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...honesty integrity transparency

your guide to residential lettings





Welcome

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Honesty, Integrity and Transparency. These are the values we believe in at Clearwater.co Sales & Letting Agents to ensure whether buying, selling or renting a home with us will be an experience you will remember for all the right reasons.

Our office is in Penn Hill with easy parking in the village. We cover Lower Parkstone and all surrounding areas across Bournemouth & Poole. We employ NAEA & ARLA qualified property sales and letting agents, and have a dedicated lettings team so you can be confident you are in safe and knowledgeable hands. We also offer a comprehensive range of services to fulfil all of your requirements including truly effective and innovative methods of marketing properties. Come in and discover how we will be able help you.



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Our service

Over recent years, changes in both the housing market and social patterns have resulted in an unprecedented rise in demand for property within the private rental sector. Investing in buy-to-let property is proving to be a prudent decision for many people looking for an alternative to stock markets or savings accounts. Key to a successful investment are factors such as location and the type of property, but it is also important to consider achievable rent levels, tenant demand and expectations, maintenance and potential capital growth.

With so much to consider, Clearwater.co Sales & Lettings Agents will take the time to assist you from the start, by providing honest and reliable advice on potential investment opportunities. We recognise that this is likely to be your second biggest investment, after buying your own home and whether you are a first-time landlord or an experienced investor you can trust our guidance.



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Preparing your house for letting

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Mortgages

Where the property to be let is subject to a mortgage, permission must be granted from the mortgagee in writing. It is sometimes appropriate to remortgage with a buy-to-let specialist and our mortgage advisors, who can offer an across-the-market perspective and will be happy to provide completely impartial advice in this regard.

Insurance

It is essential that the property and your contents are adequately insured, both while the property is empty and while it is let. Your insurers must be told that the property is to be let since failure to do so may well invalidate cover.

We can provide details of competitive insurance specifically for rented property, if required.

Security

Security systems (locks on windows and external doors, lights, and even full alarm systems) are often considered essential by prospective tenants, and are taken into consideration by all the leading insurance companies when calculating premiums.

Decorations and Carpets

We recommend these should be fresh and neutral in terms of colour and style. Higher quality properties will always attract better quality tenants and therefore it is vital that a property is well presented to meet the expectations of a potential tenant.

Furnished or Unfurnished?

By far the greatest level of demand from tenants is for properties that are available unfurnished.



This traditionally includes just carpets, curtains or blinds and kitchen appliances. This has the advantage, from the landlord's perspective, of avoiding the need for additional maintenance/ replacement and for annual testing of electrical appliances.

Domestic Appliances

These should also be of good quality and condition and subject to regular servicing. It is important that full instructions for use are left on the premises to avoid the need to call in an engineer to demonstrate. Gas and electrical appliances must meet legal safety requirements and gas appliances should be tested annually.

Cleaning

It is essential that the property is handed over in clean condition. We very strongly recommend that the property be professionally cleaned throughout, including all carpets. This creates a benchmark that will be recorded in the Inventory and Schedule of Condition which therefore allows us to maintain a high standard through subsequent tenancies. We can provide the names of reputable and economical cleaning contractors.

Gardens

Gardens should be left in good seasonal order so that the benchmark is set for the tenants, whose responsibility it will be to maintain the same standard. We recommend that relevant tools are provided by the landlord. If the garden is particularly large, or complicated to maintain, it may be appropriate for the landlord to retain responsibility for maintenance, in which event this will be reflected in the rent. We will be happy to help find suitable gardeners, be it for a full maintenance programme, hedge/lawn cutting, pruning or an occasional tidy.

Gas, Electricity and Water

These services should be left connected and we will arrange for their transfer into the tenant's name. Under the Housing Health and Safety

Rating System, Tenants must be able to control and regulate heating systems.

Council Tax

We will notify the local council tax office of each change of occupier and of any void period between tenancies. This applies to fully managed tenancies.

Keys

Three complete sets of keys should be provided in all cases – two for the tenants and one to be retained at our office. We will be obliged to charge for key cutting if insufficient keys are not supplied at the outset.

