



Tenant Information Pack

Introduction

KeyRing Lettings aim to provide both landlords and tenants with a high quality residential property management service, aimed at the housing needs of families, professionals and anyone threatened with homelessness or homeless.

We have experienced and professional staff who always aim to exceed customer expectations in order to provide the best service possible.

KeyRing Lettings can advise our tenants on all matters relating to property rental and we provide a complete range of related services.

We are a non-profit Community Interest Company (CIC) who provide a comprehensive letting and management service in the Mendip area. Any surplus we make is re-invested into the business to assist in continuing to provide the social enterprise service in the future.

Deposit

A deposit against damage or dilapidation etc. is required and we hold this at a sum equivalent to five weeks rent unless otherwise stated. Your deposit must not be used in lieu of rent. Payment of rent from your deposit account cannot be seen as discharging your liability to pay the rent under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement. The deposit will be held in accordance with the 2004 Housing Act.

At the end of the tenancy, a member of our staff will inspect the property. If the property is in the same condition as when it was let (taking into account fair wear and tear) and the inventory is correct, the deposit will be returned after you have moved out. This will usually be paid directly to you from the Deposit Protection Scheme, into an account nominated by you.

In cases where discrepancies are found, we will resolve them as soon as possible.

Deposits will be paid to us on checking into the property and signing of the Tenancy Agreement.

Payment of rent

Rent is payable monthly, in advance by standing order. Whether your property is managed by **KeyRing Lettings** or your Landlord, the rent will be due on the anniversary date of your move-in. You will receive a form for this purpose on check-in, which must be completed and returned to us as soon as possible, so that we can send it on to your bank or building society. It is your responsibility to ensure your bank or building society account has sufficient funds to support monthly payments by this method.

Initially you will be given an invoice detailing the first monthly rent payment and the deposit. The balance of this first payment must be with us in cleared funds prior to your moving in. Cleared funds are cash, a bank transfer, a building society cheque or if it is a personal cheque we will need this a week beforehand to allow time for it to clear the banking process.

It is a contractual obligation that the rent is paid on time, and by standing order. Failure to do so is a breach of contract, which may result in premature termination of your tenancy by the Landlord or the contract not being renewed.

Taking possession of the property and signing of the Tenancy Agreement.

Once referencing is completed satisfactorily, we will arrange a check-in/move in day with you. On this day you will need to pay a month's rent in advance together with the deposit, which is usually the same

amount as five weeks rent, in cleared funds as detailed above. Thereafter the rent is payable monthly in advance by standing order mandate which we will provide at your check in appointment

We will arrange a check in appointment with you and the Tenancy Agreement will need to be signed by all parties (including guarantors) before we can release the property keys.

Tenancy Agreements

We use Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreements, a class of tenancy created by the 1988 Housing Act and amended by the Housing Act 1996. The nature of these contracts is that they are legally binding once signed, and are actionable in the courts, if broken. We draw up two copies of the Agreements one for yourselves as the Tenant(s) and the other for the Landlord(s).

The minimum term for these contracts is either six or twelve months unless stated otherwise when you apply. Where there are joint tenants all parties must be named on the Agreements, this includes married couples and children over the age of 18.

Inventories/Schedule of Condition

An inventory/schedule of condition of all the items left in the property and a full description of the general state and condition of the property i.e. decoration and garden etc. will be made by **KeyRing Lettings** prior to letting. This will need to be checked by you when you move in.

You will have seven days to check the inventory yourself and send it back to us. If an amended copy is not received by us within that time limit, the original inventory will stand. When you leave the property the inventory will be used to agree any repairs or replacements beyond fair wear and tear and deductions will be agreed from the deposit so it is important that you thoroughly check and agree the inventory.

Keys

On the day the tenancy commences, we will have keys to the property for you. We will provide you with two sets of keys for the property but keys will not be released to you until all parties (including guarantors) have signed the contract and we are in receipt of the total amount due in cleared funds. **All** keys must be returned to us at the checkout appointment otherwise a fee for either replacement keys or locks will be payable.

