

inside letting

EDINBURGH'S LINK WITH LANDLORDS

ISSUE 18 WINTER 2008/2009

Energy Performance Certificates – What you need to know



From 4th January 2009, all landlords who market their property for rental must have an EPC, prior to advertising.

EPCs have been introduced by the government under the EU's Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, as part of the commitment to increase energy efficiency and tackle climate change.

An EPC is a document which shows the energy efficiency and carbon emissions of a property, and is part of a larger energy report. The property is given a rating between A and G and this is displayed on a chart which looks very similar to the energy rating given to domestic appliances.

It is only when there is going to be a change of occupancy that an EPC is required, so existing lettings will only

need one when the property comes up for re-let. They are not needed for renewals or extensions of existing lets. The EPC should be permanently displayed in the property (in the meter cupboard, for example) and is valid for 10 years.

Qualified chartered surveyors are among those who can provide EPCs, however there are a number of other providers who have been approved through various registered organisations. The surveyor electronically submits the EPC for inclusion on a national database operated by the Energy Saving Trust. It is essential to ensure that the person carrying out your EPC is properly qualified to conduct surveys in Scotland.

Government figures suggest that an EPC will cost in the region of £100 but figures will vary between

providers with some charging more and some less.

Properties will not pass or fail, but the EPC will provide recommendations on ways to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions within the home, including details of how much these measures may cost. Landlords and homeowners may qualify for tax relief or grant aid depending on the type of energy saving.

Responsibility for enforcing EPCs lies with individual local authorities, under s.25 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003.

For more information:

- Scottish Building Standards Agency www.sbsa.gov.uk
- Changeworks www.changeworks.org.uk
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors www.rics.org

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welcome

Welcome to the Winter edition of *Inside Letting*

Welcome to issue 18 of *Inside Letting* and to 2009. The New Year brings many changes to the lettings market. This edition gives you updates on three significant legislation changes to be introduced in the coming months.

Our cover story tells you what you need to know about Energy Performance Certificates, introduced at the start of the year. There are also likely to be changes to landlord registration fees introduced in February and from 1 April the rules regarding evictions are changing – see page 3 for more information.



Lindsay Souter
EDITOR

The market report (page 5) tells us about the new phenomenon of 'reluctant landlords' and highlights increasing competition in the market, so make the most of the top ten tips on home staging (page 6) to give your property the edge.

Changes to both the market and legislation make it more important than ever to keep up to date, so we hope you find this edition of *Inside Letting* gives you everything you need to stay on top of your game.

As ever, I welcome your comments and feedback. **Please send to insideletting@edinburgh.gov.uk.**

Edinburgh Landlord Day Round Up

Twenty-eighth October 2008 saw the most successful Landlord Day yet with more landlords than ever visiting the exhibition. Nearly 500 existing and potential landlords, letting agents and even some tenants flocked to the Assembly Rooms where they could browse the information provided by the 35 exhibitors.

The draw of the day was undoubtedly the seminar programme which gave the attendees a new topic every hour. The most popular seminar of the day was "Top ten tips for achieving a high energy performance rating." This session explained how to improve

energy efficiency in preparation for an Energy Performance Certificate survey.

“ I cannot speak highly enough about the event. ”

The coffee lounge, sponsored by McEwan Fraser, provided a welcome chill-out space away from the bustle of the exhibition.

Feedback from both exhibitors and visitors was very positive.

- 91% of visitors rated the range of exhibitors good or excellent
- 90% of visitors rated the event good or excellent
- 82% of visitors rated their seminar experience as "informing"
- 100% of exhibitors said they would want to exhibit again

With comments like, "A great day that was well worth the time and effort" and "I cannot speak highly enough about the event", Edinburgh Landlord Day was definitely a resounding success and the event is a must in the diary of anyone involved in Edinburgh's lively private rented marketplace.



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New Eviction Requirements

New legislation means that all landlords will need to notify the Local Authority when they are evicting their tenants through the courts.

