Automated by Friday

# Renters' Rights admin checklist for letting agents (England)

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**The promise:** one afternoon to check that your templates, CRM and processes match the Renters' Rights Act as it stands today, with every unconfirmed date clearly flagged.

**Time:** about 2 to 3 hours for a small agency. Longer if you manage hundreds of tenancies.
**Cost:** this checklist is free. The landlord database costs landlords £65 a year per property, renewed every year and pro-rated during the rollout (government campaign site (Housing Hub), checked 21 October 2026).
**Who it's for:** letting and managing agents, and self-managing landlords, with private tenancies in **England**. It doesn't cover Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Updated 22 October 2026.

## Which dates are confirmed, and which aren't?

| What | When | Status |
|---|---|---|
| Council investigatory powers | 27 Dec 2025 | In force (roadmap) |
| New tenancy system, section 21 abolished, rent and letting rules (Phase 1) | 1 May 2026 | In force (GOV.UK overview) |
| Information Sheet to existing tenants | By 31 May 2026 | Deadline passed (GOV.UK) |
| Landlord database opens, West Midlands first | 15 Dec 2026 | Announced (GOV.UK news, 9 Sep 2026) |
| Database rolls out to other regions. Each region gets 3 months to register, and deadlines follow where the property is, not where the landlord lives | Everyone actively letting registered by 14 Nov 2027 (South West deadline). Regional dates in the table below | Published (government campaign site (Housing Hub), checked 21 Oct 2026; GOV.UK news, 9 Sep 2026) |
| Database annual fee | £65 a year per property, renewed yearly, pro-rated during rollout | Published (government campaign site (Housing Hub), checked 21 Oct 2026) |

| What | When | Status |
|---|---|---|
| Database upkeep: a let property's tenancy and safety details added within 28 days of its entry (or the entry becomes inactive); any change updated within 28 days; later properties share the landlord's renewal date; a letting agent or property manager appointed by the landlord can provide and update the tenancy and safety details | From each region's start date | **Draft regulations, not yet final** (draft Private Rented Sector Database Regulations 2026, regs 4(5), 6(2), 7(2), 8, 9(4), 10(4) and 11, checked 22 Oct 2026) |
| Advert must show database registration number | "Future legislation" | **No commencement date found.** Section 82 is only partly in force (legislation.gov.uk) |
| PRS Landlord Ombudsman, membership mandatory | "We expect this to be in 2028" | **Not confirmed** (roadmap) |
| Awaab's Law for private tenancies | Consultation closes 18 Dec 2026 | **No start date set** (consultation, 9 Oct 2026) |
| New Decent Homes Standard applies to private rented homes | 2035 | Policy intent, legislation to follow (policy statement, updated 28 Jan 2026) |
| Minimum EPC C (new and existing private tenancies) | 1 Oct 2030 | Policy intent (same policy statement) |

**Landlord database: when each region must register** (government campaign site (Housing Hub), checked 21 October 2026). Landlords can register early, all regions at once.

| Region | Registration required from | Deadline to register |
|---|---|---|
| West Midlands | 15 Dec 2026 | 14 Mar 2027 |
| East of England | 15 Jan 2027 | 14 Apr 2027 |
| East Midlands | 15 Feb 2027 | 14 May 2027 |
| South East | 15 Mar 2027 | 14 Jun 2027 |
| Yorkshire and Humber | 15 Apr 2027 | 14 Jul 2027 |
| North West | 15 May 2027 | 14 Aug 2027 |
| North East | 15 Jun 2027 | 14 Sep 2027 |
| London | 15 Jul 2027 | 14 Oct 2027 |
| South West | 15 Aug 2027 | 14 Nov 2027 |

## 1. Have tenancies moved to the new system?

From GOV.UK: Renters' Rights Act, an overview for landlords (published 1 May 2026):

- [ ] Every existing assured shorthold tenancy is flagged in the CRM as an **assured periodic tenancy**, with no fixed end date.
- [ ] Fixed-term end dates and "renewal due" reminders have been removed or switched off. Nothing should prompt a renewal fee or a new fixed term.
- [ ] Every existing tenant has had the **Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet**, and the date it was sent is logged. It had to go out by 31 May 2026. The PDF must be sent, not a link (GOV.UK).
- [ ] Any tenancy agreed verbally has had a written statement of terms (overview; s.12).
- [ ] The tenancy agreement template for new lets includes the required information and has no fixed term.