Telephone

A telephone line should be provided at the property and you should instruct the provider to put a temporary stop on the line when you vacate and send you a closing account.

Empty properties

It is important that you comply with any insurance requirements during vacant periods, especially during the winter months.



Safety regulations and precautions



Failure to comply with the following Safety Regulations may constitute a criminal offence under the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and could lead to a fine or imprisonment. In any case, landlords have always had a duty of care under common law to ensure that rented property is kept in a safe condition and it is therefore essential to examine the property and its contents closely before letting.

Housing Health and Safety Rating system (HHSRS)

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System was introduced under the 2004 Housing Act. It is a risk based evaluation tool, designed to identify potential hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. Common breaches of this legislation include a lack of extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens, trip hazards such as uneven patio slabs and loosely fitted carpets, or staircases without handrails.

Fire and Furnishings Regulations

Under the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended) a landlord who is letting a property in the course of business is responsible for seeing that the furniture carries the appropriate fire resistance labels. Bedding, carpets and curtains and furniture manufactured before 1950 falls outside the regulations.

Electricity

The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations

1994 state that all electrical appliances, both fixed and portable in rented accommodation must be safe. The only sure method of checking this is to have them all tested and labelled periodically by a qualified electrician with the appropriate portable appliance testing equipment.

Gas Safety Regulations for Landlords & Agents

From 31st October 1994 it became law for gas equipment in rented properties to be serviced and safety checked before a tenancy and then annually by a registered installer - and for landlords or their agents to keep accurate records of work carried out on all appliances in their control, confirmed by an official safety certificate. It is a legal requirement that we ensure that a Gas Safety Certificate is provided to the tenant annually.

This, of course, includes all gas appliances like cookers, fires and flues as well as boilers and water heaters. Landlords are reminded that only Gas Safe registered plumbers should carry out this work. It is desirable to leave all gas appliances with service contracts in place.

Legionnaires Risk Assessment

Under the Health and Safety Executive, approved code of practice L8 and HSE 274, landlords are now required to carry out risk assessments for legionnaires disease and if necessary take action. We can make arrangements for a test to be carried out on your behalf.



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Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

From 1st October 2015 when the premises are occupied under a tenancy a carbon monoxide alarm must be provided by the landlord in any room within the premises which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation which contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance.

From 1st October 2015 while the premises are occupied under a tenancy the landlord must ensure that a smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of the premises on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation.

Energy Performance Certificate

From 1st October 2008, all rental properties with a new tenancy in England and Wales are required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The EPC will rate the energy efficiency of a property and its environmental impact. The EPC survey must be completed prior to marketing a property, and a tenant is required to receive a copy of the report before entering into a tenancy agreement. The energy rating must be included with any particulars and we upload this information to all websites when marketing the property.



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Services we provide

We provide the following levels of service – full details are provided within our Terms & Conditions.

Tenant Introduction

This service includes the following:

Production and distribution of promotional materials, to include photographs and a brochure with full details.

- Organising, where appropriate, an initial Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), Gas Safety Certificate and other legally required certification.
- Provision of a To Let board.
- Comprehensive advertising on all the major portals, in addition to our own website www.clearwater.co
- Accompanied viewing service.
- Completion of comprehensive credit, existing landlord and income checks on prospective tenants, for which we employ a third party specialist.
- Deposit Registration in the Deposit Protection Services custodial scheme.
- Collection of the first month's rent. We arrange for subsequent payments to be paid direct to you.
- Production of an appropriate tenancy agreement and associated documentation.
- Production of an independent Inventory and Schedule of Condition will be arranged for you (at additional cost) for you to use as a basis for comparison when the tenant vacates.