Section 11 of the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 is due to be commenced on 1 April 2009. From this date, you should make

the local authority aware when raising proceedings for possession. The requirement does not apply to cases where you are routinely ending a short assured tenancy and the tenant has no recourse to legal action.

Mortgage lenders will also have to notify the local authority where the owner is being evicted due to mortgage arrears. The Scottish Government intends that local authorities will receive early notice of households at risk of

homelessness due to eviction. As a local authority we hope to be able to advise your tenant on their housing options prior to them becoming homeless and would also be able to plan for the expected number of homeless households.

As soon as details are finalised, Inside Letting will update you with what you need to do. For now more information is available at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/homeless/s11

Changes to registration fees and discounts



Following the Registration of Private Landlords Consultation that was completed in November 2008, changes will be made to the fees and discounts available to landlords and agents submitting new applications or when renewing their applications. Scottish Statutory Instrument 2005 No 403, The Private Landlord Registration (Information and Fees) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 details the revised fees to be paid and the discounts to be applied.

The changes are summarised in the table on the right, and subject to final approval in Parliament, will come into effect on 12 February 2009.

For more information about the forthcoming changes or any aspect of Landlord Registration contact the Landlord Registration Team on 0131 469 5293 or email landlordregistration@edinburgh.gov.uk

To view the consultation and the responses go to <http://cci.scot.nhs.uk/Publications/2008/07/17092436/0>

The changes are outlined below and come into effect on 12th February 2009

| Original fees | New fees |
|--|---|
| The principal fee is £55 | No change |
| The property fee is £11 for each property | No change |
| The applicant specifies an agent not already registered, the fee is £55 | No change No fee if the agent is already registered, or has made a valid application, or is a charity or holds an HMO licence 50% fee if the agent is not registered in the applicant's area but is registered elsewhere |
| If the agent only acts for one property the fee is 50% of the principal fee = £27.50 | No discount, full fee payable |
| Charities pay 20% of the total amount | Charities pay no principal or property fee |
| Applicants with an HMO licence pay no principal fees or property fee for HMO properties | No change |
| For each joint owner, who is not the lead owner and not a member of their family, the principal fee is £55 | No principal or property fee for <u>any</u> joint owners, whether they are family members or not |
| Applying for registration in more than one local authority <u>at the same time</u> . The principal fee is £55 for the first and for each additional authority applied for at the same time the fee is £13.75 | When using the internet-based system, applications submitted to more than one local authority at the same time will receive a 50% discount of the principal fee – the fee payable will be £27.50 per authority Where a landlord has already applied for registration or is registered in one authority or more and subsequently applies for registration in another authority, the application will be subject to a 50% discount of the principal fee = £27.50 |
| | No change to the property fee |
| Following 2 requests for a valid application to be submitted a late application fee of £110 is applied | No change. This fee can also be charged to Charities despite their 100% exemption from the principal and property fee. |
| Applying using the internet-based application system attracts a 10% discount on the total fee | No change. This discount does not apply to a late application fee |



CASE NOTES:

OBTAINING A COURT ORDER FOR EVICTION



You have served notices, your Short Assured Tenancy termination date has been and gone and yet the tenant you want to move out has made it clear that he is going nowhere!

Whether landlords like it or not, many tenants are very aware of their rights. Even after all the requisite notices have been served, tenants still have the right to remain in the property until they are evicted by court action. The Notice to Quit and the AT6 even inform the tenant of this.

Contrary to popular opinion, a landlord has no legal right to change the locks and throw out all the tenant's possessions. This would be an unlawful eviction in terms of Section 22 of the Rent (Scotland) Act 1984 as amended.

In Section 23 and 23 (a) of this Act it is prohibited to evict without "due process" of law. This means that it is not lawful to evict any person from residential accommodation without court authority, even after notices have been served and expired.

So how does a landlord go about obtaining a court order to evict the tenant after the expiry of the requisite notices? A landlord can raise eviction action on his own or seek legal advice from a solicitor. The process of raising the action is relatively simple but lengthy.

