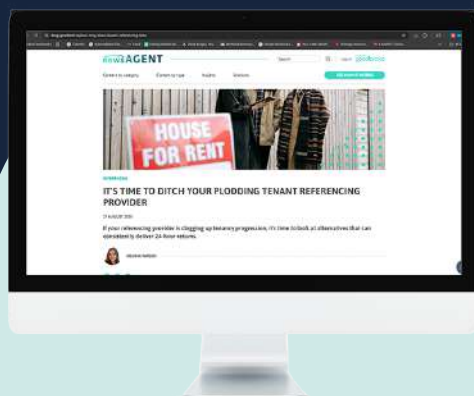
Tenant quality is more important than ever

The best way to prevent repossession delays is to avoid the courts altogether. You can achieve this by placing high-quality tenants in your landlords' properties.

Robust referencing software helps you ensure prospective tenants:

-  Are who they say they are
-  Can reliably pay the rent
-  Are employed and their income is sufficient
-  Have good feedback from previous landlords
-  Are not on the UK Sanctions List

This gives you the best possible chance of ensuring tenants don't fall into arrears and the properties they occupy don't fall into disrepair.



See how you can turbocharge your referencing with Goodlord



How Goodlord can help

Goodlord's platform delivers a range of benefits to letting agents, including:

AUTOMATING MANUAL TASKS

Greg Tsuman, Lettings Director at Martyn Gerrard, says Goodlord allows his agency to do more with less.

"From a team of 30 people progressing files, we've now got a team of three, with the rest **focusing on business generation instead of administration**"

Greg Tsuman
Lettings Director at Martyn Gerrard

STREAMLINED DOCUMENTATION

Goodlord automates the tenancy process, ensuring you can serve more customers than ever before. Just ask Samuel:

In terms of the number of tenancies we process each year, in the peak of our business in the summer, we process between 160 - 200 tenancies in a month. Even in the quieter periods, we're still doing 50-70 a month. We do all of that with two administrative staff who progress all of those tenancies. Delivering that volume wouldn't be possible without the Goodlord platform.

Samuel Fitz-Hugh
Co-Founder of Settio



Learn more about how Goodlord helps Settio



RENT PROTECTION AND LEGAL EXPENSES COVER

Goodlord's Rent Protection Insurance facilitates the mediation process between tenants and landlords, helping to prevent cases of tenant rent arrears from reaching the courts.

When this can't be avoided, **our insurance package covers unpaid rent**, ensuring landlords are paid until vacant possession, **even if the eviction process takes longer than 15 months**.

"The features that made Goodlord stand out, is that there's no cap on the policy. A lot of the competitors have a six-month payment cap, which doesn't always benefit our clients on the basis that court waiting times are so long at the moment.

Also the fact Goodlord pay at vacant possession as well, you have six weeks at 90% vacant possession which is a key point in the policy."

Becky Ward

Director at Bourne Estate Agents



Learn more about how Goodlord helps Bourne Estate Agents

WE ALSO:



Provide £100K claim indemnity



Cover 90% of rent for up to six weeks post-eviction



Provide Section 8 notice support and compliance guidance



**EXPERTS IN
PROPERTY
PROTECTION**
goodlord

[Learn more](#)

02

Single system of periodic tenancies

Fixed-term Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) will be replaced by periodic tenancies under the Renters' Rights Act.

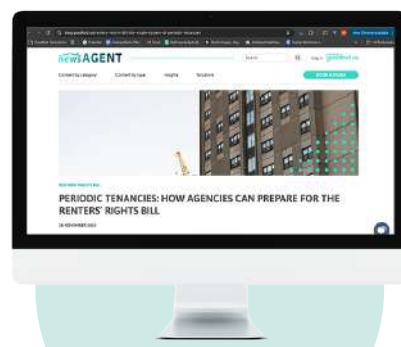


Proposed changes

With this change, the Government aims to give tenants the freedom to leave substandard properties.

ASTS BECOME PERIODIC TENANCIES OVERNIGHT

On May 1, 2026 all ASTs will instantly become periodic. Any tenancy you sign from now until that date will be affected, as well as your existing tenancies. **Tenants will need to provide two months' notice to end the tenancy.**



Learn more about how abolishing fixed-term ASTs impacts the PRS.



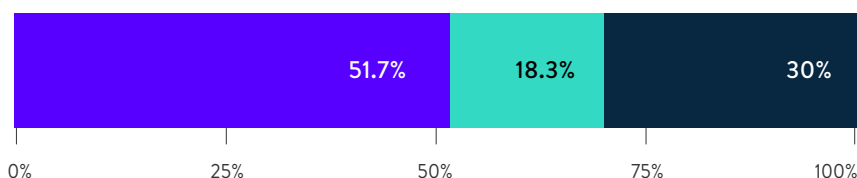
EFFECTIVE 2-MONTH MINIMUM TENANCY

Tenancies will operate a rolling, month-to-month basis, and there will be no official minimum term for new or existing tenancies. However, **tenants could sign a tenancy agreement and immediately serve two months' notice**, effectively making this the minimum term.



Which tenancy agreement would you prefer?

- I'd prefer a fixed-term, renewable tenancy agreement
- I'd prefer a rolling, open-ended agreement with 4-12 weeks' notice
- I don't mind/ don't know



Implications for stakeholders

The move to periodic tenancies increases admin for agents and strictly defines the tenant-landlord relationship.

CONTRACTS NEED TO BE UPDATED

The transition from fixed-term agreements to periodic tenancies will require your agency to update all contracts created on or after May 1, 2026. The government has promised to create a draft tenancy agreement in January 2026 to allow you to start preparing. **You won't need to issue a new agreement for tenancies created before May 1, but you will need to serve tenants with a government-published information sheet before May 31, 2026.**

TENANCY AGREEMENTS ARE LESS FLEXIBLE

52% of surveyed tenants indicated they prefer fixed-term, renewable tenancy agreements. **49% of tenants did not feel trapped in their home by a fixed-term tenancy agreement.**

However, the move to periodic tenancies outlaws any fixed-term agreement, **regardless of these preferences.**

NOTICE HANDLING PERIOD NEEDS TO BE STREAMLINED

With tenants able to serve notice at any point under periodic agreements, you need to streamline notice handling and tenancy documentation to avoid delays and disruptions. This includes:



Managing tenant notices to make sure properties are re-let quickly



Keeping clear and compliant records to help landlords respond to tenancy changes



52%

of tenants indicated they prefer fixed-term, renewable tenancy agreements.

