Derby City Council

The Renters' Rights Act 2025:

Staying Compliant:
A Practical Checklist for Landlords

DASH Services
Providing Quality Housing Services

The Renters' Rights Act 2025: A Landlord's Guide to Compliance

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 received royal assent on the 27 October 2025 and in November 2025 the government published its **implementation roadmap**. Implementation will take place over three phases:

Phase 1: 1 May 2026 - tenancy reforms

Phase 2: From late 2026 - PRS database and landlord ombudsman

Phase 3: TBC - Awaab's Law and a decent homes standard to the PRS

As a landlord, understanding these changes now will help you prepare for a smooth transition, avoid penalties, and maintain strong tenant relationships.

This guide outlines the key requirements and steps you can take to ensure compliance.

1

The End of Section 21 'No-Fault' Evictions

What's changing from 1st May 2026?

- Section 21 evictions will be abolished, meaning landlords can no longer evict tenants without a specific reason
- All tenancies will become periodic (rolling contracts)
- Possession will only be granted under legally defined grounds, such as:
  - Selling the property
  - Moving in yourself or for a close family member
  - Tenant rent arrears or anti-social behaviour

What can I do?

- Familiarise yourself with the new possession grounds - understand when and how you can lawfully regain possession
- Keep clear records if you plan to sell, refurbish, or move into a property to support any future possession claims
- Improve tenant communication - a strong landlord-tenant relationship will help reduce disputes over possession

2

Private Rented Sector Database

What's changing from late 2026?

- All landlords must register their properties on a new national Private Rented Sector database
- This aims to improve transparency and enforcement in the rental market

How to prepare:

- Gather essential documents ahead of time, including:
  - Gas Safety Certificate
  - Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
  - Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)
- Ensure your records are up to date, as missing documents could lead to compliance issues
- Ensure all your property certificates and documents are easily accessible and in one central place
- Ensure you have a robust system in place to ensure you do not miss any key deadlines

3

Meeting the Decent Homes Standard

Find out more information on Awaab's Law here:

What changes are being proposed?

For the first time, private landlords must meet the Decent Homes Standard, ensuring properties are:

- Safe and well-maintained
- Free from serious hazards (such as damp, faulty wiring, or poor insulation)
- Fit for human habitation
- Meeting Awaab's Law, which will be extended to the private rented sector, requiring landlords to address damp, mould and serious issues within set timescales

How to prepare:

- Conduct an inspection, either yourself or with a professional, to identify and fix potential hazards
- Budget for necessary repairs, as non-compliance could lead to fines
- Respond to tenant repair requests promptly, ensuring you meet the new legal timeframes
- Ensure you have a clear process in place for communicating with your tenants
- Ensure your tenants know how to contact you should they have a problem
    - Make clear plans for when you go on holiday or have any unexpected absences i.e. sickness

4

Changes to Rent Increases

What's changing from 1st May 2026?

- Rent increases will be limited to once per year
- Landlords must give tenants at least two months' notice of a rent increase
- Tenants will have the right to challenge unfair rent hikes through a tribunal
- Only 1 months rent in advance can be requested once any tenancy agreement has been signed, and before the tenancy commencement date

What can I do?

- Set up a rent review calendar - plan rent adjustments in a structured way
- Ensure rent increases are based on market conditions to avoid disputes
- Keep clear records of rent changes and justifications
- Do your research - get to know your local market

5

Tenant Dispute Resolution:

The Ombudsman Scheme

What's changing from late 2026?

- A Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman will handle disputes between landlords and tenants
- The development of the Ombudsman will happen in stages:
  - **Stage 1** will happen at least 12-18 months before implementation. The Secretary of State will choose a scheme administrator to run the new service, which will then need time to scale up.
  - **Stage 2** will require lanlords to be members of the new service, expected to be in 2028. Landlords will be given sufficient notice in advance.
- The Ombudsman's decisions will be legally binding
- All landlords must register with the scheme

How to prepare:

- Sign up for the Ombudsman Scheme as soon as it's available - it will be mandatory
- Keep detailed records of maintenance requests and tenant interactions to help resolve disputes

The Ombudsman Scheme continued

- Focus on clear communication with tenants to prevent conflicts before they escalate
- Ensure you keep up to date on the latest developments by registering with your Local Authority's mailing list, accreditation or keep updated via the DASH Services website

6 New Rules on Pets in Rentals

What's changing from 1st May 2026?

- Tenants will have the right to request a pet, and landlords cannot unreasonably refuse

What can I do?

- Create a fair and transparent pet policy, balancing tenant need, property upkeep and property suitability

7 Stronger Protections Against Tenant Discrimination

What's changing from 1st May 2026?

- The new law bans discrimination against tenants on benefits or with children
- Tenant selection must be fair and transparent, based only on financial suitability

What can I do?

- Review your tenant screening process - ensure it complies with non-discrimination rules
- Focus only on affordability, references, and credit history when assessing applications
- Remove any outdated policies that might unintentionally exclude certain groups
- If you are using an agent, ensure they are following the guidance on your behalf

8

Stronger Local Authority Enforcement

What's changing from 27th December 2025?

- Councils will have greater powers to investigate landlords and enforce compliance
- Higher fines and penalties will be introduced for breaches of rental laws

How to prepare:

- Stay informed on local council regulations, as enforcement will be stricter
- Conduct regular property inspections to ensure ongoing compliance
- Engage with local authorities proactively to stay ahead of any new requirements

Next Steps:

How Landlords can prepare now

- Review your property portfolio and identify areas needing upgrades or compliance adjustments
- Update your tenancy agreements in line with the new regulations, as soon as the information is available
- Develop a clear record-keeping system to track compliance and avoid penalties
- Engage with professional landlord associations to stay informed and receive guidance
- Keep an eye on your Local Authority website and try the free DASH e-learning training at dashtraining.org.uk/course

Download the Renters' Rights Act 2025: Implementation Roadmap here:

The Renters' Rights Bill represents the most significant change in rental laws in decades. While adapting to the new rules may seem challenging, preparing now will protect your business, strengthen tenant relationships, and ensure you remain fully compliant.

By taking proactive steps, landlords can minimise disruption, avoid penalties, and continue to operate successfully in the evolving rental market.

This document is available on our website and will be updated as more information becomes available.

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