Two standard forms, a Summary Cause Summons for Eviction and a Statement of Claim, which sets out the facts surrounding the landlord's request for eviction, are required to be completed and lodged in court together with a court fee of £60.00.

They can be obtained from the Sheriff Court or downloaded from www.scotcourts.gov.uk.

The Court will check the papers and once satisfied with the grounds for eviction, will grant a warrant to allow the court papers to be served on the tenant and fix a date for the action to call in court; approximately six to seven weeks after papers are lodged in court.

“ **A landlord is not going to be able to get tenants out of the property within a week or two of a court action being raised.** ”

Papers must be served legally by recorded delivery or by Sheriff Officers at least three weeks prior to the "return day." The return day is seven days before the action actually calls in court, and the tenant has to receive the papers by valid legal service at least four weeks before the call date.

After the papers have been served on the tenant, the landlord should return them to court with proof of service on or before the return day. If the tenant fails to appear or is not represented on the calling date, it is likely that the Sheriff will grant eviction. However, if the tenant appears or is represented and states a defence or is offering to clear the arrears, it is likely that the landlord will not get an

eviction order. In most cases (except those proceeding under Section 33 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1988 for compulsory repossession) where there is an offer to pay off the arrears the court is likely to continue the case. The tenant may deny the arrears in which case the court will require to hear evidence from both the landlord and the tenant at some later date, which can be five to six months away.

Once the right to evict is granted, the court will appoint a time and date after which this can proceed. The practice in Edinburgh Sheriff Court is that this date will be four weeks after the action calls in court.

Sheriff Officers can evict the tenant from the property after the appointed time and date and will advise the tenant in advance. The landlord should arrange for a joiner and / or locksmith to be in attendance with the Sheriff Officers. In most situations, the tenant will have vacated the property before the Sheriff Officers attend. However, a landlord should still go ahead with a technical eviction to legally allow a change of locks. After all that, which is probably at least 3–4 months after notices have been served, the landlord can finally take lawful possession of the property.

The wheels of justice turn very slowly. This can be particularly frustrating for landlords whose tenants are refusing to pay rent and are continuing to sit in a property and running up further arrears. On a positive note, the process itself is relatively simple, assuming that all the legalities of the notices are in order. If not, the legal process will be a mine field and the topic of another article!



Market Report

CULLEN GIVE THEIR THOUGHTS ON THE MARKET



The last few months have seen a growing number of residential properties becoming available for rent in Edinburgh and the 'reluctant landlord' has become something of a buzz word. While we are experiencing challenging times, renting out flats and houses that didn't sell is not always an easy remedy.

While demand for rental property appeared to be growing exponentially for a few weeks, it now appears that the supply of flats as well as houses is beginning to outstrip demand.

If mortgage funds become more readily available in the next few months, following the Bank of England's cut in interest rates, the market for buying and selling may pick up again. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen what influence higher unemployment may have and whether sellers are ready to reduce their asking prices.

Most landlords have bought with a "long term view," intending to keep their investment property for at least ten years, although many talk of 20, 30 years or even more. Where pension or inheritance planning is the aim, buying the right property that can be let over time is more important than short term economic developments. It is paramount for any prospective landlord to obtain as much information as possible about the property itself, the area it is located in and the general rental market before making a commitment.

Focussing on the student market allows landlords to lease their property for a whole year rather than six months,

minimising turnover and void periods. With the universities forecasting continued growth for the next seven years, the student population should expand, thus increasing the demand for high-quality properties in desirable locations.