Goodlord survey, State of the Letting Industry 2025

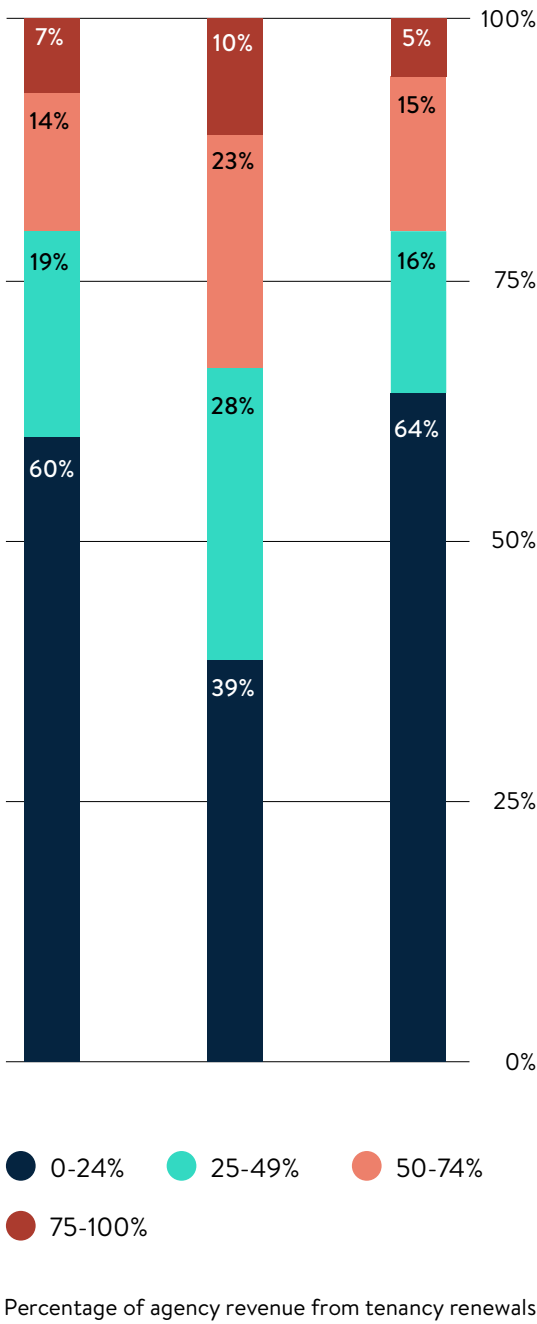


LOST RENEWAL REVENUE

The Goodlord State of the Letting Industry 2025 report revealed that on average, **27% of agencies' revenue is made up by tenancy renewals**. This number grows to 37% in London. **Agents will have to find something to fill the gap if they want to continue operating as they did before.**



➤ **Most agencies rely on renewals for a significant proportion of their income.**



Goodlord State of the Lettings Industry survey, 2025.

How Goodlord can help

Our platform enables you to automate time-consuming admin and deliver more value to landlords and tenants.

PROTECT YOUR PROFIT

With Goodlord, you can expand your services and cover lost renewal revenue. Offering services like Rent Protection Insurance, Section 13 advice, and tenant services through Goodlord all help drive your profitability.

AUTOMATIC CONTRACT UPDATES

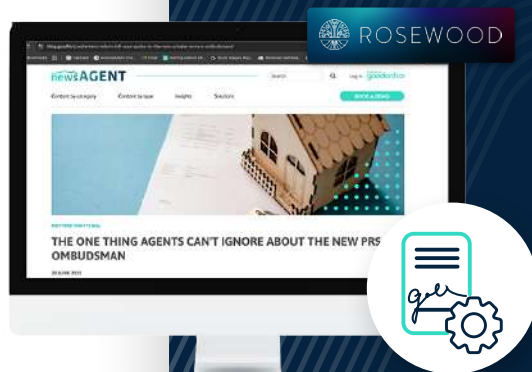
You'll have to serve both ASTs and periodic contracts depending on when a tenancy begins.

This means that if your tenants start a tenancy before May 1, 2026, you will need to serve them an ASTs first, before it is converted into a periodic contract.

"I feel really confident that Goodlord is always keeping up to date with all the changes in legislation. They're constantly improving their products to suit and to make sure they're up to speed with what's going on in the lettings world."

Becky Ward

Director at Bourne Estate Agents



Find out more

03

Rent increases via Section 13

The Renters' Rights Act introduces significant changes to standard rent increase procedures.



Proposed changes

Rent review clauses, renewed ASTs, and written agreements will be no more.

CH.3

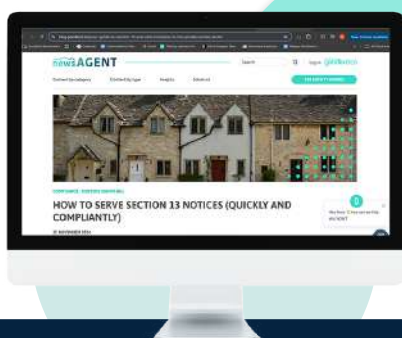
UNIFIED RENT INCREASE MECHANISM

After the abolition of ASTs, **Section 13 notices will become the only mechanism for increasing rent.**

This means rent review clauses, renewed fixed-term agreements, and written agreements between the tenant and the landlord will be things of the past.

EXTENDED NOTICE PERIOD

Landlords must provide tenants with two months' notice of any proposed rent increase, compared to the current one-month requirement.



Learn how to simplify Section 13 notices.



Implications for stakeholders

Rent hikes may become more common as landlords lose flexibility and their costs rise. And, of course, there's more admin for agents.

TIGHT RENT INCREASE TIMELINES

Under the new system, landlords can only raise rents once per year. As you must give your tenants at least two months' notice of a rent increase, keeping track of rent review dates is essential. Otherwise, any plans to increase the rent to cover rising costs will be delayed.

INCREASED ADMINISTRATIVE WORKLOAD

Section 13 will become the only way to increase rent, meaning you'll have to handle a much higher volume of notices than before. **Only 28% of letting agents said they were very confident serving Section 13 notices.** You could quickly train up your team and then charge landlords for this service to help offset lost renewal revenue.

LOSS OF FLEXIBILITY FOR LANDLORDS

Previously, landlords were able to raise the rent whenever they deemed it appropriate. **The reforms to Section 13 has removed this flexibility.**

RENT INCREASES MAY BE DELAYED

The Act gives tenants the right to dispute rent increases in tribunals. According to the State of the Lettings industry 2025, **76% of tenants said they would appeal a rent increase they considered unfair, and 23% would appeal ANY rent increase.**

"The problem with [the] reforms to rent increases is not that tenants can appeal. It is right that tenants have a form of recourse if they believe their rent is being raised excessively. However, the fact that rent increases will only become effective from the date the First-tier Tribunal (FTT) reaches a verdict is troublesome. Landlords and agents hold legitimate fears that floods of tenants could appeal simply to delay increases."

David Smith

Partner, Spector, Constant, and Williams Solicitors

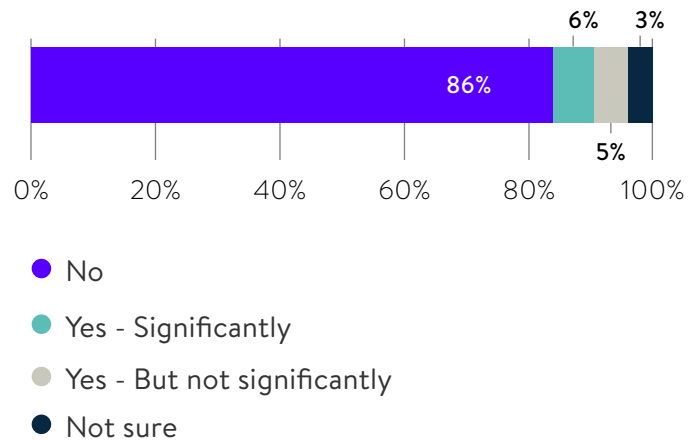


INCREASED RISK OF RENT HIKES FOR TENANTS

Goodlord data shows that **87% of tenants have not experienced a rent increase in their current tenancy**, while over half of those who did described the rise as “not significant.” This trend may shift soon, though, as **56% of landlords said they are more likely to raise rents in response to the Renters’ Rights Act** and other reforms that could increase their costs.

