



From mountain to sea

# Landlords Matter



July 2021

Welcome to Aberdeenshire Council's Summer Edition to Landlords Matter.



Although the Landlord Registration Team is working differently, we can still be contacted on **01467 534853** or [landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

**Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for private landlords and letting agents**

Advice and guidance for landlords and letting agents can be found on the [Scottish Government's website](#). This website is updated regularly as restrictions change.

**Extension of emergency Coronavirus legislation**

The [Coronavirus \(Extension and Expiry\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) has been approved by the Scottish Parliament.

Following three days of scrutiny, Members of the Scottish Parliament voted in favour of the Bill which extends the current emergency coronavirus legislation from **30 September 2021** to **31 March 2022**.

The provisions of the Bill will continue the current extended notice periods for eviction grounds, which are currently:

- **At least 28 days** (and corresponding with the “ish” date of the Tenancy Agreement) where the eviction ground relates to (a) criminal convictions, (b) tenant absent without reasonable excuse or (c) anti-social behaviour
- **3 months** where the tenancy was granted, and the landlord was induced to grant the tenancy by false statement made knowingly or recklessly by the tenant
- **6 months** in all other cases, including rent arrears

We expect such notice periods will remain in place until at least **31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**.

The ban on the enforcement of eviction orders has lifted. Landlords with Decrees or Tribunal Orders for eviction on grounds such as rent arrears or condition of property can continue to enforce these.

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## Anti-social behaviour

Private Landlords are responsible for any antisocial behaviour that occurs in or around the properties which they rent. This means that if your tenants are causing trouble you must take action to put a stop to it. Failure to take action will impact on your landlord registration.

When you receive a complaint about your tenants or their visitors, there are a number of steps you can take to resolve the issue. These include:

- sending them a letter, explaining what you've been told and asking them to change their behaviour
- arranging a time to visit them and discuss the problem
- finding out the circumstances, understanding what the issue is and what the options are to fix it
- agreeing with your tenants what will change, recording it in writing and making sure you and your tenants both have a copy

- keeping a log of what steps you've taken, in case you need to prove later that you've tried to resolve it

If you keep getting complaints after you have tried to resolve the issues you will need to decide what your next steps will be.

Your options include:

- talking to your tenants again and telling them there are still issues
- asking the council to apply for an antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) for the tenants or their visitors
- going to court to get an interdict to prevent your tenants behaving in a certain way
- evicting your tenants

If you don't do anything to stop your tenants' antisocial behaviour, the Council can take action. This can start with an antisocial behaviour notice (ASBN), which tells you as the landlord what you have to do to stop the problem. It may also affect your landlord registration status.

Further guidance can be found on the Scottish Government's [website](#).

## Noise app

A new mobile app called the Noise App is being trialled by Aberdeenshire Council.

The Noise App allows residents to make a recording of the noise on their smartphone or tablet and submit a report online.

Noise from neighbours is a common source of disturbance, with the most frequent complaints relating to loud music or TV, shouting, banging doors, dogs barking and DIY activities.

The Noise App allows residents to capture the offending sounds much earlier, instead of officers attending to witness the noise or installing noise measuring equipment. This enables officers from Housing, Community Safety and Environmental Health services to start their investigations earlier and take action more quickly.

You can download the app at <http://www.thenoiseapp.com>

For guidance on some types of noise that may be regarded as a nuisance, visit: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/environment/environmental-health/noise-pollution/>

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## Would you like assistance in advertising your vacant property?

Aberdeenshire Council has recently recruited a Housing Officer to support private sector landlords and tenants. The focus will be on linking private landlords with prospective tenants and supporting both throughout the process and the tenancy.



The Housing Officer will support landlords and tenants to resolve issues that may threaten the tenancy at an early stage, they will also be the single point of contact for queries relating to use of the council's [rent deposit guarantee scheme](#).

Currently we are looking to work with landlords to identify vacant properties and to share this information with home seekers. The option of advertising vacant properties via the Aberdeenshire Council website is to be developed.

Please contact Audrey Kemp should you be interested in this scheme. Her contact information is below:

**Audrey Kemp**  
**Housing Officer (Private Tenancies)**  
**01467 538559**  
[audrey.kemp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:audrey.kemp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

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## Landlord registration

If you no longer require your landlord registration as you are no longer letting (property sold, etc) you must notify the landlord registration team by email [landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or telephone the team on **01467 534853**. Removing properties from your registration yourself will not remove your

registration from the database. You should refer to your landlord registration number(s) when contacting us so that lead and joint registrations can be deleted if applicable.

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## Scottish Government announces £10m grant for tenants in arrears due to COVID-19

The Scottish Government has announced a £10 million grant fund for tenants who have fallen into rent arrears as a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Additional information can be found [here](#).

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## Damp and condensation

It is important that landlords identify and take action to prevent damp and condensation within their rental properties. There are many different causes of damp and it is important to find out how and why it is happening.

If it is a repair problem it will be your responsibility as a landlord to resolve this, however, if it caused by your tenant not ventilating the property properly then you may need to provide them with information and advice on what is expected of them. Aberdeenshire Council has created a [damp leaflet](#) which you may find useful.

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## Fuel bank heat fund

[The Heat Fund](#) provides fuel to households who live off the gas grid, rely on bulk fuel deliveries and are unable to keep warm.

The scheme helps prevent self-disconnection where a household cannot afford to pay for their fuel. The Heat Fund ensures that people are not left without energy for basics like heating and hot water.

The Fuel Bank Heat Fund can be used to provide fuel to eligible households who live off the gas grid and **don't** use electricity as their primary source of heat.

For further information please contact [landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

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## Landlord training

**Landlord Accreditation Scotland** promotes best practice in the Scottish private rented sector.

**LAS** run a series of training courses which are now being delivered virtually, to enable landlords to adopt this practice and to ensure they remain updated with changes to legislation and how to deal with the day to day management of rental property.

Landlords do not need to be accredited to attend the training courses. Anyone involved in letting property in the private rented sector in Scotland is welcome to attend.

The cost of the courses is kept to an extremely affordable level to encourage as many people as possible to attend.

The courses are run by experienced tutors including housing law, tax and accreditation specialists ensuring that landlords and agents receive the most relevant information in an informal environment.

The next training course is -

- [Managing common repairs](#) – **Tuesday 6 July 2021 – 2PM**

Their [course calendar](#) is available on their website.

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