Contents and Buildings Insurance

It is important that you arrange your own contents insurance cover, the Landlord is responsible for the buildings insurance on the property.

We also advise that you insure against accidentally damaging the Landlords furnishings, fixtures and fittings during your stay, remembering that a small accident could absorb more than the sum of the deposit we hold.

Rental arrears

Non-payment of rent is a breach of contract, if you breach the contract your Landlord is entitled to commence court proceedings to evict you and you can be sued by your Landlord for the total amount of the money owed on the contract.

Pets

All of our properties are let on a no pet basis, unless agreed in advance by the Landlord.

When you leave the property at the end of the tenancy, the property and all carpets must be cleaned in line with the Tenancy Agreement.

Routine visits

You will be informed when your tenancy begins whether we are providing a management service or whether you deal directly with your Landlord. Where we are providing a management service we are required to visit all our properties regularly.

A routine visit will normally be made approximately one month after the start of a tenancy and thereafter visits will be carried out approximately every three months by a member of our staff however, we reserve the right to visit more frequently if we feel it is necessary. Visits are designed not to be intrusive and there is no need for you to be present unless you wish to be there.

If you have been given permission to keep a dog in the property you will be required to be present at the property for the visit at the time advised by **KeyRing Lettings** or you must otherwise arrange for the dog to be elsewhere when the visit takes place.

Maintenance

We have our own maintenance contractors who can deal with all maintenance and repair work required on any property or appliances.

Any maintenance required must be arranged through **KeyRing Lettings** as we need to seek our Landlords approval in advance for works carried out, any works arranged directly between you and a contractor cannot be financially reimbursed, unless agreed in advance.

Gas Safety

In accordance with the terms of The Health and Safety Act 1974 and the Gas Safety (installation and use) Regulations 1994 and Amendment Regulations 1996 and No2 Regulations 1996, we have a duty to ensure that each property we manage has the gas appliances inspected each year and that a safety certificate is produced. You will be provided with a copy of this certificate when you check in and thereafter on renewal annually. We also keep a copy of the certificate at our office.

Electrical Safety

Under the terms of the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and the Electrical Equipment (safety) Regulations 1994, the landlord has a duty to ensure the electrical safety of the property. KeyRing Lettings take every care to ensure that properties we manage are safe in this respect and we advise the Landlord to obtain the relevant electrical safety certificates, a copy of which you will be provided with at check in.

Fire Safety

Under the terms of the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and The Fire and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 and the Fire and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 1993, the landlord has a duty to ensure that the soft furnishings at all of our properties are safe and that they comply with the above regulations. This means that all relevant items should have labels confirming that they do comply with regulations.

TV Licence

Your TV licence should be transferred to your new address. You are responsible for ensuring you have a TV license during your tenancy.

Gas, electricity and water

Gas, electricity and water bills are not included in your rent. Although it is your responsibility to inform the relevant companies that you are taking the property, **KeyRing Lettings** will usually pass meter readings on to the utilities on your behalf. Some properties have pre-payment meters for electricity and gas. The relevant energy supplier can change this to a normal billing method at your request but they may charge you for this service. Most utility companies offer monthly payment options on request.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors and Smoke alarms

The property will have one working smoke alarm per floor and a working carbon monoxide in every room where there is a solid fuel burning appliance. All alarms will be tested in your presence on the day you move into the property.

Council Tax

As tenants you will be responsible for paying this tax but **KeyRing Lettings** will notify the relevant local authority when you move into and out of the property. Payment of the Council Tax by monthly direct debit is available by individual arrangement with the local authority.

