



Landlords Update

Newsletter of Tower Hamlets Landlords Forum. Building a better future for both landlords and tenants!

Report from our Landlords Forum

Many thanks to all members who came our May 2007 Forum. We were pleased to give a platform to key experts including:

Martin Conneally, London Landlord Accreditation Scheme

Jeremy Hall, National Landlords Association. Jeremy spoke about the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme.

Toyin Davidson, Rent Arrears Recovery Service

info@davidson.co.uk

Toyin gave useful information about debt recovery, litigation, Enforcement Action, tracing and investigations.

Kate Rosengarten, Real Lettings landlord@broadwaylondon.org
This is a letting agency with a difference. They work with Broadway, a registered charity for homeless people. They find property for previously homeless clients, help keep people in homes and guarantee rents.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

London Landlord Accreditation Courses

5 July 2007

9.30 a.m – 16.30 p.m

Harbour Room, Level Headed Building
Unit A, Great Eastern Enterprise Centre,
3 Millharbour, London E14 9XP

London Landlords Day

6 September 2007

1 p.m – 20.00 p.m

Olympia, London

Landlords Forum

The next meeting of Tower Hamlets Landlords Forum is on ... September 2007 from 2pm to 4.30pm. We are holding the meeting at our new offices at 62 Roman Road, Bethnal Green E2.

All Tower Hamlets landlords and agents are invited. Many of our landlords and agents tell us how useful they are finding these meetings, if you would like more information call Noella on

020 7363 3558

We very much look forward to seeing you.



The Homeless & Housing Advice Service has now relocated to newly refurbished offices at 62 Roman Road E2.

Luckily, all our telephone numbers remain the same.



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CONTACT DETAILS

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e-mail: housing.advicewest@towerhamlets.gov.uk
you will also find us on the web at:
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

Send your letters, ideas, comments, even jokes and we will publish them in our newsletter.

How would you like to see the Landlords Forum develop and what you would like to see in the newsletter?

Please email, write or call us.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Well done Elliot Leigh Property Services

The team at Elliot Leigh Properties in Roman Road are keen and regular members of our Landlords Forum.

Along with our clients we very much appreciate their efforts to assist clients who have had their properties repossessed.

They have worked hard to ensure those families have realised the best prices for their property. This makes a great difference to families at a very difficult time.



This Month's Top Tip

Have a spring clean! Make the most of the good weather to tackle all those jobs you have been putting off. If you use environmentally friendly paints and products you will be doing your bit for the environment as well.

Replace light bulbs with energy-saving equivalents and save up to £9 on your annual electricity bill or £100 over the lifetime of the bulb - not a bad return on an initial outlay of as little as £3.50 per bulb.

JOKE CORNER

If you are caught sleeping at your desk remember these useful explanations... Try, "did you know if you get your ear really close you can hear a sound coming out of this keyboard!" Or, "...they told me at the blood bank this might happen."



National Landlords Association

The NLA protects and promotes the interests of private sector landlords. Join now – for more information visit www.landlords.org.uk



Increasing the rent?

Do your research and get it right.



If you are considering increasing the rent of your properties there

are important matters to take into account. Principally you need to know if there are any provisions in the Tenancy Agreement to allow you to do so? If no, then you have two options;

- 1 Increase the rent at the end of the fixed term by renewing the contract.
- 2 Serve a Section 13(2) Notice (Housing Act 1988) which proposes an increase in rent.

Please note the amount of increase should be in keeping with rents of similar properties in the same area. If the increases are above the local market rents, tenants can apply for the rent to be assessed by a Rent Assessment Committee.

The Rent Assessment Committee has the power to then reduce the rent if they see fit and you will be bound to this figure for 12 months.

For more information see: www.therentservice.gov.uk

Are your properties wasting energy and money?

Do you know you can get a home energy check and that you can claim tax relief for making energy saving improvements?