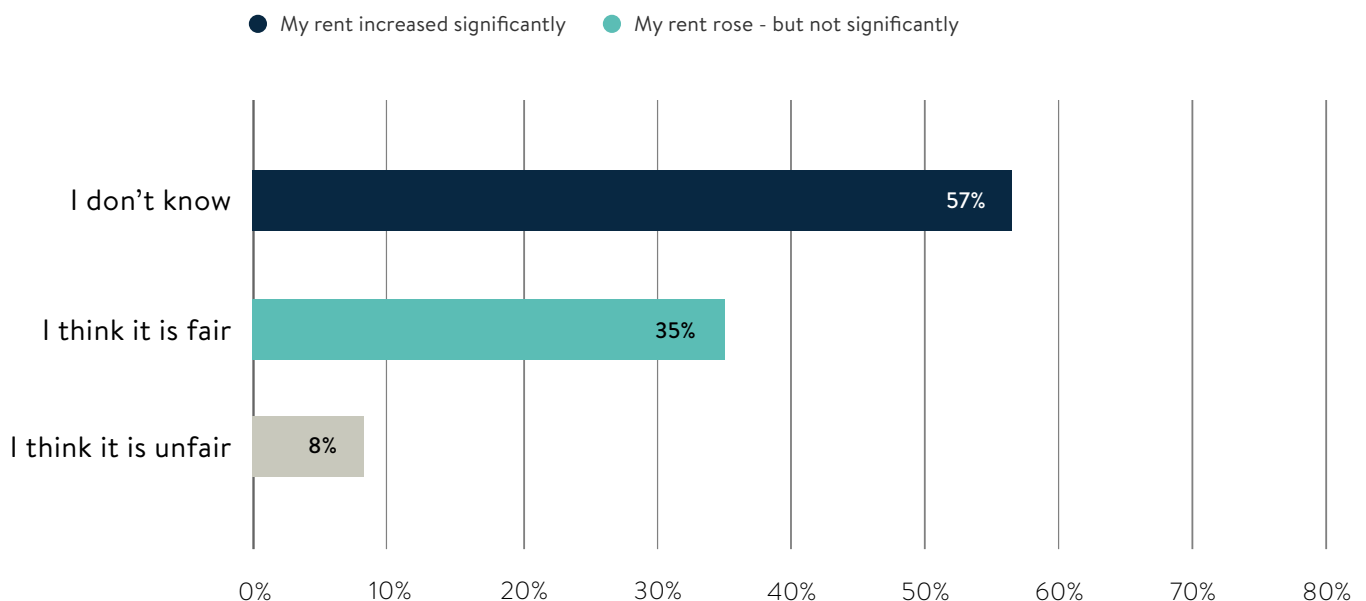
For example, the government’s upcoming EPC regulations will require landlords to invest in the energy efficiency of their properties to comply. While a minimum rating of “C” will be required, **government data indicates that 52% of properties in the PRS are rated “D” or lower.**

Has your rent increased during your tenancy?



Goodlord State of the Lettings Industry survey, 2025.

Would you regard the rent increases during your tenancy as fair or not?



Goodlord State of the Lettings Industry survey, 2025.

How Goodlord can help

Goodlord's compliance-first software will help you manage these changes in a few ways.

1. SERVE SECTION 13 NOTICES WITHIN THE GOODLORD PLATFORM

In-platform notices create clear audit trails that will help support your rent increase.

2. AUTOMATIC SECTION 13 NOTIFICATIONS

The Goodlord platform alerts you when tenancies are coming up for renewal. This allows you to serve Section 13 notices punctually and ensure that your landlords aren't left out of pocket.

3. PROTECTION FROM TENANT RENT INCREASE APPEALS

While tenants won't pay backdated rent, even if the courts judge an increase to be fair, we'll pay the difference until a decision is made.



[Learn more](#)

Compliance-ready solutions built to tackle the challenges of the Renters' Rights Act.

See platform in action



AUTOMATED SECTION 13 NOTICES

Rent can only be increased once a year via a Section 13 notice.

Goodlord automates the process with compliant, tracked and evidenced notices and reminders.

- ✓ Prefill and issue Form 4 directly from your platform
- ✓ Generate alternative offers to support negotiations when required
- ✓ Access up-to-date comparable reports reflecting asking and current achieved rent data, to justify increases and support First-tier Tribunal cases
- ✓ Receive alerts so reviews are never missed
- ✓ Protect and replace existing renewal income



SWITCH TO PERIODIC TENANCIES

All tenancies will default to periodic, requiring you to amend all current contracts. **Goodlord will provide compliant contracts at no extra cost.**

- ✓ Contract templates ready for Renters' Rights Act and future legislation
- ✓ Contracts monitored and updated in line with new compliance requirements
- ✓ Support to identify which contract to use during transition
- ✓ Access to additional templates: HMOs, Landlord Terms of Business, offer letters, prescribed information

04

Applying the Decent Homes Standard to the PRS

The Renters' Rights Act will apply the Decent Homes Standard to all properties in the PRS.



Proposed changes

In an effort to improve the quality of housing stock in the UK by 2036, the Decent Homes Standard will be applied to the PRS.

EXTENSION TO THE PRS

Previously, the Decent Homes Standard has only applied to properties in the social housing sector.

With this extension to the PRS, **landlords will have to update their properties to meet four key criteria.**

LEGALLY ENFORCED STANDARD

Approximately 21% of properties in the PRS don't meet the current standard. While landlords do have until 2036 to upgrade their properties, it will be a significant investment of time and money to get them fixed.

Cost is a concern. The 2022-2023 English Housing survey found that it will cost an average of £9,234 to bring every property that doesn't currently meet the standard into compliance, Goodlord's data showed that **only 10% of surveyed landlords would be willing to pay that much.**

THE FOUR KEY CRITERIA



Free from serious hazards

Serious Category 1 hazards as defined by the Housing Health & Safety Rating System include excessive heat and cold, structural issues, and other dangers.



A reasonable state of repair

This includes items such as chimneys, the roof, heating systems, and kitchen appliances.



Reasonably modern facilities and services

Kitchens must be less than 20 years old with adequate space and layout, and bathrooms must be under 30 years old. Noise insulation and sufficient common entrance areas are also required.



A reasonable degree of thermal comfort

Properties must have efficient heating systems and proper insulation.

Per a 2025 consultation, the government will most likely add a fifth criteria that homes be free of damp and mould.

Implications for stakeholders

Tenants will be able to challenge poor housing, while compliance rules tighten for landlords and letting agents.

INCREASED TENANT POWERS

Tenants will be able to request that landlords improve their properties without the threat of Section 21 evictions.

COUNCIL-MANDATED FINES

The government will give councils expanded powers to challenge and fine landlords and letting agents who do not carry out necessary improvements.

Non-compliance will be a criminal offence, carrying fines and even banning orders in severe cases.



WHAT DO AGENTS NEED TO DO TO AVOID FINES?

Failing to ensure properties comply can lead to fines and banning orders. **Here are some simple things you can do right now:**

- ✓ ***Establish an inspection schedule***
Regular checks ensure you can identify issues with your properties before they become bigger issues.
- ✓ ***Record everything***
Compile every certificate and compliance-related document for each property in an accessible location for landlords and agents.
- ✓ ***Educate staff and landlords***
The more informed your agents and landlords are about the standard, the easier it will be to ensure that all your properties reach it.

If you would like to expand your knowledge of the Decent Homes Standard, [check out our informative blog.](#)

HIGHER COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS

Ultimately, landlords will be responsible for ensuring that their properties meet the required standards. **Letting agents will also have an obligation to keep all compliance documentation up to date.**

“The vast majority of landlords are professionals who meet their obligations and provide excellent homes for their tenants. By giving councils increased powers to enforce the Decent Homes Standard, the government is ensuring that the few bad actors are forced to improve their offering.”

