

Landlord Guide to Renters' Rights Act 2026

Renters' Rights Act – Key
Points for Landlords



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Content List

Welcome Note	03
What Is the Renters' Rights Act?	04
Key Changes Under the Renters' Rights Act	06
What Does This Mean for Landlords?	18
What Does This Mean for Tenants?	18
How Boxall Brown & Jones Can Help	19
Contact Information	20

Welcome Note

Dear Reader,

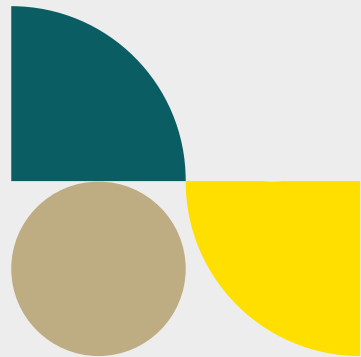
The Renters' Rights Act represents one of the biggest reforms to the private rented sector in decades. Introduced to improve security, standards and transparency across the rental market in England, the legislation significantly changes how tenancies are managed for landlords, tenants and letting agents.

The reforms officially came into effect from 1st May 2026 and apply across the private rented sector in England.

This guide has been created to help landlords, tenants and property professionals understand the key changes, what they mean in practice, and how to remain compliant.

Disclaimer

This guide is intended for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Landlords and tenants should seek professional advice regarding their individual circumstances and specific legal obligations.



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Section 1

What Is the Renters' Rights Act?

What Is the Renters' Rights Act?

The Renters' Rights Act is designed to:

- Improve security for tenants
- Raise housing standards
- Simplify tenancy structures
- Strengthen enforcement against poor practice
- Provide clearer rights and responsibilities for both landlords and tenants

Image by freepik



The legislation impacts virtually every aspect of residential lettings, including tenancy agreements, possession processes, rent increases, property standards, dispute resolution and landlord compliance.

Section 2

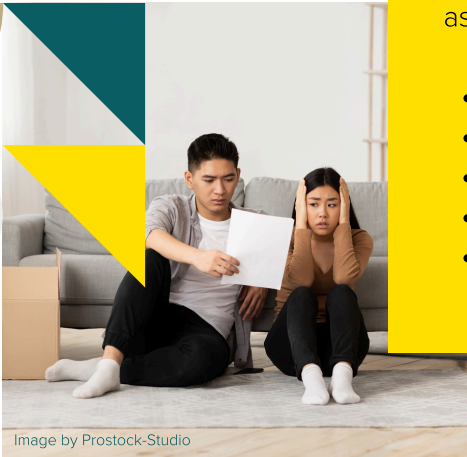
Key Changes Under the Renters' Rights Act

1. Section 21 Evictions Have Been Abolished

One of the most significant changes is the end of Section 21 ‘no fault’ evictions. Landlords can no longer end a tenancy without a legal reason.

Instead, landlords must rely on specific possession grounds under Section 8, such as:

- Selling the property
- Moving into the property themselves
- Serious rent arrears
- Anti-social behaviour
- Breach of tenancy agreement



Important Changes

- Landlords must provide evidence when using possession grounds
- Many grounds now require longer notice periods
- Tenants are protected from arbitrary eviction
- Courts remain involved if tenants do not leave voluntarily

2. All Tenancies Are Now Periodic

Fixed-term assured short hold tenancies have been replaced by periodic tenancies. This means:

Tenants Can:

- Stay in the property indefinitely unless a valid possession ground applies
- Leave at any time by giving two months' notice

Landlords Must:

- Use a legal possession ground to regain possession
- Follow updated notice periods and procedures
- The aim is to provide greater flexibility and stability for tenants while creating a simpler tenancy structure.



Image by pixelshot

3. New Rules Around Rent Increases

Landlords can still increase rents to market value, but the process is now more regulated.

Key Changes

- Rent can only be increased once per year
- Landlords must use the formal Section 13 process
- At least two months' notice must be provided
- Tenants can challenge excessive increases through the First-tier Tribunal
- Tribunals cannot increase rent above the amount proposed by the landlord



The reforms are designed to prevent landlords using excessive rent increases as an indirect method of eviction.