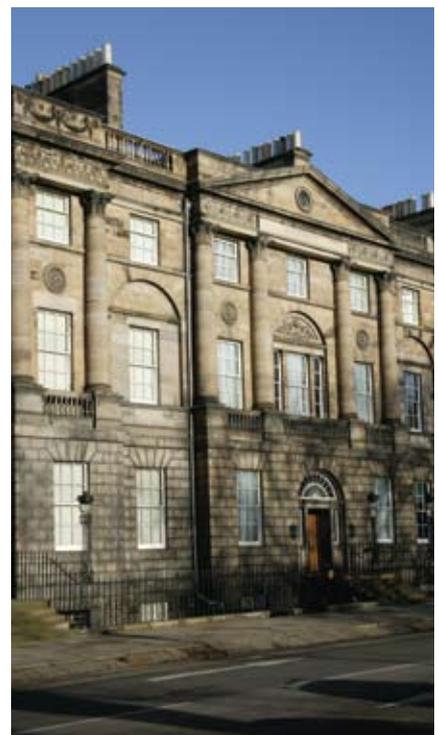
“ It is paramount for any prospective landlord to obtain as much information as possible about the property. ”

All tenants expect a high quality property and excellent service from their landlord, and increasing availability over the past months means that they now have a wide choice of accommodation to view. Landlords and property management companies can gain a competitive edge through clever marketing of each property. At the moment, there is a good supply of all types of property.

In the current economic situation, the tenants' purchasing power will set the level of affordable rent. In some sectors of the lettings market, such as ex-council suburban properties, this level has already dropped slightly. The challenge for landlords and agents is to know how rent levels are developing in order to ensure properties are marketed effectively. As well as good images and descriptions, it will become increasingly important to offer flexible viewing times and information about

the local area such as bus routes, shops and schools.

In 2009 we will see what effect measures like the Home Report will have on the housing market, which we envisage will be less fraught by 2010/11. Informed property investors are likely to see purchasing opportunities present themselves over the coming months and the Scottish system of buying and selling is thought to help avoid the 'chain effect' of sales in England. Cullen Property believes this will assist the recovery of Scotland's property market in general, allowing the country to lead the way for the UK property industry. Over time, a stable property market will ensure that a good selection of rental property is available and the residential lettings market continues to grow in a sustainable way.



Effective home staging



With current market conditions proving difficult for sellers, there are many things you can do to increase the rentability of your home. One of the most effective is home staging. Furniture by SP of Edinburgh, which specialises in dressing properties for sale and rental and provides furniture packages for landlords, has ten handy hints for marketing your property.

- 1 Clear the clutter – family pictures, figurines and mementos may be your cup of tea but to other people they're just junk. Store everything neatly away rather than stuffing it in cupboards. Consider putting larger items into storage.
- 2 Empty bins and buy fresh flowers. Apart from dead flowers and overflowing bins looking unsightly, they also give off really bad odours!
- 3 Make sure your rooms flow. There is nothing worse than a potential buyer banging their shins on the coffee table. You may have learned to live with it but others will see it as a barrier.
- 4 Get rid of big intimidating pieces of furniture. They can make rooms appear smaller than they actually are.
- 5 Make the most of old furniture. Use a throw over sofas or tables. However, always be honest about the condition of furniture on your inventory.
- 6 Introducing a colour scheme throughout the rooms will sell a lifestyle as well as the physical property itself. However, overpowering colour schemes can put tenants off.
- 7 Cleaning windows is a quick and cheap way of brightening up rooms.
- 8 Switch on lights throughout the house for the photographer taking pictures for the advert and during property viewings. This will brighten up dark areas and create ambience. If you're taking your own photographs, always take them during the day. Consider using a fisheye type lens to get more into your photo.
- 9 Make sure your bathroom is clean and tidy. Viewers don't want to find a dirty toilet or wet towels on the floor.
- 10 **CLEAN, CLEAN AND CLEAN AGAIN!!** A dirty house can put negative thoughts in your potential tenant's mind. It sounds really simple but you would be amazed how many people just don't bother.

So if you are planning on selling or renting your property, work through these 10 steps to help add value and encourage potential buyers or tenants to put in an offer.

Furniture by SP – **0131 663 0333**
www.furniturebysp.com

Letwise will run a training course on Marketing Your Property and Deposits on 30 April 2009

To book your free place on this course contact letwise on 529 7454

Roof top dangers

There has recently been an increase in reports of tenants accessing the roof areas through hatches in top floor tenement flats. Reports have focussed on the Newington area of the city but all landlords need to be aware of this issue.

