



## **Summer Newsletter 2018**

**Welcome to our summer newsletter 2018 and what a summer it has been! As usual we will start with the latest legal news and then guide you through various updates within the Southernbrook Group.**

### **LEGAL UPDATE!!!**

Phew!! What a year we've had so far in the world of tenancy law and legislation changes. As so much has happened and is ongoing we thought it would be a great idea to keep you updated on the story so far, proving time and again why you need a competent qualified Agent to act on your behalf!!

- **Government How to Rent Guide first update – 17 January 2018**
  - New version must be provided for new tenancies created after this date to include a statutory periodic tenancy if you are required to serve a section 21 notice.
  
- **Minimum Energy Levels Regulations (MEES) – 1 April 2018**
  - You will not be able to create new tenancies which are rated F and G after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018, unless you have applied for one of the exemptions i.e. cannot get funding, listed building.
  
- **Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018**
  - This will allow a Gas Safety to be conducted within two months of the expiry date and the anniversary date for the year following will remain the same (very similar logic to the MOT for a car)
  
- **Homeless Reduction Act 2017 – 3 April 2018**
  - Councils will be obliged to assist tenants on the receipt of the section 21 notice and not advise that they should await eviction.
  
- **Banning Orders – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018**
  - Banning agents and landlords for an agreed period, if they are commit certain crimes or do not comply with certain housing law requirements i.e. licensing, gas safety, fire risk. No public database but held by local council.

- **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) – 25 May 2018**  
A subject too big to summarise in one sentence, but a requirement for all service providers to become more transparent and accountable about the personal data they hold.
  
- **Government How to Rent Guide second update – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018**  
Updated for the second time this year along a further additional 3 renting guides aimed at landlords, tenants, and leaseholders
  
- **Deregulation Act 2015 – 1 October 2018**
  - All the compliance issues for a valid service of Section 21 notice will apply to ALL tenancies in existence on this date i.e. EPC, GSR, Form 6A, but NOT the how to rent guide for those tenancies which started prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 and are still in existence.
  
- **Houses in Multiple Occupation and Residential Property Licensing – 1 October 2018**
  - Removal of the three storey limited for mandatory licensing i.e. five students sharing a ground floor flat, will require a mandatory licensing. Also introducing minimum room sizes for licensable HMO's.
  
- **Mandatory Requirement for all Letting Agents to hold Client Money Protection – April 2019**
  - A few more details to be announced on the approved schemes, but proposed that all agents will require CMP to continue to receive and hold clients monies
  
- **Minimum Energy Levels Regulations (MEES) – 1 April 2020**
  - The regulations will apply to all relevant tenancy agreements in existence on that date

### **Current Proposals in Parliament**

- **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation and Liability of Housing Standards). – date to be announced**
  - An additional requirement to PROVIDE and KEEP properties in a standard fit for human habitation. Has received cross party support, so expect this to be implemented. Greater onus on health and safety.
  
- **5 Yearly Electrical Safety Checks – date to be announced**
  - A consultation of the proposals is currently available to comment upon, but a mandatory requirement to conduct a 5 year periodic electrical inspection is guaranteed.

- **Ban of Tenant Fees – date to be announced**
  - After the scrutiny at committee stage, the Government have amended the draft bill. Expected to be law in Spring 2019.
  
- **Private Landlords (Registration) Bill – date to be announced**
  - Unlikely to happen at the moment, but a private members bill to force all Landlords to register their properties in England, as in Wales.
  
- **Carbon Monoxide Alarm Requirement – date to be announced**
  - Has received Government backing, so expected to be in force sometime in 2019. Will be a requirement to have a CO2 alarm in any property with fuel that produces carbon monoxide.
  
- **Mandatory requirement for Letting Agent staff to be Professionally Qualified – date to be announced**
  - Very little detail beyond the soundbite. A working group will recommend to Government how the training/qualifications will be obtained/maintained
  
- **Property Ombudsman Review – date to be announced**
  - Review in to the oversight of the schemes, and a proposal to have one ombudsman across all the relevant parts of the property

## **GDPR**

### **What is the General Data Protection Regulation? (GDPR)**

You may have already heard about GDPR and how we store and control data. This enforcement came into place on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2018 and was designed to protect people's personal information, for example; contact telephone numbers, addresses etc which can identify a person. The new regulations are to ensure that we have consent from the persons whose data we are holding and that they are happy for us to store their personal information. Being a letting agent, we hold a lot of sensitive information for both our tenants and landlords.