## 2. Is my lettings process compliant from enquiry to move-in?

- [ ] **Adverts and listings** state a single asking rent. GOV.UK says this doesn't include "to let" signs (overview; s.56).
- [ ] No "offers invited" or "best and final" wording. **Rental bidding is banned**, and you can't accept an offer above the advertised rent.
- [ ] Referencing and viewing scripts don't screen out people because they have **children** or receive **benefits**.
- [ ] **No rent is taken before the tenancy is signed.** Rent in advance is capped at **1 month** (roadmap).
- [ ] There's a process for **pet requests**: a reply within 28 days, and refusal only for a valid reason (roadmap; overview). Set a CRM task with a due date when a request comes in.

## 3. Have I updated how rent increases work?

- [ ] Rent increases go through **section 13, using Form 4A**, with at least **2 months'** notice (overview; s.6).
- [ ] There's no more than **one increase a year**, and the CRM stops a second one going out.
- [ ] The rent proposed is defensible as market rent, because tenants can challenge an increase. For now they still apply to the First-tier Tribunal, and don't have to pay the higher rent until it decides. The government plans to move initial decisions to HMRC's Valuation Office later, with no date set (GOV.UK news, 9 Sep 2026).

## 4. Have I updated possession and notices?

- [ ] Section 21 templates and workflows are **deleted or archived**, so no one can use them by mistake.
- [ ] Possession now uses **section 8 grounds**. Many grounds have longer notice periods, often 4 months (overview).
- [ ] The CRM records the tenancy start date, so you can see the **first 12 months**, when a landlord can't use the selling or moving-in grounds.

- [ ] The rent-arrears process reflects the mandatory ground at **3 months'** arrears.
- [ ] Landlords know that breaches can bring civil penalties of up to £7,000, and a financial penalty of up to £40,000 for offences, as an alternative to prosecution (enforcement guidance). Rent repayment orders can be up to 2 years' rent (overview).

## 5. Are tenants' deposits protected?

From GOV.UK: Deposit protection schemes and landlords and the overview for landlords:

- [ ] Every deposit taken is in one of the government-backed tenancy deposit protection schemes for England and Wales: **Deposit Protection Service, MyDeposits or Tenancy Deposit Scheme**. Each offers a custodial option (the scheme holds the money) or an insured option (you or the agent hold it and pay the scheme to insure it).
- [ ] The CRM records the date each deposit was received and the date it was protected. It must be protected **within 30 days** of receiving it (GOV.UK for tenants says the same for assured periodic tenancies).
- [ ] The **prescribed information** goes to the tenant **within 30 days** too, and the date it was sent is logged. GOV.UK lists: the property address; the deposit amount; how it's protected; the scheme's name and contact details, and its dispute resolution service; your (or your agency's) name and contact details; the name and contact details of any third party who paid the deposit; why you might keep some or all of it; how to apply to get it back; what to do if the tenant can't reach you at the end of the tenancy; and what to do if there's a dispute over the amount.
- [ ] Holding deposits are tracked. They don't need protecting, but once the tenant moves in a holding deposit becomes a deposit and must be protected. Deposits paid by a third party (a parent, or a rent deposit scheme) must be protected too.
- [ ] Deposits are returned within **10 days** of agreeing the amount.
- [ ] Landlords know the consequences. A tenant can apply to the county court at any time during the tenancy. If the court finds the deposit wasn't protected, it can order you to repay it or pay it into a custodial scheme within 14 days, and may also order you to pay the tenant **up to 3 times the deposit** (GOV.UK). For possession, GOV.UK's overview says a court will only give a possession order where a deposit was paid if at least one of these applies: the deposit was protected, the scheme's requirements were met and the tenant got the correct information; the deposit was returned (in full or with agreed deductions); or a court challenge about deposit protection has been decided, settled or withdrawn (overview).

## 6. Am I ready for the landlord database?

From GOV.UK news, 9 Sep 2026, the roadmap and section 82:

- [ ] I know which region each managed property is in, and each one's deadline from the table above. The West Midlands goes first on **15 Dec 2026**, with a deadline of **14 Mar 2027**.
- [ ] For each property, I've gathered what the roadmap says the database will need: landlord contact details, property details, and **gas safety, electrical safety and EPC** information.
- [ ] Certificate expiry dates are in the CRM, with reminders.