Those involved have been using roof spaces and platforms for general recreation including barbeques and sunbathing in the warmer months. Aside from the obvious risk to health and safety, there is a real threat of

damage occurring to the roof of the property and a high probability of disturbing other occupants in the tenement.

On one roof, beer bottles left in guttering resulted in water leaks to the upper flats, and a substantial roofing bill.

What you can do:

- If you have reason to believe that your tenants have been accessing the roof space you should speak to them and emphasise the dangers.

- If your property has direct access to the roof you should consider restricting this by padlocking the hatch or placing a safety bar on any window that leads out to the roof area. Please note that these measures would not present any difficulties to the Fire Service if they require emergency access.
- Consider inserting a clause in your tenants' lease prohibiting them from accessing the roof space. If you use Letwise's model lease agreement you will already have this covered.

If you wish to get any further advice on this issue please contact Letwise on 0131 529 7454.

Water leaks

City of Edinburgh Council officers deal with approximately 2000 calls a year about water leaks. Here's Inside Letting's tips on how to manage water leaks within your properties.

- Tell tenants where the main stopcock is so the water supply can be cut to the property. If you don't know where this is, find out. In most cases this will stop the leak and prevent further water damage.
- Find out how to turn off the water supply for the cistern, washing machine, dishwasher and the boiler, and show your tenants.
- Make sure you know where the cold water tank is located.

- Keep bath and shower seals in good order and check for gaps and mould.
- Check the tile grout for any holes.
- Check out any significant movement in the bath or shower tray.
- Don't tile over the water supply pipes. It can make them inaccessible to a plumber. Tracing a water leak can be very destructive.
- Check pipes for excessive verdigris (green rust). This can point to pipework problems.

Overflow occurs when water constantly runs from the toilet cistern, the cold water storage tank, the boiler or the immersion heater tank. Overflow

should not run all the time as it is damaging to your building.

To prevent burst pipes lag your pipes and tanks. As well as being more energy efficient it will protect them from the cold. When tenants are away from the property, ask them to set the heating to come on for a minimum of one hour per night. Alternatively, most radiators have a frost setting for these circumstances.

To avoid blocked communal drain pipes, tell tenants not to put grease, fat or food down kitchen sinks and supply a food catcher that fits over the plug hole. Cottonbuds, hair, disposable cleaning cloths, babywipes and kitchen towels can block toilets.

Make sure your tenants and neighbours have your or your agent's contact number, should they need to reach you in an emergency. Speak to your neighbours and try to resolve the issues between yourselves.

For advice on carrying out communal repairs contact Homeworks on 0131 529 7240. When looking for a plumber we recommend that you go through a trade association such as SNIPEF ensuring you get a qualified and competent plumber. Call 0131 225 2255 or visit www.snipef.org. Where you cannot resolve the issue yourselves call Property Conservation on 0131 529 4902 (for blocked drains) or Public Health on 0131 529 3030. When calling out of hours dial 0131 200 2000.



Bicycles – trouble in store?

Both the City of Edinburgh Council and the police have received a number of complaints regarding bikes in common stairs. These complaints include bikes obstructing stairs and landings and of bikes being stolen.

Tenants should be reminded that bikes should be kept within the flat, but if this is not possible they should store the bikes in such a way that does not cause an obstruction anywhere within the stair area.

We advise that bikes should not be attached to the railing of stairs as this cannot only cause damage to the brittle cast iron, but railings can easily be broken should someone wish to steal the bike.

The overall security of the flats and other property within the stair starts at the common stair door. Please remind tenants to make sure that both the flat door and the common stair door are securely closed when entering and leaving; and only to permit entry into the stair to people who have a right to be there.