Emily Popple

Director of Landlord Experience, Goodlord



PBSA EXEMPTIONS

The government has confirmed that purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) will be exempt from the DHS as long as PBSA landlords abide by government regulations.

Failure to comply with these regulations will lead to the landlord being struck off the “code of practices” and forced to abide by the more stringent DHS.



How Goodlord can help

Landlords and letting agents can keep up with the DHS thanks to our compliance-first platform.

AUTOMATED CHECKS AND REMINDERS

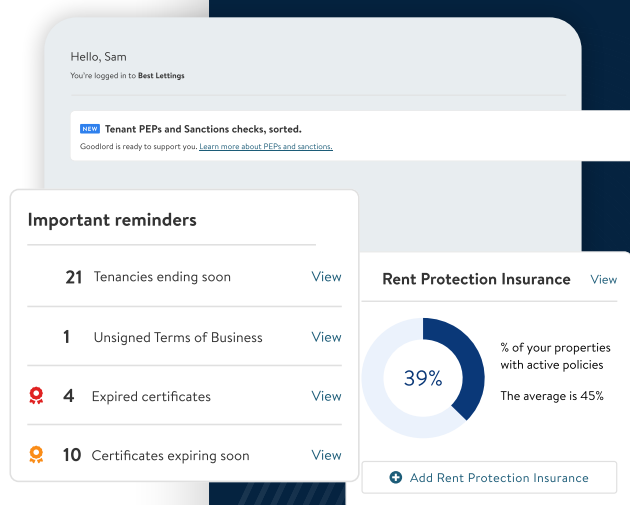
The Goodlord platform automates your compliance checks and sends reminders when it's time for inspections.

ALL YOU NEED IN ONE PLACE

We centralise your documentation in one place, giving you easy access to the information you need when you need it.

FUTURE-PROOF TENANCY AGREEMENTS

All tenancy agreements generated through Goodlord take new regulations into account, so you don't have to worry about staying compliant.

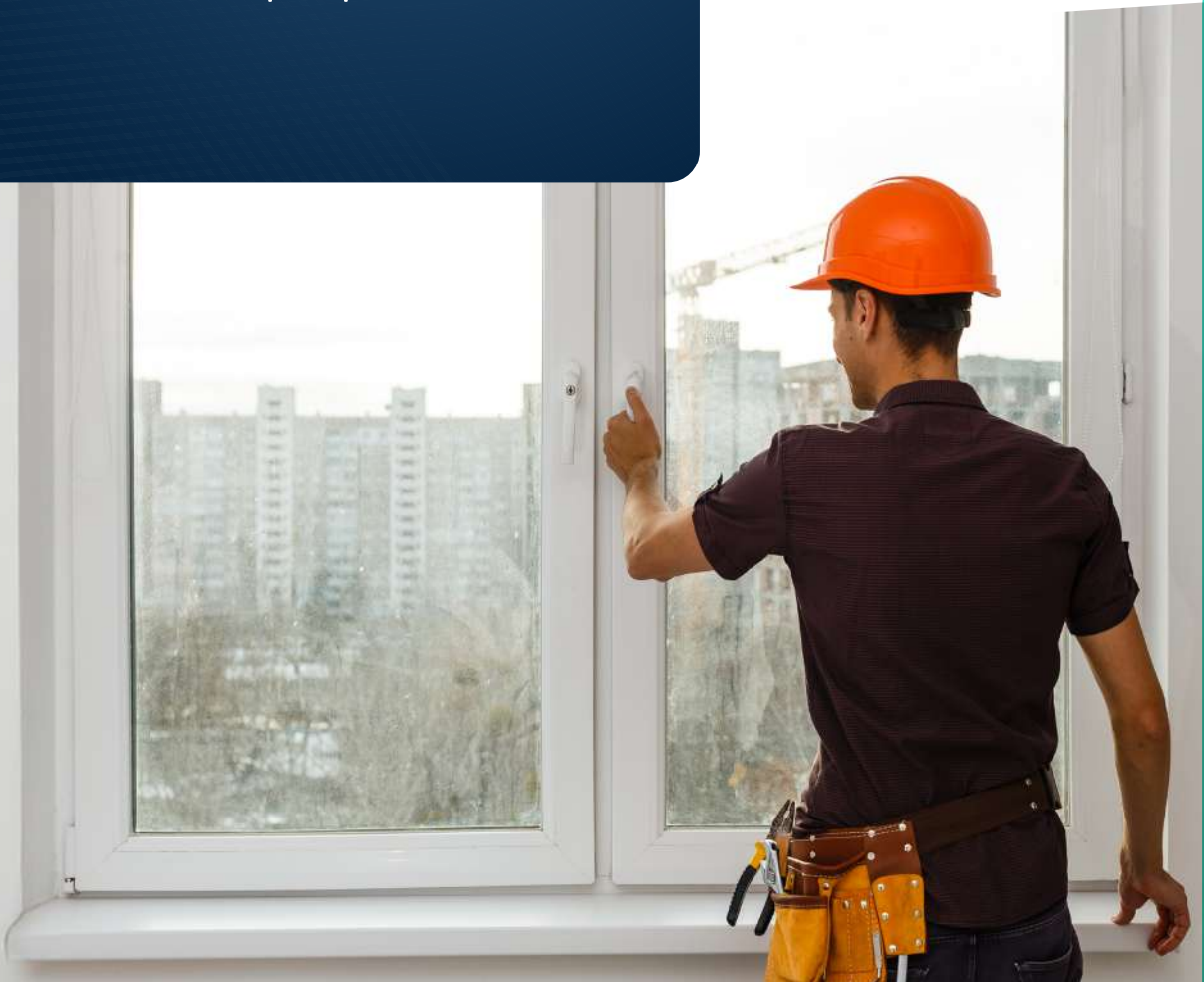


[Learn more](#)

05

Awaab's Law

In a significant step for tenant safety, Awaab's Law will soon apply to all rental properties.



Proposed changes

Awaab's Law, which until now has only applied to social housing, will soon look to eradicate damp and mould in the PRS.

STRICT REPAIR TIMELINES

After the 2020 death of Awaab Ishak, Awaab's Law imposed strict timelines on landlords to investigate and fix damp and mould hazards.

Landlords will have 24 hours to investigate and repair emergency hazards and 10 days for significant hazards. They will also be required to provide complete reports to the affected tenants.

EXPANDED HAZARDS LISTS

The government wants to expand the list of hazards covered by Awaab's Law using a phased approach over several years.

How the hazard list will expand:

2025

Landlords must investigate and repair damp and mould issues within set timeframes.

2026

The list of hazards will grow to include excess cold or heat, poor hygiene, and structural risks.

2027

Awaab's Law will have full coverage of all Category 1 and 2 HHSRS hazards, excluding overcrowding.



Implications for stakeholders

Strict timelines mean landlords and letting agents need to be proactive when it comes to hazards.

INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY

If a landlord fails to act on a reported hazard, tenants will be able to report them to the PRS ombudsman. **The ombudsman will have the power to issue fines (£7,000 up to £40,000) and refer particularly severe cases to the courts.**

TIGHTER DEADLINES

Awaab's Law lays out clear timelines for investigations into hazards and their repairs. Landlords must adhere to these timelines, and letting agents must be available to support them.

CLEAR DOCUMENTATION

Landlords must provide tenants with a complete report of the hazard, from the time it was reported to the time it was fixed. **Agents can help by documenting known hazards and keeping records on when inspections were carried out.**

HOW CAN AGENTS AVOID FINES?