4. New Landlord Ombudsman Scheme

A new mandatory Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman has been introduced.

Image by Peopleimages.com - Yuri Arcurs

What This Means

All private landlords in England must:

- Join the Ombudsman scheme
- Pay an annual membership fee
- Cooperate with investigations and decisions

Tenants Can:

- Raise complaints free of charge
- Seek compensation or remedial action
- Access independent dispute resolution without immediately going to court

Landlords who fail to register may face substantial penalties.

5. Private Rented Sector Database

All landlords and privately rented properties must now be registered on the new national database. The database is intended to:



- Improve transparency
- Help landlords understand legal responsibilities
- Support local authority enforcement
- Provide tenants with more information before renting

Failure to register can result in:

- Financial penalties
- Restrictions on regaining possession
- Further enforcement action for repeat breaches



6. Rental Bidding Has Been Banned

Landlords and agents can no longer encourage or accept offers above the advertised rental amount.



Image by Akarawut Lohacharoenvanich

New Requirements

- A clear asking rent must be advertised
- Agents and landlords cannot invite bidding wars
- Accepting higher offers above the advertised rent is prohibited

This is intended to create a fairer and more transparent lettings market.

7. Stronger Rights for Tenants With Pets

Tenants now have strengthened rights to request permission for pets.

Landlords:

- Must consider requests reasonably
- Cannot unreasonably refuse consent
- May still refuse in legitimate circumstances



Disputes can be escalated to the Ombudsman or courts if necessary.

8. New Protections Against Rental Discrimination

Landlords and agents can no longer automatically refuse applicants simply because they:

- Receive benefits
- Have children

‘No DSS’ style policies are effectively prohibited.

Landlords may still carry out affordability and referencing checks, but decisions must be based on individual circumstances.

Image by Motortion

9. Decent Homes Standard Extended to Private Rentals

The Decent Homes Standard now applies to the private rented sector. Properties must meet minimum standards relating to:

- Safety
- Repair
- Heating
- Damp and mould
- General living conditions



Local authorities have enhanced powers to investigate and enforce compliance.

10. Awaab's Law Extended to Private Landlords

Awaab's Law introduces stricter responsibilities around serious hazards such as damp and mould. Landlords will be legally required to:

- Investigate hazards within specified timeframes
- Complete repairs promptly
- Ensure homes are safe for occupation



Failure to comply could lead to:

- Enforcement action
- Compensation claims
- Court proceedings



11. Rent in Advance Restrictions

Landlords and agents can no longer demand large upfront rent payments before a tenancy begins.

New Rules

- Only one month's rent can generally be requested before move in
- Tenants cannot be forced into excessive advance payments
- Tenants may still choose to pay rent early voluntarily



Image by Andrew Howe

The aim is to reduce financial barriers for renters.

What Does This Mean for Landlords?

Landlords should now:

- Review tenancy agreements
- Ensure all documentation is compliant
- Register with the Ombudsman and PRS Database
- Understand updated possession grounds
- Review rent increase procedures
- Ensure properties meet required standards
- Respond promptly to repairs and hazards
- Keep accurate records and communication logs



Professional management and proactive compliance are now more important than ever.

What Does This Mean for Tenants?

Tenants now benefit from:

- Greater security and stability
- Protection from unfair eviction
- Clearer routes to challenge poor practice
- Improved housing standards
- More transparency around landlords and properties
- Greater protection against unfair treatment

However, tenants must still:

- Pay rent on time
- Follow tenancy terms
- Respect the property and neighbours
- Report issues promptly

How Boxall Brown & Jones Can Help



At Boxall Brown & Jones, we understand that legislative changes can feel overwhelming for both landlords and tenants.

Our experienced residential lettings team can help with:

- Tenancy compliance
- Property management
- Updated tenancy agreements
- Rent reviews
- Landlord advice

- Property inspections
- Maintenance coordination
- Regulatory guidance

Whether you are a landlord seeking support or a tenant wanting clarity on your rights, our team is here to help.



Contact Information

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