For further bike security information visit:

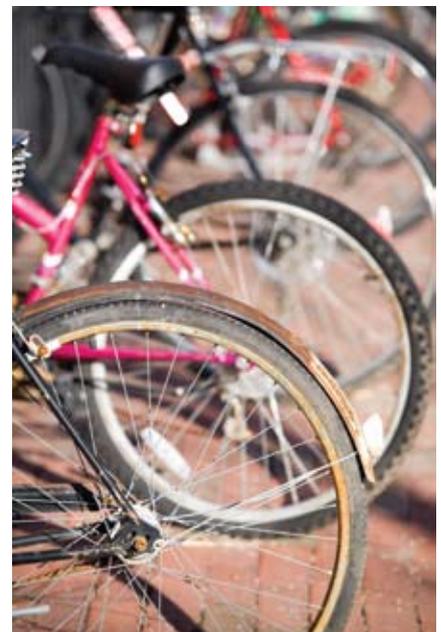
www.soldsecure.com

[www.crimereduction.](http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/vehiclecrime/vehiclecrime063htm)

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Stamp Duty Land Tax on residential property

Chartered Accountants, Chiene and Tait clarify the changes made to (SDLT).

Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) is a tax charge on transactions relating to UK land and buildings. The purchaser of a building is required to make an SDLT return and is liable to pay the SDLT within 30 days of the effective date of a transaction. The SDLT return together with the payment of the liability will usually be arranged by the solicitor dealing with the transaction. A penalty of up to £200 can be charged for late submission of a return.

On 2 September 2008, the Chancellor announced a temporary exemption from SDLT for acquisitions of residential property with a purchase price of up to £175,000. This temporary exemption will apply for transactions undertaken from 3 September 2008 to 2

September 2009. This was introduced by the Government to demonstrate support for home buyers.

From 3 September until 2 September 2009

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Purchase price up to £175,000 | Nil |
| Over £175,000 to £250,000 | 1% |
| Over £250,000 to £500,000 | 3% |
| Over £500,000 | 4% |

Disadvantaged Areas Relief can still apply for residential only property purchases. The starting point for charging SDLT is £150,000. However, as the residential property thresholds introduced from September 2008 also apply to most residential property, purchasers are advised to use the new higher thresholds.

SDLT is a 'thorn in the side' for those who invest in property. Subject to the exemptions referred to above, there

is little that can be done to avoid it and it must be kept at the forefront of the minds of landlords for budgeting purposes.

Letwise in conjunction with Chiene and Tait run Finance Matters a training course that gives an overview of taxation and bookkeeping for private landlords.

For course dates and booking details see the training brochure at the back of this magazine.

Disclaimer

This article is an overview of the law and provisions and does not cover all scenarios.

Reliance must not be placed on this article with respect to land and property transactions without seeking professional advice.

Sale and Rent Back Firms Need Statutory Regulation

Nicola Sturgeon has called on UK ministers to do more to protect Scottish homeowners from controversial sale and rent back schemes operated by some private landlords. Speaking about the findings of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) report into the sale and rent back sector, Ms Sturgeon has written to Gareth Thomas, Minister for Trade, Investment and Consumer Affairs, calling for action to help those who are in financial difficulty as a result of misleading selling of some schemes.

She went on to say: "I am deeply concerned that Scottish homeowners may be exploited by unscrupulous operators taking advantage of weak legislation. It is imperative, given the state of the housing market, that the UK Government takes speedy action to regulate the sale and rent back market and provide real protection to homeowners."

The OFT report has found that:

- some consumers enter into sale and rent back transactions when

this is not the best option for them

- some sale and rent back firms may mislead customers as to the value of their property or the security they have as tenants. This includes telling people they will be able to stay in their home for years, when in reality the tenancy may only be guaranteed for six to 12 months
- some firms impose substantial rent increases or even evict tenants after a short tenancy period. It is also possible that tenants may lose their homes if the landlord defaults on the mortgage, and
- some consumers are evicted because they cannot afford the agreed rent, which suggests staying in their property was not sustainable in the first place.