Under Awaab's Law, failure to document and fix damp and mould with strict timelines will result in severe penalties. Here are some steps you can take to stay compliant:

- ✓ **Respond quickly to reports**
Speed is essential. Log and acknowledge damp and mould reports as soon as possible to start the repair clock.
- ✓ **Create a repair action plan**
Have a detailed repair plan in place helps ensure that fixes are implemented with legal timelines.
- ✓ **Keep detailed records**
Awaab's Law requires you to provide tenants with repair reports. The more detailed your records, the easier this is.

If you'd like to know more about Awaab's Law, [take a look at our informative blog](#).

How Goodlord can help

Compliance is the name of the game with Goodlord.

DOCUMENTATION, ALL IN ONE PLACE

Documenting hazards is one of the most essential parts of Awaab's Law. Our platform allows you to store and easily access all your documentation in one place, meaning you can tackle problems quickly and efficiently.

“As the law is extended into the private rental sector, letting agents must take proactive steps to help landlords meet their obligations, from timely repairs to effective communication with tenants. With strict deadlines, financial penalties, and a heightened focus on health and safety, the intention of the law is clear: provide safe, clean housing, or face the consequences.”

Emily Popple

Director of Landlord Experience, Goodlord



[Learn more](#)



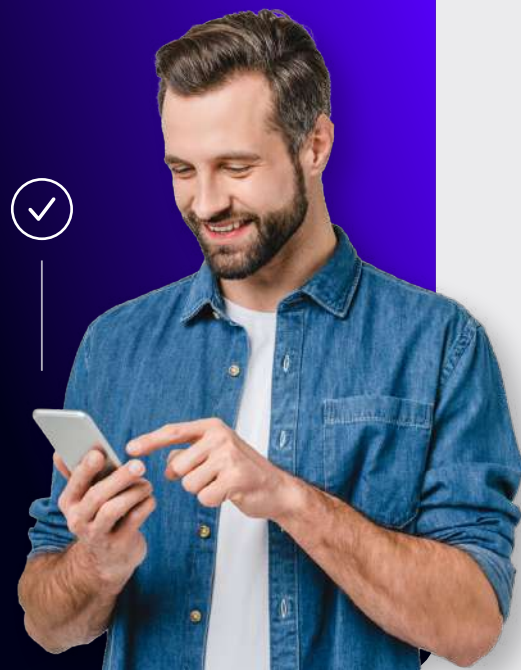
PRO REFERENCING

goodlord

Complete references returned in **24 hours** on average

With PRO Referencing, you don't have
to choose between speed and quality

Get started today



With PRO Referencing, you get:



Unique fraud-protection:

Gives you and your landlords access to
more trusted sources.



Faster move-ins:

References returned in 24 hours
on average.



Full compliance:

Digital Right to Rent (IDVT), PEPs, AML &
Sanctions checks included.



Rent & legal protection:

With a satisfactory PRO Reference, you
can apply for Rent Protection and Legal
Expenses Insurance.



Better user experience:

Tenants give PRO Referencing a 90%
satisfaction score.



Get PRO Referencing today

06

Renting with pets

Landlords will soon be unable to deny a “reasonable” pet request from their tenants.



Proposed changes

Animal-loving tenants will have stronger rights to request pets, while landlords will have fewer grounds to deny them.

THE RIGHT TO REQUEST PETS

Pets have traditionally been a sticking point between tenants and landlords. Under the new law, tenants will have a legal right to request pets, and **landlords will no longer be able to impose blanket bans on their properties.**

All requests must be considered fairly, on a case-by-case basis. Landlords will be required to reply in writing and can request additional information (vet records, the size of the pet, etc).

REASONABLE REFUSAL GROUNDS

Request refusals must be based on “reasonable” grounds. **“Unreasonable” denials can be reported to the new PRS Ombudsman and may result in fines or even escalation to civil courts in extreme cases.**

What are reasonable grounds for refusal?

The government has yet to disclose a full list of grounds for refusal, but the following have been mooted:



Lease restrictions from a superior landlord

If the property is leasehold and the superior landlord or freeholder has a no-pets clause, the landlord could refuse the request.



Health concerns

If the landlord or a tenant in the same building has severe pet allergies, it can be a valid reason for refusal.



Lack of vaccinations or pest infestations

If the pet is not up-to-date on its vaccinations or is infested with fleas or ticks, it could pose a danger to other animals and tenants in the building.



What are reasonable grounds for refusal? (continued)

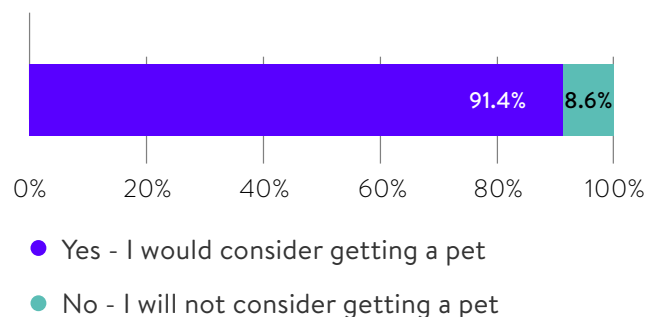
Unsuitable property

The property does not meet the pet's needs. For example, a big dog living in a small flat, or a dog with mobility issues living in a top-floor flat.

Anti-social behaviour

An aggressive dog or an excessively loud parrot could be considered anti-social behaviour and thus grounds for refusal.

✎ If the rules made it easier for tenants to have pets, would you consider getting a pet?



Goodlord State of the Lettings Industry survey, 2025.

SAFEGUARDS FOR LANDLORDS

The government initially planned to appease landlords worried that pets could damage their properties by allowing them to require that tenants take out pet damage insurance. **This provision was removed during parliamentary debates.**

A dedicated pet damage deposit was proposed as an alternative solution, but the government believes that traditional deposits will be sufficient to cover any unfortunate accidents.



Implications for stakeholders

More tenants can enjoy the company of a furry, feathered, or scaly friend, while landlords must consider each request fairly.

PET-FRIENDLY HOUSING

Keeping pets has always been a contentious issue in the PRS. This legislation goes a long way to enshrine the right to request a pet and have it reasonably considered in law.

Pets can help tenants live happier lives, making it a positive step in the right direction for tenants' rights. Tenants with pets should take steps to ensure their animals are calm and non-destructive.

LANDLORDS MUST BE REASONABLE

Landlords must consider pet requests reasonably and cannot impose blanket bans. Although property damage concerns are valid, the government has ruled these should not override tenant rights.

Yet, by removing the requirement for tenants with pets to purchase pet damage insurance, it risks undermining these proposed reforms.

How Goodlord can help

Documentation will help you defend your decisions.

CLEAR AUDIT TRAILS

When a tenant challenges a landlord's decision around a pet request, **it's important to show that the choice wasn't based solely on pet ownership.**

Goodlord creates a transparent, timestamped record of tenant requests and landlord responses, alongside checks such as affordability. This ensures you have **a clear audit trail to demonstrate fair, consistent decision-making if questioned by the ombudsman.**

[Learn more](#)

Practical advice for agents

Documentation will help you defend your decisions.

SET YOUR AGENCY APART

Pets in lets represent a chance for your agency to differentiate itself from the competition by offering pet-inclusive services. From documentation to inspections, you can build an offering that works for tenants and landlords.

SET UP A PET REQUEST WORKFLOW

Standardise how you handle requests. Create a checklist for tenants (e.g., vet records, pet references) and a response template for landlords.