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Full Management Service

This provides landlords with comprehensive and thorough administration of their property, allowing them to distance themselves from the day-to-day management of the property. In addition to the Tenant Find service, as detailed before, this includes:

- Taking meter readings and transferring utilities.
- Regular visits during the tenancy term to ensure that the tenant is taking care of the property. Any matters requiring attention will be reported in writing to the landlord and acted upon where necessary.
- Organising and overseeing any necessary repair works to the property, with your prior authorisation.
- Collecting the rent, pro-actively pursuing it when necessary, and forwarding this, net of charges, on a monthly basis to yourselves by bank transfer.
- Provision of a detailed statement of account on a monthly basis.
- Production of a check-out report at the tenancy end.
- Issuing relevant notices, including the notice to quit, as and when required by yourself.
- Working with your solicitor in the unlikely event that eviction proceedings are necessary or that rent arrears have to be pursued through the court system. We are able to arrange Rent Guarantee and Legal Expenses Insurance to protect you against this eventuality.

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Important considerations



The Tenancy Agreement

The Housing Act 1988 specifies different types of tenancy. Whilst there are several different types, it is almost certain that the tenancy of your property will either be an Assured Shorthold Tenancy or a Contractual Tenancy.

The Deposit

We will take a security deposit of 1½ months rent which will be lodged with the Deposit Protection Services custodial scheme and is held in the event of the property not being returned in an acceptable manner. If a pet is accepted at the property a higher deposit will be required.

Inventory and Schedule of Condition

It is essential to have an inventory/schedule of condition prior to each tenancy. We can arrange this using local independent inventory companies who we work with on a regular basis. At the end of a tenancy the property is inspected against the

inventory and any deterioration to its condition is noted. The tenant is responsible for the cost of rectifying any damage, over and above what is considered to be fair wear and tear caused by them at the property.

Void Periods

Our management service does not include the supervision of the property when it is vacant although, in the normal course of showing it to prospective tenants, periodic visits may be made to the property by our lettings staff.

Instruction to Solicitors

You will be informed of any rent arrears or breaches of covenant brought to our attention. Should it prove necessary to employ the services of solicitors you will be responsible for instructing them, and for all fees involved, unless you have purchased a rent warranty product. Full details available on request.



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Taxation of UK-Resident Landlords

Landlords who remain resident in the UK are required to declare rental income annually, together with all other income, as it is assessable, after allowable expenses, for income tax.

Taxation of the Non-Resident Landlords

Where the landlord of the property is resident abroad for six months or more and has not been approved under the Non-Resident Landlords Scheme (see below), the Commissioners for Inland Revenue will, under UK income tax law, hold the managing agent (or the tenant where there is no managing agent appointed) personally liable for the payment of tax on income from rent collected on the landlord's behalf. The taxation of income from landlords (Non Residents) regulations 1995

requires the rent-receiving agent to retain the tax element on the net rent if the landlord is not registered and to pay it to the Inland Revenue on a quarterly basis, within thirty days of the end of the quarter.

Mortgage Consent

If you have a mortgage on the property you are letting, you will need to obtain consent from your mortgage lender. Most will give consent but they may charge an administration fee. To allow consent they may require information on the type of Tenancy Agreement you intend to use and the length of the tenancy.

They will probably also require reassurance that you are using a professional and ARLA registered agent.





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Insurance

As a landlord you should ensure that you have both buildings and contents insurance in place to cover your investment. Tenants are responsible for insuring their own contents and personal belongings.

Please also note that standard homeowner insurance policies will not suffice once a tenant is in residence and you are not an owner occupier. The policy will need to be specifically designed for let property.

We also offer Rent Guarantee and legal cover insurance. A quote can be provided to you



once the referencing of your tenants has been completed.

Council Tax and Utility Bills

In addition to the rent, tenants are responsible for paying water charges, council tax, gas and electricity bills.

Keys

You will need to provide your tenants with 2 sets of keys. If your property is being managed by Clearwater.co Sales & Lettings Agents, a further set of keys will need to be held at our local branch.

Property Folder

Many landlords choose to make a property folder. This should include copies of manuals and guides. It is also advisable to leave a local guide and any other information that your tenants may find useful such as details on parking, refuse collections etc.

Professional Cleaning

Prior to occupation, all properties should be professionally cleaned. When the property is returned, the tenant is expected to do the same. Any outside space should also be left in seasonal order.