As a result, the main recommendation of the OFT report is that there should be statutory regulation of the sale and rent back sector by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). It recommends that there should be:

- an obligation on sale and rent back firms to be more transparent about the initial valuation and sale price, the terms of the tenancy and the amount of rent to be paid. In particular, firms must offer forms of tenancy that match the assurances they give to customers, and
- a requirement on firms to tell consumers about the free, independent advice available to them before they decide to sell.

John Fingleton, OFT Chief Executive, said:

"Recommending statutory regulation is not something we do lightly or often, however in this case we consider it necessary to put a stop to the unacceptable behaviour of some sale and rent back operators and to ensure consumers are better protected."

Download Sale and rent back – an OFT market study (pdf 494 kb) from:

http://www.oft.gov.uk/shared_oftr/reports/consumer_protection/oft1018.pdf



Letwise offers a programme of training and briefing events for private landlords in Edinburgh. These courses are designed to inform landlords about the various aspects of property and tenancy management and to update on any changes which impact on the private rented market.

Landlord Training Programme: April 2009 – June 2009

TRAINING SESSIONS AT A GLANCE

APRIL

- **Saving Money on Domestic Energy**
Thursday 2 April 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm
European Room, City Chambers
- **Marketing Your Property and Deposits**
Thursday 30 April 2009, 1 pm – 5 pm
Midlothian Suite, Lothian Chambers

MAY

- **Safety Requirements for your Property**
Thursday 7 May 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm
Contract Heating, 2B Bankhead Crossway
- **Fire, Electrical and Plumbing Regulations**
Thursday 14 May 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm
Midlothian Suite, Lothian Chambers

JUNE

- **Tenancy Agreements**
Thursday 4 June 2009, 5.45pm – 8.30pm
European Room, City Chambers
- **Recovery of Possession**
Thursday 11 June 2009, 5.45pm – 8.00pm
European Room, City Chambers
- **The Law of Repairs**
Thursday 18 June 2009, 5.45pm – 8.00pm
European Room, City Chambers

Saving Money on Domestic Energy

Thursday 2 April 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm
Venue: European Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

Energy Performance Certificates now have to be provided to prospective tenants or buyers and may have an impact on rent levels and property values. Increased energy efficiency enhances the quality of housing, reduces fuel poverty, lowers the incidence of cold related illnesses, and promotes affordable warmth. This, in turn, can lead to more stable tenancies and lower maintenance costs for your properties. All householders, including private and social landlords, are now being encouraged to meet a range of energy efficiency targets in order to reduce the amount of energy being wasted in Edinburgh homes by 30%. Landlords can secure tax benefits under the Landlords Energy Saving Allowance as well as benefit from a range of energy efficiency grants by making their rental property more energy efficient.

It is important that as an owner and a private landlord you are aware of changes and developments in this area and know what advice, assistance and grants are available to you.

Is it for you?

This briefing session will be of benefit to any landlord or letting agent interested in making their rental property more energy efficient, cost effective and attractive in a competitive rental market.

Marketing Your Property and Deposits

Thursday 30 April 2009, 1 pm – 5 pm

Venue: Midlothian Suite, Lothian Chambers, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1RN

This course is designed to inform landlords and letting agents on how to market and stage their property effectively in a highly competitive letting environment. The course will also cover best practice when dealing with tenants' deposits and will address the many varied problems relating to creating holding deposits and making deductions from security deposits. Other aspects covered will include dealing with guarantors and distance selling regulations.

Course objectives

By the end of the course delegates will:

- understand how to effectively market a property and achieve optimum rents;
- understand the legal implications if they let a property without the tenants actually viewing the property (Distance Selling Regulations);
- understand the legalities and implications of requesting a rent guarantor;
- understand the legal requirements around deposits; and
- be aware of how to deal with disputes around deposits.

Is it for you?

This course is beneficial both for newcomers to the private renting business and experienced landlords and letting agents alike.