EDUCATE YOUR LANDLORDS

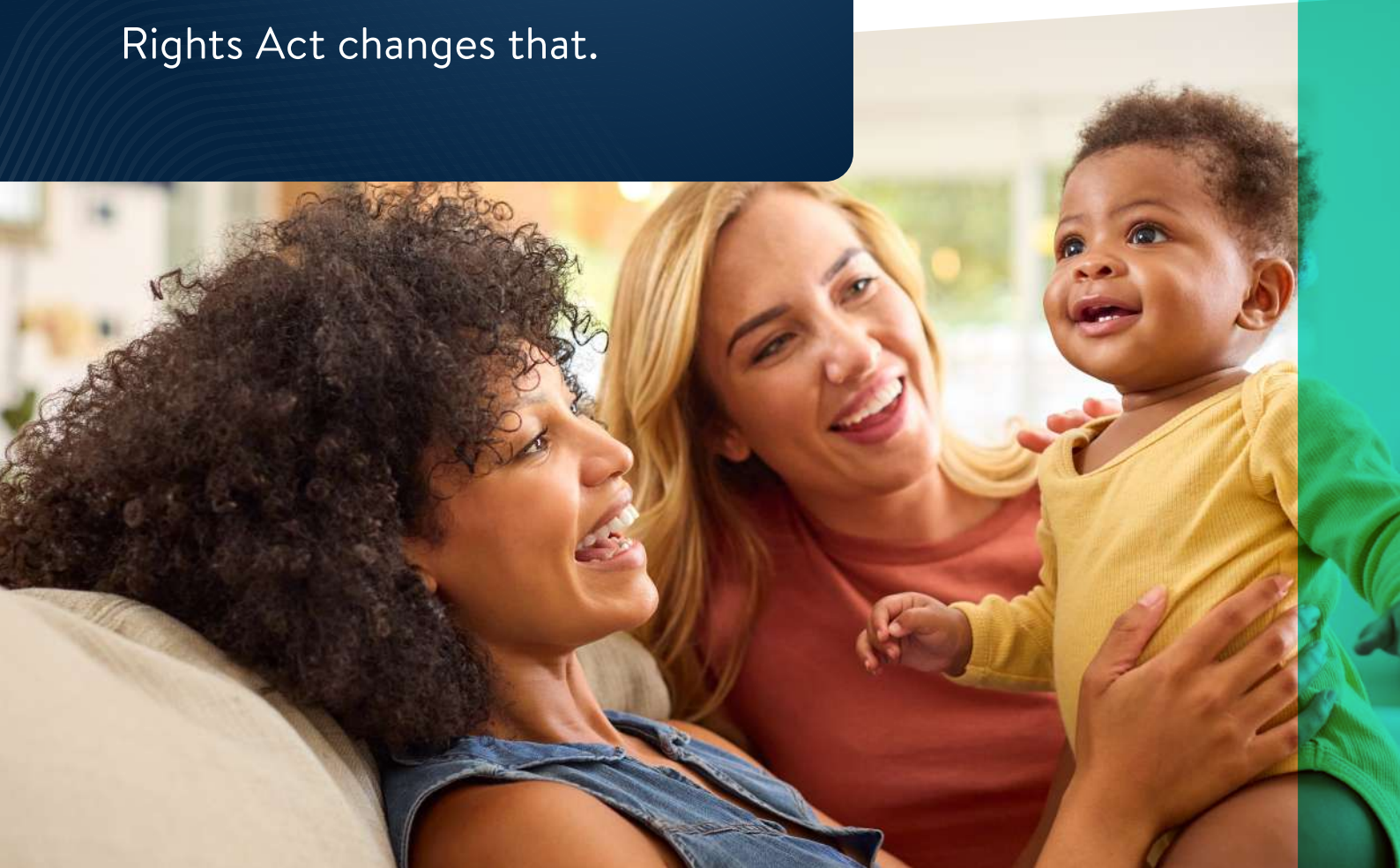
Some landlords may be nervous about pets. Provide guidance on the new rules, explain what counts as a “reasonable refusal,” and highlight the potential to access a wider tenant pool.



07

Rental discrimination

Families with children and renters on benefits have historically struggled to find homes in the PRS. The Renters' Rights Act changes that.



Proposed changes

Rules around rental discrimination are being tightened to protect families with children and renters on benefits.

BAN ON DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

From May 1, 2026, the Renters' Rights Act will build on the list of protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 to include families with children, benefit recipients, and those on housing allowance. **This will outlaw “No DSS” bans, which have been a common practice in the PRS until now.**

It should be noted that the Renters' Rights Act and the Equality Act 2010 will remain two distinct pieces of legislation.

CONTRACT CHANGES

In addition to the expanded list of protected characteristics, the Act will render all terms in rental mortgages, contracts, and leases that ban benefit recipients or families unenforceable.

What are protected characteristics?

A protected characteristic is a personal attribute protected from unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 in the UK. They include:

- 👤 **Disability (mental and physical)**
- 👤 **Race**
- 👤 **Religion or belief**
- 👤 **Sex**
- 👤 **Sexual orientation**
- 👤 **Gender reassignment**
- 👤 **Pregnancy and maternity**
- 👤 **Age**
- 👤 **Marriage and civil partnerships**

The Renters' Rights Act adds families with children and benefit recipients to the list.

“The best way for landlords to ensure they do not discriminate when carrying out right to rent checks is to treat all prospective tenants fairly, making sure their criteria and practices in this regard are appropriate and necessary.”

Implications for stakeholders

Tenants will be further protected from discrimination, while landlords and letting agents will have to be more mindful of their practices.

NO MORE “NO DSS”

Once a common sight in rental listings, No DSS notices will be banned outright by the new legislation.

This means that letting agents and landlords will have to remove it from their listings and ensure that it is not included in any tenancy agreements. **The property ombudsman can hand out fines of up to £60,000 for non-compliance.**

FAIRER EVALUATIONS

Landlords and letting agents must now consider every prospective tenant on their individual circumstances; blanket bans against families or benefit recipients will be a complete no-go.

By documenting your decision-making processes, agents and landlords can stay compliant with the law and offer a more inclusive tenancy journey.



How Goodlord can help

Industry-leading referencing and documentation promote an inclusive tenancy process.

STREAMLINED REFERENCING

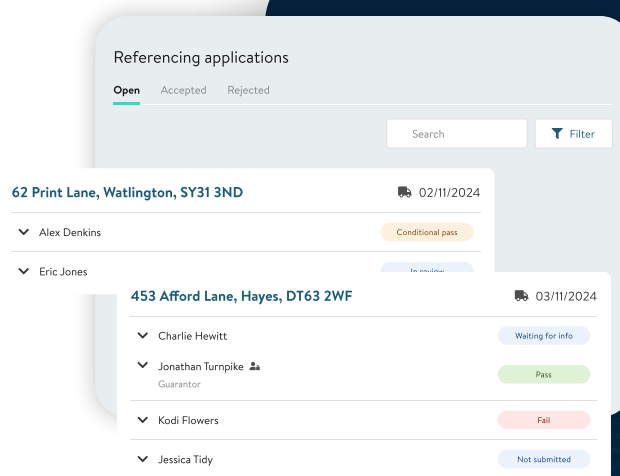
Goodlord's PRO Referencing helps to keep you compliant with housing and discrimination laws. Our process is completely free of any bias.

IN-BUILT LEGISLATION

All policies and tenancy agreements built within the Goodlord platform are automatically kept in line with any and all relevant legislation. This means that you can rest assured that your contracts are always up to date with the latest legislation.