### **Communication Preferences**

You can now update your own communication preferences on how we contact you. For landlords, you will see at the bottom of your monthly statements you receive from us a link with 'Click here to manage your communication preferences'. This will re-direct you to a page where you can change how you would like to be contacted and we will be notified of any changes you make.

You can find our privacy notice on our website at [www.southernbrook.co.uk](http://www.southernbrook.co.uk) under the Landlords tab.



**Manage your communication preferences**

To find out more about how we use your information please contact us.

**Contact preferences**

Would you like to receive news, offers and updates via your preferred contact method from Southernbrook Lettings Ltd? You can unsubscribe at any time from this page. Please select

Would you like Southernbrook Lettings Ltd to send you details of properties that may be of interest to you, based on your specific criteria, as they become available? You can unsubscribe at any time from this page. Please select

**Contact methods**

I am happy to receive emails Yes

I am happy to receive text messages No

I am happy to receive post No

I am happy to receive phone calls No

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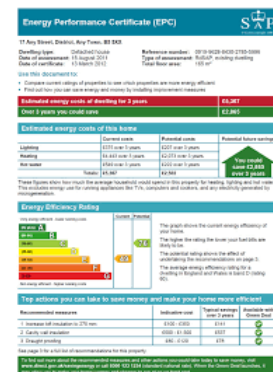
Please see the picture to the left which shows you how you can manage your communication preferences.

## Utilities

As you may or may not be aware, we currently notify utility suppliers of any tenancy changeover for Gas, Water Electric and Council Tax. During any vacant period, any bills will be sent to our office where we will sort all outstanding payments and notify the supplier of the correct meter readings taken on a Checkout or Inventory, and work out who is liable for the bill. However, we are now unable to speak to utility suppliers on behalf of Landlords regarding any bill that we are not named on. If you do not wish for any bills to be sent to your correspondence address and would prefer all bills were sent to us, you will need to email or call the suppliers to say that you are happy for Southernbrook Lettings to speak on behalf of you and be named on the account.

## EPC's

After multiple exams, our managing director Louis is now a qualified Domestic Energy Assessor! meaning we can now carry out all Energy Performance Certificates in-house for our landlords. This is becoming stricter with legislation consistently changing! Remember an EPC is a legal requirement on ALL rental properties and they now do need to meet a minimum energy efficiency rating of E and above for any tenancy granted since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. Many are also coming up for their 10 year renewals since the law came into place in 2008. Several landlords think that if their property is listed they do not require an EPC but this is no longer the case. EVERY rental property is required to have one and any potential improvements that can be made to bring a property up to an E rating have to be done. If all improvements are made and the property still isn't a minimum of an E we can then register it as exempt. Should you wish to find out further information on this please do not hesitate to speak to Louis.



## Holiday Lettings

The holiday let market is booming and we are finding more and more people are looking for shorter term lets. This could be because they need a stop gap in-between tenancies, house sales or could be visiting relatives or attending events in the local area. As you may be aware we opened our holiday let division last year, it has really taken off and is now a roaring success! We manage the whole

process from marketing, managing bookings, collecting payments, organising cleans and check in's. We take direct bookings as well as advertising on all of the main sites such as Airbnb, trip advisor, holiday lettings etc. We have had a lot of new holiday let properties come on the market lately so if you have any relatives coming down to the area and are looking for somewhere to stay then give Hayley a call as we can give discounts for direct bookings! Alternatively, If you have a property of some kind and are interested in how you could be making some extra money then give us a call today!

### **Property of the Quarter**

As part of our quarterly newsletters we are now introducing a new section picking one of our landlord's investments that they are looking to sell. As you will know Southernbrook are a specialist letting agent and don't market for residential sales. However, due to our large landlord client base we often get clients looking to sell their investments and likewise others wanting to buy! If you looking to buy or sell please speak to Louis today as it may well be we have a property with a tenant in situ already waiting for you!

This quarter we have a ground floor one bedroom flat located in Ventura, Durban Road, Bognor Regis. Ventura is a purpose-built block with many selling points, for example, gas central heating, off road parking, bike storage, long leases and being only 10 years old are all very modern well-kept apartments.



This flat is currently tenanted and producing just over a 6% yield and is available to investors or first-time buyers and would make an ideal investment. All for just **£125,000!!** Speak to Louis today for further information.

### **Social Media**

Please don't forget to follow us on Social Media to keep updated with our various competitions and Southernbrook News!



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