Safety Requirements for your Property

Thursday 7 May 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm

Venue: Contract Heating, 2B Bankhead Crossway South, Edinburgh EH11 4EX

This course, delivered by Contract Heating (members of NICEIC, the Fire Protection Association and CORGI approved) will give delegates practical experience on how to identify problems and faults within their property in relation to heating systems, water supplies and electrical systems. It will also show delegates how to read various safety certificates and identify what needs to be actioned.

Course objectives

By the end of the course delegates will:

- have gained practical experience on identifying problems and faults within their property;
- have an awareness of what is required to provide safe accommodation for their tenants;
- know what procedures to follow in a gas emergency; and
- understand how to read safety certificates and identify any actions that are required to be taken.

Is it for you?

This course is intended for both new and experienced landlords and letting agents. Please note as this is a workshop based, practical course, numbers are limited to 8 delegates per course. It is advised that you book early!

All of these courses are free of charge.

You can book a place by contacting letwise on 0131 529 7454 or e-mailing: letwise@edinburgh.gov.uk

For further information about these courses or future training events, contact our Training and Development Officer, Rachel Fleming on 0131 529 2177 or e-mail: rachel.fleming@edinburgh.gov.uk

Due to the high level of non attendance at courses recently, we have changed our policy. Delegates who fail to cancel their place on the course and subsequently do not attend, will be excluded from all remaining courses in the quarter. This is to enable us to maximise capacity and make sessions as cost effective as possible. This does not prevent delegates from booking on courses within the next advertised quarter.



Fire, Electrical and Plumbing Regulations

Thursday 14 May 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm

Venue: Midlothian Suite, Lothian Chambers, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1RN

This course will inform landlords and letting agents on the new property standards in relation to fire, electrics and plumbing.

Course objectives

By the end of the course delegates will:

- be aware of the importance of good fire safety in rented property and why it is taken so seriously;
- be aware of new building regulations; and
- be aware of water byelaws operated by Scottish Water.

Is it for you?

This course is recommended for all private landlords and letting agents.

Tenancy Agreements

Thursday 4 June 2009, 5.45pm – 8.30pm

Venue: European Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

This course will identify the key elements for inclusion in tenancy agreements, and suggest good practice issues in establishing assured and short assured tenancies.

Course objectives

By the end of this course delegates will:

- be aware of the legal requirements and pitfalls in creating assured and short assured tenancies
- be aware of unfair contract terms in leases and how to avoid these
- be aware of the legal rights and obligations of landlords and tenants
- understand what action can be taken against tenants if things go wrong; and
- be aware of what could be construed as harassment.

Is it for you?

This course is intended for private landlords and letting agents involved in creating tenancy agreements whether let to individuals / families or shared occupancy. It is intended to cover assured and short assured tenancies, and is not intended to address resident landlords or protected tenancies.

Recovery of Possession

Thursday 11 June 2009, 5.45pm – 8.00pm

Venue: European Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

This course will enable delegates to understand the legal requirements and pitfalls in successfully recovering possession of their property under the assured and short assured tenancy regime.

Course objectives

By the end of the course delegates will:

- understand the mandatory and discretionary grounds for repossession
- understand the legal requirements to successfully regain possession at the end of a lease
- be aware of the notices and procedures required in repossession
- be aware of what can go wrong when seeking possession, and how to avoid these problems; and
- understand court processes.

Is it for you?

This course is intended for both new and experienced landlords and letting agents. It is not designed for resident landlords.

The Law of Repairs

Thursday 18 June 2009, 5.45pm – 8.00pm

Venue: European Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

This course will look at the rights and duties landlords and tenants have in cases of disrepair and where these rights and duties come from.

Course objectives

By the end of this course delegates will:

- be aware of statutory and common law repairing obligations
- understand the requirements of the Repairing Standard
- be aware of how the Private Rented Housing Panel operates
- have an understanding of gas safety, furniture and fire safety regulations, and electrical safety.

Is it for you?

This course is designed for both new and experienced landlords and letting agents.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

ترجمہ کے لئے حاضر آماندہر سچے انوباد کررر

بسعنا توفیر الترجمة MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ 很樂意翻譯

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