Value Added Tax

All our fees, and any other charges made by Clearwater.co Sales & Letting Agents, will be subject to Value Added Tax at the prevailing rate.

You Can Be Reassured

Clearwater.co Sales & Letting Agents are proud to be members of:

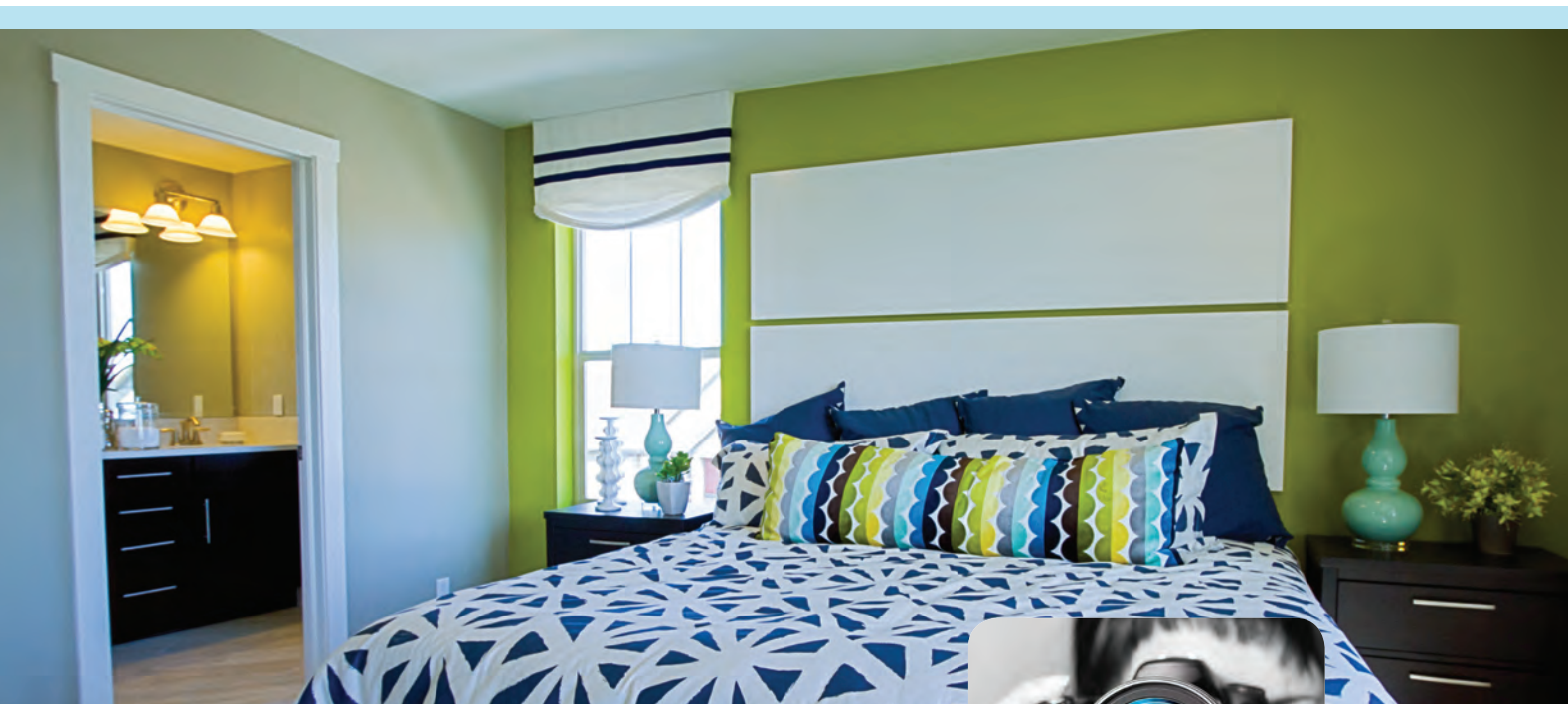
- The Property Ombudsman
- National Association of Estate Agents
- Association of Residential Letting Agents





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