IMPORTANT AUDIT TRAILS

Hopefully, you will never need to defend yourself from an accusation of discrimination. But if you do, Goodlord documents all tenant pre-qualification and provides a full audit trail to reinforce your case.



[Learn more](#)

08

Rental bidding wars

Rental bidding wars, a common feature of city rental markets, will be a thing of the past under the Renters' Rights Act.



Proposed changes

The Renters' Rights Act bans rental bidding wars.

ABSOLUTE BAN ON HIGHER OFFERS

The Act prohibits landlords and letting agents from requesting, encouraging, or accepting any rent offers above the advertised level. **The ban still applies if the tenant willingly offered more than the asking rent.**

Additionally, landlords and agents must list a specific asking rent, eliminating vague or “from” pricing models.

ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

Local authorities will be empowered to impose fines and civil penalties on non-compliant agents and landlords.

These civil penalties will vary in severity depending on the offence; **local authorities could impose fines as high as £7,000 and permanently mark a landlord's record in the PRS Database** (see [Section 10 - PRS Database](#)).



39%

of tenants report paying more than one month's rent to secure a property.

Goodlord survey, State of the Letting Industry 2025



Implications for stakeholders

Some landlords and letting agents will have to adjust their practices, while tenants will enjoy a fairer rental experience.

TRANSPARENCY IN LISTINGS

The idea behind the change is that the requirement for accurate pricing in advertising will lead to tenants being able to find properties that truly match their budgets.

Agents will have to remove all “offers over” or negotiable rent language in adverts and guide their landlords on the best prices they can list their properties for.

With that being said, the ban on rental bidding wars may stretch tenant affordability further as **19% of surveyed landlords in the State of the Lettings Industry 2025 said they will raise their marketed price in response.**



Learn more about how banning bidding wars fixed impacts the PRS.



NO MORE RENT IN ADVANCE

The Renters' Rights Act abolishes rent in advance, **raising concerns among landlords and agents as it has often enabled minority groups, such as foreign students or those with criminal records or CCJs, who struggle with traditional referencing checks to secure housing.**

“Although the ban is designed to clamp down on rogue landlords making unreasonable demands, it punishes overseas tenants as well as those with irregular pay, poor credit histories or criminal records. Whereas rent in advance was a useful tool for them to secure a property, they could now find themselves further marginalised.”

David Smith

Partner, Spector, Constant, and Williams Solicitors



How Goodlord can help

Move beyond bidding wars and prove you're delivering a fairer experience for tenants.

AUTOMATED DOCUMENTATION

Goodlord removes ambiguity by automating rent documentation so all listings, tenancy agreements, and communications show a fixed advertised rent.

MARKETING INSIGHTS

Knowing the local market is essential to setting profitable yet realistic prices. Goodlord will help you and your landlords set competitive, compliant asking rents without guesswork thanks to our [monthly Rental Index](#).

GOODLORD GUARANTOR

Goodlord is launching Goodlord Guarantor, a new product solution that helps agents say “YES” to more tenants. Designed to support the ban on rent in advance and upfront rent payments, it makes it easier for students and international renters to secure their next home, **with up to 3 years of protection included.**



[Learn more](#)

Solutions designed to *protect your business and your landlords*

Keep your agency compliant, simplify the transition, reduce admin, and protect revenue.



COMPLIANT PAYMENT FLOWS

The Act changes how and when move-in-monies and payments are taken. **Goodlord will keep your team compliant, reducing admin and risk of fines.**

- ✓ Payments fully compliant with the new rules, with audit trails and built-in protection against incorrect requests
- ✓ Security deposit collected and secured before agreement signed
- ✓ First month's rent requested automatically once contract is executed



GOODLORD GUARANTOR

Advance rent payments are banned, leaving some tenants, including international renters and students, without options. **Goodlord stands as a professional guarantor for tenants affected by the ban.**

- ✓ Covers all standard guarantor liabilities on behalf of the tenant
- ✓ Valid for three years with a single upfront payment, with no renewal risk for landlords
- ✓ Fully integrated into referencing and tenancy progression for a seamless journey for both agents and tenants

See platform in action

09

The Private Rented Sector Ombudsman

The Renters' Rights Act proposes a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman. While joining will be compulsory for landlords, agents also need to stay vigilant.



Proposed changes

Landlords will be required to register with the PRS ombudsman scheme.

A REQUIREMENT FOR LANDLORDS

A PRS ombudsman has been on the agenda for some time, having been initially proposed in the Conservative government's Renters Reform Act.



The incumbent Labour Government is also pressing ahead with this, planning to make it a legal requirement for all private landlords to register with the Private Rented Sector Ombudsman scheme. **This is regardless of whether they manage properties themselves or through an agent.**

As opposed to the likes of Section 21 and periodic tenancies, there will be “significant lead-in time” before the Ombudsman is introduced.

A NEW REDRESS SCHEME

Currently, private tenants can make complaints via two redress schemes:

1. The Property Ombudsman (TPO) - an independent, not-for-profit organisation

2. The Property Redress Scheme (PRS) - a government-authorised consumer redress scheme

However, **they can only use these to complain about letting agents, not landlords.** This raises a couple of issues.

48% of landlords who do work with an agent can refuse the requests the agent makes on the tenant's behalf. This puts agents in a tricky spot and makes it difficult to find a resolution for the tenant.

The new Ombudsman is designed to address these systemic issues.



Implications for stakeholders

Tenants will be able to solve issues more easily, while landlords and letting agents face fines and more for non-compliance.

RESOLVING ISSUES WITHOUT GOING TO COURT

Tenants will be able to get “quick, fair, impartial and binding resolution for tenants’ complaints about their landlord.”

They’ll be able to complain about anything a landlord has done or failed to do that has caused them harm, stress, or inconvenience (although valid issues have yet to be defined).

£40K FINES FOR REPEATED BREACHES

All private landlords must join the new Private Renters’ Ombudsman scheme, whether they manage properties themselves or use an agent. The government insists that fees will be kept proportionate and low.

Failure to register can result in civil penalties of up to £7,000, and repeat offences may lead to fines of up to £40,000 or even criminal prosecution.

Letting agents risk the same fines if their landlords don’t register.

WHAT AGENTS NEED TO DO NOW

Soon, all landlords will be required to join the new PRS ombudsman scheme. Agents who work with unregistered landlords will face fines and may even be banned from operating. Here’s how you can get ready now:

- ✓ **Understand the requirements**
You and your landlords should familiarise yourselves with the Ombudsman’s role, rules, and how complaints will be handled.
- ✓ **Update your complaints process**
A clear, fair, and accessible complaints procedure may help prevent complaints from getting to the level where the Ombudsman is needed.
- ✓ **Educate your agents and landlords**
Ignorance will be no excuse. Ensure your landlords and agents know what’s required of them once the Ombudsman scheme launches.

Learn more about the government’s plans around the new PRS Ombudsman on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

EXPULSION RISK

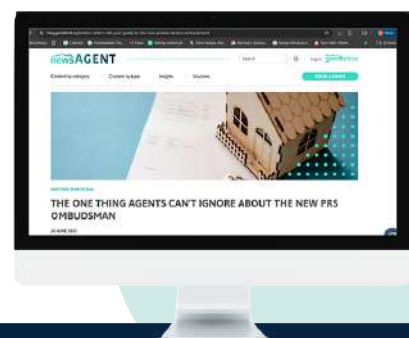
If a landlord ignores the Ombudsman's decision, they may be expelled from the scheme, preventing them from legally renting out properties.