Energy Performance Certificates

You will be provided with a valid certificate on the day you move into the property. The certificate will be valid/renewed 10 yearly

Health and Safety – Legionnaires Disease

Legionnaire's disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia, which can affect anybody. It is caused by the inhalation of small droplets of water from contaminated sources containing legionella bacteria. Landlords have a legal obligation to ensure tenants are aware of the possible causes and symptoms of Legionnaire's disease and **KeyRing Lettings** will provide you with an information sheet and carry out a risk assessment on the day you take up occupation of the property, advise you on the outcome and what steps, if any, need to be taken.

Telephone

British Telecom will not talk to third parties therefore we are unable to help you directly with these arrangements.

How to Rent Booklet

You will be given the most recent copy of the booklet on the day you move in to your property.

Checking out at the end of the Tenancy

A final inspection appointment will be made with you at the end of the tenancy. This appointment will be based around the inventory produced at the start of the tenancy and will determine whether the deposit is refunded in full or if any deductions need to be made. All keys must be returned to us at this time.

Provided all matters are in order and any deductions are agreed (and covered by the deposit held) you can normally expect the return of any balance due from the deposit directly from the Deposit Protection Scheme.

Prescribed Information

Prescribed information is information regarding details of where your deposit is held and this can be found at the end of your Assured Shorthold Tenancy, a copy of which will be emailed to you in advance of taking up occupancy and also on the day you move in to the property.

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit

The following information (clauses 1-4) are applicable if you are receiving or intend to start claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit during the term of your Tenancy or if you become a Housing Benefit or Universal Credit claimant at any time throughout the term of your tenancy.

1. As well as completing forms for us you must also fill in and submit your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit application form/change of circumstances form. This must be done as soon as possible, ideally on the day of your check-in and we will assist you with this process if required.
2. You must hand your Housing Benefit form in to your local authority Housing Benefit section or any council access point and you must make sure you are given a **RECEIPT** by the Officer who takes your application from you - this will be your only proof that the Housing Benefit office has received your claim. We can advise you on your nearest access point and the opening hours. If you are claiming, or entitled to claim, Universal Credit, you must complete your Universal Credit claim on line, or report any changes to your job coach in your journal, and provide any documents requested within the allocated time to allow the claim/changes to be processed in time for your next rent due date.
3. As well as your initial application form you will need to supply some additional information to support your claim. If your claim is a brand new claim and you have never claimed before then the process is quite extensive but we will be happy to arrange an appointment for you to attend either Mendip District Council Housing Benefit office or your local Job Centre where an Officer will assist you in completing the form. We will advise you on what documents you will need to provide to ensure your application is processed quickly.

If you are already in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit you will still need to complete a change of circumstances form or speak to your Work Coach. You will also be required to supply a copy of your new Tenancy Agreement and **KeyRing Lettings** will be happy to supply you with a signed copy on the day you move in for this purpose but it is essential you take this agreement and application to the relevant person without delay.

We will ask you to provide us with copies of these receipts as confirmation that the application has been made and that your obligations under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement are being met, so do please ensure you obtain a receipt.

4. If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, we would like your Benefit paid directly to us at **KeyRing Lettings**. We will supply you with a form to hand into your local authority along with your claim if required.

It is important to remember that you are liable to pay your rent on the rent due date even if there has been a delay in processing your Benefit claim

Re-letting

If for any reason you vacate the property before the end of the fixed term, with or without the Landlord's consent, you will be liable for rental payments to the end of the fixed term or until the day a replacement tenant moves into the property. You will also be liable to pay any reasonable costs to re let the property before the end of a fixed term, which the Landlord would normally be liable for. Further details and costs for this will be explained to you if the need arises.

If the Landlord is happy to continue, your tenancy may be extended by a further fixed period or the tenancy may become periodic (a rolling contract) and has no fixed end of term date.

If your tenancy become periodic, two months' notice is required from the landlord(s) should they wish to end the tenancy. If you as the tenant should wish to end the tenancy then one months' notice is required from you.

In Conclusion...

KeyRing Lettings offer a caring service and we pride ourselves on our customer service so if you have any questions contact us on 01749 681356 or email us at welcome@keyringlettings.co.uk