- [ ] Every new gas safety record, EICR or EPC, rent change and change of occupants creates a CRM task to update the database entry **within 28 days**. Under the draft regulations, not yet final, an entry "must be updated before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day the information or documents became out of date" (regulations 8 and 9(4)).
- [ ] For a property that's already let, the tenancy and safety details are ready before the landlord registers it. Under the draft regulations, not yet final, they can follow the entry but must be added within 28 days, or the entry becomes inactive (regulations 6(2) and 11(2)(a)).
- [ ] Landlords know the first property they register sets the renewal date for every property they add later, and that a landlord entry with no property added within 3 months becomes inactive (draft regulations, not yet final, regulations 10(4) and 11(1)(a)).
- [ ] Agreed with each landlord who keeps the database details up to date. Under the draft regulations, not yet final, the tenancy and safety details "may be provided on behalf of a person who is making a dwelling entry by a letting agent or property manager appointed by them" (regulation 4(5)), and they "may be updated on behalf of" the landlord "by a letting agent or a property manager appointed by them" (regulation 7(2)). The landlord still makes the entry.
- [ ] My advert templates have a placeholder for a registration number, ready for when that rule starts. Section 82 says you must not market a property unless the landlord and property are on the database, but its commencement is limited, so **don't treat this as live until there's a confirmed date**.
- [ ] Landlords have been told the fee: £65 a year per property, renewed every year and pro-rated during the rollout. A landlord with 4 properties pays about £260 a year (before pro-rating).

## 7. What should I prepare for, but not yet act on?

- [ ] **Ombudsman:** all private landlords will have to join a landlord ombudsman. The roadmap expects this in **2028**. Add a "complaints route" field to the CRM now, and fill it in when this is confirmed (s.64).
- [ ] **Awaab's Law (private rented):** the Act allows it (s.60). The consultation runs until 18 Dec 2026, and **no start date has been set**. Make sure repairs are logged with the date reported, the date you responded and the date fixed, so you'll be ready for whatever timescales are decided.
- [ ] **Decent Homes Standard:** the policy statement sets **2035** for private rented homes. Councils will also get a new power to fine up to £7,000 for category 1 hazards, which GOV.UK intends to start before the full standard (policy statement).
- [ ] **Energy efficiency:** EPC C by 1 Oct 2030 for private rented homes, with a £10,000 cost cap per property under the same statement. Flag properties below C in the CRM.

## Your template, CRM and process update list

- [ ] Tenancy agreement (periodic, no fixed term, required terms)
- [ ] Information Sheet sent and logged for every pre-May 2026 tenancy
- [ ] Advert and listing templates (asking rent, no bidding wording, registration number placeholder)
- [ ] Offer and holding-deposit emails (no above-asking offers, no rent before signing, 1 month cap on rent in advance)

- [ ] Pet request form, with a 28-day CRM task
- [ ] Form 4A rent increase workflow, with a once-a-year lock and 2-month notice date
- [ ] Section 21 templates removed; section 8 notice templates checked
- [ ] Deposit received, protected and prescribed-information dates, with a 30-day CRM task
- [ ] Tenancy start date and "first 12 months" flag
- [ ] Certificate and EPC fields with expiry reminders
- [ ] "Database update due" date, 28 days from any certificate, rent or occupant change (draft regulations, not yet final)
- [ ] Region field for database rollout
- [ ] Repair log with reported, responded and fixed dates
- [ ] Staff briefed, and a note in the diary to re-check this list each quarter

## What can go wrong?

- **An old template survives.** One "fixed term 12 months" agreement or section 21 notice in a shared drive can undo the rest. Search your drive and your CRM's document templates, not just the master copy.
- **Portal feeds that still allow bidding.** Check that your website or portal feed doesn't add "offers over" or similar wording.
- **Rent increase timing.** Under section 13 of the Housing Act 1988, as amended, the new rent in a Form 4A notice can't start earlier than 2 months after the notice is served, or earlier than 52 weeks after the last increase took effect (or, for a first increase, 52 weeks after the tenancy began). Section 13(4A) says rent can't go up except through a section 13 notice, a tribunal determination or one of the agreements it lists (legislation.gov.uk). Let the CRM enforce the dates.
- **Acting on a date that isn't confirmed.** Ombudsman, Awaab's Law and the advert registration rule are all still to be fixed. Third-party guides sometimes state dates GOV.UK hasn't confirmed. Go with GOV.UK and legislation.gov.uk.
- **Wales or Scotland properties mixed in.** This checklist is for England only.

## Want to save time on the admin?

Our guide How to auto-reply to Rightmove and Zoopla leads in minutes and log them in your CRM is a good place to build compliant enquiry replies (asking rent stated, no bidding language). For one new automation every Friday, plus updates when these dates are confirmed, get the AutomatedByFriday email: automatedbyfriday.com/newsletter.

*Not advice: this checklist is general information about the law in England, last checked against GOV.UK and legislation.gov.uk on 22 October 2026. It isn't legal advice. Dates marked "not confirmed" may change. Check the linked pages or ask a qualified adviser before acting.*

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