The Ombudsman's rulings can also be enforced through the courts, and **tenants may be awarded a Rent Repayment Order (RRO) for up to two years' rent.** The government is doubling the maximum RRO period to increase its deterrent effect.



NO MORE PIGGY IN THE MIDDLE

Agents will no longer have to act as the middleman during the complaint process, as landlords will be directly accountable for tenant complaints. **This means the burden of handling disputes will be shared.**



You can learn more about the PRS Ombudsman scheme in our blog.



How Goodlord can help

Compliance doesn't have to be a chore, we can help.

KEEP LANDLORDS INFORMED

Our platform is built with compliance in mind, so all our features are up to date with the latest legislation. We help you make sure your landlords are informed.



MARKET YOUR SERVICES

In a post-Renters' Rights Act world, a knowledgeable letting agent is invaluable for landlords. With our platform, you can position yourself as the go-to Renters' Rights Act expert to both new and existing landlords who find compliance overwhelming.



[Learn more](#)

10

The Private Rented Sector (PRS) Database

This one-stop property portal is designed to improve transparency and standards in the industry. Despite privacy concerns for landlords, it should deliver value to stakeholders across the industry.



Proposed changes

The PRS database will list the name and key information of PRS landlords.

CH.9

A LIST OF LANDLORDS

While specifics are still to be finalised, the PRS database is expected to publicly list a range of landlord data points, including compliance credentials, possession orders, tenancy dispute information, and more.

The government aims to improve transparency and raise standards in the PRS.

“Responsible landlords who meet their obligations have nothing to fear from the PRS database. This register will introduce an additional level of transparency to the lettings industry, empowering tenants to make informed decisions about their housing.”

Emily Popple

Director of Landlord Experience, Goodlord



Implications for stakeholders

Transparency will be the name of the game as landlords must register for the database.

BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OBLIGATIONS

The government views the database as a potential compliance portal. Residential landlords will be able to understand their responsibilities better and ensure that their properties meet the new requirements of the UK rental market.

The National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA), for example, has called for the digitisation of important electricity and gas safety certificates. It argues that **this kind of information will ensure peace of mind for tenants while also allowing responsible landlords to demonstrate their professionalism.**



HOW CAN AGENTS PREPARE FOR THE PRS DATABASE?

The new PRS Database will collect and publicly list the names and properties of landlords. **Letting a property for an unregistered landlord can land agents in hot water.** Here's what you can do to get ready:

- ✓ **Audit your landlords**
Get in touch with your landlords and ensure you have up-to-date information on them and all their properties.
- ✓ **Centralise your records**
Store landlord and property records in one place (like the Goodlord platform) to simplify registration.
- ✓ **Educate your landlords**
Your clients might be concerned about how their data will be handled. Educating them on the database will go a long way to assuaging their fears.

You can learn more about the incoming PRS database with [our informative blog](#)

THE RISK OF FINES AND A GREATER CHANCE OF ENFORCEMENT

Without registering on the database, it will be illegal for landlords and their agents to advertise a property for rent. They also won't be able to carry out eviction proceedings against their tenants, unless anti-social behaviour is involved.

Not only that, but **non-compliant landlords may be saddled with financial penalties of £7,000 for the first civil penalty, with costs spiralling to £40,000 for repeated breaches.** Agents will face the same fines for advertising or letting a property belonging to an unregistered landlord.

Providing false or misleading information to the registry will be designated a criminal offence, which could result in rent repayment orders, potentially leading to further prosecution.

SUBMITTING INFORMATION ON BEHALF OF LANDLORDS

The government intends to allow agents to submit information to the database on behalf of landlords and will be exploring through secondary legislation what that might look like in practice and what capabilities they will need to build.

PUBLICLY LISTED INFORMATION

Much like Companies House, the PRS Database will be a public register. This means that the majority of the information stored in the database will be accessible to the general public.

In particular, the industry would like to see landlords given a unique register number, and each property uploaded to the database assigned a Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN). **This will help identify landlords within the system and ensure their properties are listed correctly.**

It will also allow simple duplication checks. In other words, a landlord won't be able to add themselves to the database multiple times, meaning all of their information will be in one place.

EXTRA FEES

Although landlords will have to pay a fee to register for the database, **the government has said membership fees will be proportionate and reasonable.**



How Goodlord can help

We'll help you position yourself as a compliance champion.

KEEP CLIENTS INFORMED

Your landlords will have to register with the database. Ensure that you tell them of the necessary information and any deadlines they must meet. Our knowledge base will help you stay informed.

EXPAND YOUR SERVICES

Agents may be able to upload information on behalf of their landlords. You should ensure that existing, former, and potential new clients are aware that you can help them with database requirements and other compliance obligations. We'll be here to help you with the process.



[Learn more](#)

Conclusion

Agencies that understand and communicate their value to clients will steal a march on their competitors when the Renters' Rights Act becomes effective.

According to the 2025 State of the Letting Industry Survey, **35% of landlords don't use an agent to let or manage their properties.**

However, with the increased compliance requirements proposed by the Renters' Rights Act, more landlords are likely to seek out expert advice from agents.

Agents who are proactive and prepare for the Act's implementation can:



Pitch their services to self-managing landlords



Market their services to existing, let-only customers



Expand your offering for fully managed customers

Ultimately, the Renters' Rights Act is a unique opportunity for agents to showcase their expertise and position themselves as indispensable partners to landlords.



Rent Protection and Legal Expenses Insurance *built for the Renters' Rights Act*

Every tenancy you manage today - and every new one you sign - will be impacted by the Act.
Most existing policies won't protect you.



Goodlord's upgraded RRA cover includes:

-  Up to 6 months' cover for rent increases delayed in tribunal
-  Additional £1,000 property damage cover
-  Up to £175/night for alternative accommodation, if required (max 3 months)
-  Up to £15/day for storage, if required (max 3 months)
-  First month's rent paid within 5 days if the tenant defaults
-  Ability to transfer your existing policies to a more comprehensive RRA-aligned cover

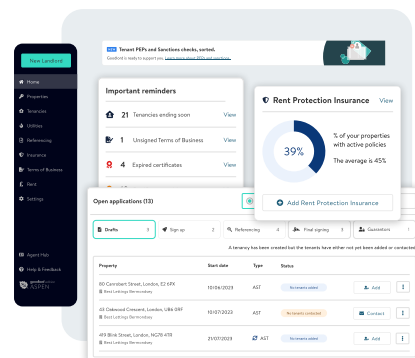
Protect your landlords today



About Goodlord



Goodlord is a RentTech platform with a mission to provide the best renting experience in the world. Letting agents can manage their properties in one place while staying compliant.



Goodlord's platform handles the entire lettings process, from offer letters to rent collection, all while helping to boost agency's revenue.



SAVE TIME

Manage the entire letting process in one place. The Goodlord platform helps agents to consolidate their suppliers, reduce touchpoints to process a tenancy, and slashes the time agencies spend on admin.



STAY COMPLIANT

Goodlord protects letting agents from compliance risk - from seeing which certificates are expiring per property, to automatically sending the How to Rent guide.



GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Letting agents can focus on landlords, not on admin. We automate a lot of processes so they can focus on what really matters. Plus, they can generate extra revenue without lifting a finger - such as offering an industry-leading rent protection service to their landlords.

Since our inception in 2014, Goodlord has processed more than one million tenancies. The group has demonstrated its commitment to further growth by acquiring referencing vendor Vouch in 2020, fintech platform Acasa in 2021, and onboarding platform Halo in 2023.

VISIT [GOODLORD.CO](https://www.goodlord.co)



goodlord.co