

LANDLORDS MATTER Aberdeenshire Council's Private Landlord Newsletter September 2024

The New Housing (Scotland) Bill: What Private Landlords Need to Know



The Scottish Government has introduced the Housing (Scotland) Bill, a comprehensive piece of legislation aimed at reforming the private rented sector and enhancing tenant protections. **Please note** that everything in the Bill is currently subject to change and is not yet set in stone.

Key Provisions of the Bill that may affect landlords.

1. **Rent Control Areas** The bill introduces the concept of rent control areas, where local councils will have the authority to assess and regulate rent increases.

2. **Eviction Regulations** The bill places stricter regulations on evictions, requiring the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland and the courts to consider delaying evictions under certain circumstances.
3. **Tenant Rights to Make Changes** Tenants will have the right to request permission to keep pets and make reasonable changes to the property they are renting.
4. **Unclaimed Tenancy Deposits** The bill proposes that unclaimed tenancy deposits be used to support private tenants across Scotland.
5. **Possible Conversion of Assured Tenancies to Private Residential Tenancies**

Full details can be found [here](#).

Winter Proof Your Property

With the winter months fast approaching now is the time to ensure your rental properties are prepared for the colder weather. Here are some tips to help you.

- If you have empty properties and the heating cannot be left on low, you must drain the water and heating systems to prevent pipes from freezing.
- Check that your landlord insurance is up to date and you are covered for storm damage, flood damage, leaks and third party liability for injuries.
- Discuss with your tenant if they are to be away for any period of time during the winter months, most insurance companies require you to let them know if the property is to be vacant for 14-30 days.
- Insulate the loft space if you can to help retain heat in your rental properties and make sure any external water pipes are well insulated to prevent them from freezing.
- Make sure your tenants know where the water and gas stop taps and electricity isolation switches are, this could help prevent further damage should pipes burst, stopping the flow quick can prevent further damage to your property.

Radio Teleswitch (RTS) Electricity Meters

The technology that supports RTS meters will end on 30 June 2025.

You may have an RTS meter if:

- it switches between peak and off-peak tariff rates
- it automatically turns on your heating or hot water
- your home is heated using electric or storage heaters

- there is no gas supply to your area, including households in rural areas and high-rise flats

This change affects properties with RTS meters, commonly used in homes with electric storage heaters.

The electricity suppliers will contact the bill payer to arrange to have the meters replaced with a smart meter. Landlords should check their tenants have made these arrangements with their supplier. Failure to replace RTS meters could result in heating and hot water systems ceasing to function properly after the switch over.

Damp and Condensation



For private landlords in Aberdeenshire, managing damp and condensation issues is crucial to maintaining a healthy living environment for tenants. Aberdeenshire Council provides a comprehensive leaflet that offers guidance on identifying, preventing, and treating damp and condensation in rental properties. This resource is invaluable for landlords looking to ensure their properties meet health and safety standards, and it includes practical tips on ventilation, heating, and moisture control which you can forward on to your tenants. [You can access the leaflet here.](#)



Get Ready for Winter Event

Home Energy Scotland are joining up with Empower Aberdeen for a winter roadshow hosted by Scarf on Monday 7 October in the Aberdeen Music Hall. Talk to them for free and impartial advice on saving money and energy.

They are the only place to get Scottish Government grants and interest-free loans to support your journey to energy-efficiency. They can discuss potential funding options with you, as well as offer practical advice.

They will also be joined by local charities and third sector organisations who may be able to provide useful additional support to help your household.

Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme

Aberdeenshire Council run a Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme to help individuals, couples or families renting in the private sector. The Council will guarantee the initial deposit equivalent to one month's rent (up to a maximum of the Local Housing Allowance applicable to the household and the relevant area). The scheme aims to help people who cannot provide a deposit and who wish to secure a private rented tenancy as a housing option. The Scheme allows us to work in partnership with Landlords to address the demand for housing in the area. For further information click [here](#).

LANDLORD TOOL KIT



Have you visited our [website](#) recently? You will find lots of useful information for private landlords including;

[Our Landlord Information Leaflet](#)

[Landlord Registration](#)

[Landlord Checklist](#)

Landlord Training Courses

Landlord Accreditation Scotland (LAS) Webinars for Private Landlords

Landlord Accreditation Scotland are delighted to offer a number of landlord webinars for 2024. These webinars provide landlords with the opportunity to understand a topic better or act as a refresher on the subject, bringing knowledge on changes to legislation and best practice up to date.

Alongside providing practical guidance, these webinars will be delivered by LAS tutors who are highly experienced and knowledgeable in private rented sector matters and will be on hand to address all your questions and concerns. It can be difficult to keep track of changes to legislation which affect our responsibilities as landlords, which oftentimes can result in costly mistakes. The webinars available from LAS cover all these responsibilities and are updated in line with ever changing legislation.

If you haven't taken part in a webinar before and wonder if it is for you, please contact the LAS team and they will be happy to talk you through how it works.

Your next LAS webinar

Book [online](#) now.

You are receiving this newsletter as a registered landlord of Aberdeenshire Council.

The Landlord Registration Team can be contacted on 01467 534853 or by email
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