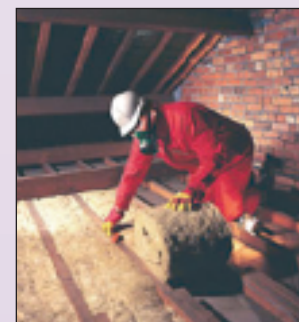
You can now take an online home energy check, based on type of property and type of heating system that you have. Most energy companies offer this service on their websites or you can go to: www.est.org.uk/myhome/

You might be eligible for grants to improve the energy efficiency for your property, to find out and for general energy efficiency advice contact your local **Energy Efficiency Advice Centre** on freephone **0800 512 012**

In addition to this you can get extra tax relief, as landlords can claim the **Landlords Energy Savings Allowance (LESA)**. This scheme has now been extended increase the size of the allowance.

From 6th April 2007 the **LESA** allows up to £1500 tax relief per property on specific energy efficiency measures. Previously the system only allowed the £1500 tax relief per building, so if a landlord owned a flat in a block of four, all of which were contained in one building, that landlord could only claim a quarter of the allowance.

This has now been changed and landlords can claim the



£1500 tax relief for each property. There has also been an increase in the number energy efficiency measures which now enable the landlord to claim the allowance.

They include;

- Loft insulation
- Cavity and solid wall insulation
- Hot water system insulation
- Draught proofing
- Floor insulation (included from April 2007)

RDS properties needed!

If you have a property you would like us to find a tenant for please let us know. We run a very successful **Rent Deposit Scheme** that matches properties and tenants. It supplies the deposit and rent in advance, as well as

sorting out all the other issues, like getting the Housing Benefit on quickly — they have their own exclusive Housing Benefit officer to fast track any claim! We want your properties now so contact us on **020 7364 7472** or email housingdvce@towerhamlets.gov.uk

TENANCY DEPOSIT PROTECTION SCHEME (TDPS)

TDPS came into force on 6 April 2007. It is designed to ensure that all tenants of an Assured Shorthold Tenancies are able to get back the deposit they are entitled to. All deposits taken from April 6th 2007 need to be placed in either the Custodial Scheme or an Insurance Based Scheme.

Both Landlords and Letting Agents can join the Scheme, but it is the individual Landlords that are legally liable for the deposit.

If a deposit is not protected, the Landlord will be breaking the law

and not able to regain possession of the property. The Tenant can apply for a court order requiring the deposit to be protected.

If the court is satisfied that the Landlord has failed to comply the court might order the Landlord to repay the deposit within 14 days to pay the deposit into a designated account held by the custodial scheme.

The court can also order the Landlord to pay to the tenant an amount equivalent three times the deposit amount within 14 days of

making of the order. For peace of mind Landlords can register at;

www.mydeposits.co.uk

For more information about Tenancy Deposit Scheme see the DGLG website on;

www.communities.gov.uk/tenancydeposit



Houses in Multiple Occupations(HMOs)

Do you have an HMO?

Do you own or manage residential property to rent in England?

Do you live elsewhere or in the property, with or without your family?

Are there 3 or more tenants living in the property (apart from you and your family)

Do the residents share a kitchen or bathroom or toilet?

If you have answered yes to these questions, you have a HMO and need to register this with the Tower Hamlets Environmental Health Service.

Do you need a mandatory licence?

Do you have 5 or more tenants?

Do they live in 2 or more households?

Has your property 3 or more habitable storeys?

If you have answered yes you need to apply for a Mandatory Licence.

You can obtain a licence by registering with Tower Hamlets Environmental Health Service, the cost is £50 per habitable room.

The registration lasts for five years and is renewable at the end of the term.

For more information see; www.towerhamlets.gov.uk www.communities.gov.uk

Ever heard of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)?

Homes can be dangerous places, The most common hazards are cold, fire, falls, lead in drinking water pipes and old paintwork. Hot surfaces that could lead to burns or scalds, for e.g. fire, heaters, cookers, and hot taps.

Landlords are advised to self assess their property for hazards that may cause a health or safety risk to tenants and take appropriate measures to reduce risk.

On 06/04/07 HHSRS replaced the Housing Fitness Standard. This new tool can be used to assess all residential dwellings to ensure they are safe to live in.

Avoid legal action that can be taken by both tenants and local authorities if there is an accident

and make sure your properties have been checked.



To get an assessment done contact Tower Hamlets Environmental Health Service.

Call: 0207 364 7472

Email: environmental.health@towerhamlets.gov.uk