



Your Guide to Residential Lettings

www.drivers.co.uk



WELCOME TO DRIVERS & NORRIS



Drivers & Norris have been trading for over 100 years and are an independent estate agent covering Holloway and the surrounding areas. With our extensive knowledge of the local property market, we ensure that our services meet your needs and give you peace of mind.

Much of our business is through word of mouth, recommendations and repeat business. We pride ourselves on our honesty and professionalism. We have formed close relationships with local solicitors, surveyors and other property related businesses, which can also help you in your move.

We are proud to say that for many years we have involved ourselves in supporting local schools through sponsorships, and other types of fundraising. We are real people offering a real service.

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We pride ourselves on our honesty and professionalism.





OUR SERVICE

Over recent years, changes in both the housing market and social patterns have resulted in an unprecedented and inexorable 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, Drivers & Norris 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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We can provide details of competitive insurance specifically for rented property, if required.

PREPARING YOUR HOUSE FOR LETTING

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, 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 and a cooker. 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 oil 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, and will allow 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.

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 supplied at the outset.

Telephone

If a telephone line is installed at the property 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 (amended 1989 & 1993) provide that specified items supplied in the course of letting property must meet minimum fire resistance standards. The regulations apply to all upholstered furniture, beds, headboards and mattresses, sofa-beds, futons and other convertibles, nursery furniture, garden furniture

suitable for use in a dwelling, scatter cushions, pillows and non-original covers for furniture. They do not apply to antique furniture or furniture made before 1950, bedcovers including duvets, loose covers for mattresses, pillowcases, curtains, carpets or sleeping bags. Items that comply will have a suitable permanent label or swing ticket attached. Non-compliant items must be removed before the tenancy commences.

Electricity

Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020. These regulations were introduced in England from 1st June 2020 and require landlords to have the electrical installation at their properties inspected and tested by a qualified and competent person at least every 5 years.

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.

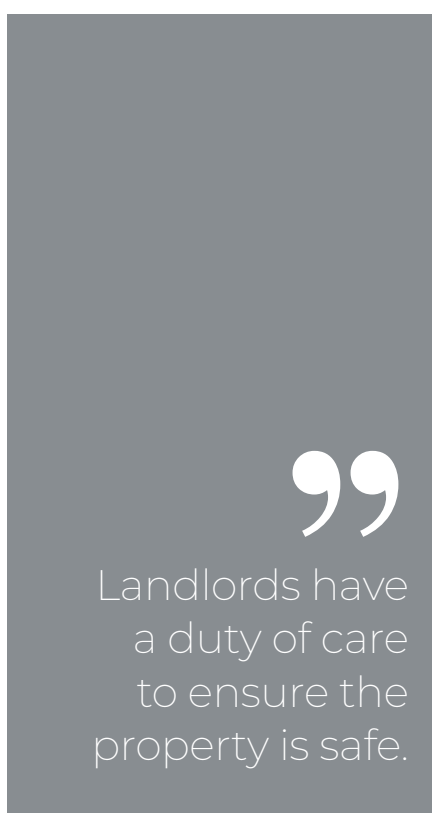


This, of course, includes all gas appliances like cookers, fires and flues as well as boilers and water heaters. Landlords are reminded that only British Gas or Gas Safe registered plumbers should carry out this work. It is desirable to leave all gas appliances with service contracts in place.

Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Alarms Legislation introduced from 1st October 2015 makes it a requirement for a smoke alarm to be fitted on each occupied floor and a carbon monoxide alarm in any room where a solid fuel is burnt. Legislation has been further updated which requires that from 1st October 2022.

This amended legislation is referred to as Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022. In addition to the requirements on smoke alarms, it now becomes a requirement to fit a carbon monoxide alarm in any room used as living accommodation where a fixed combustion appliance is located (excluding gas cookers). Landlords also have to be able to demonstrate that the all smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are tested and working at the commencement of a tenancy and to carry out any repairs/replacements during a tenancy.



Legionnaires Disease

The Health and Safety Executive have made it clear that the landlord, or the landlords agent, are responsible for helping reduce the spread of Legionella in water systems in private rented properties. The landlord has overall responsibility to ensure their properties meet these requirements. It is therefore recommended that you have a water assessment undertaken to check for Legionella bacteria which causes legionnaires disease. This assessment will identify and evaluate potential sources of

exposure and recommend steps to prevent or control any risk that is identified.

It is also advisable to install audible carbon monoxide detectors which comply with British Standard BS7860 in the property. We recommend one alarm for each room that contains a gas appliance.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

This came into effect in October 2006, and it applies to the common parts of blocks of flats and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). It is a mandatory requirement that a detailed fire risk assessment be carried out to identify any risks or hazards and any such findings should be eliminated or reduced.

Energy Performance Certificate

It is a requirement for an Energy Performance Certificate to be available when any property is built, sold or let. This certificate has to be available before any marketing can commence and a copy of a valid EPC certificate has to be given to tenants prior to the commencement of any AST; failure to do so can not only attract a fine of £200 per property but also cause issues at a later date if a landlord needs to serve a section 21 notice to end a tenancy. Since April 2018 all rental properties need to achieve a minimum of an EPC E rating but there are plans that from 2025 this minimum rating will increase to C.

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

We provide the following three 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 floorplan.
- Organising, where appropriate, an initial Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), Gas Safety Certificate and other legally required certification.
- Provision of a To Let board.
- Advertisements in the local press and on various websites, including the major portals and www.thompson-vales.co.uk
- Accompanied viewing service.
- Completion of comprehensive credit and income checks on prospective tenants, for which we employ a third party specialist.
- Collection of an appropriate deposit, which is lodged in our client account and protected by the Safe Guard scheme.
- Registration of the deposit with TDS (The Dispute Service), in accordance with current legislation.
- 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 Inventory and Schedule of Condition (signed by the tenant) for you to use as a basis for comparison when the tenant vacates. We would stress that we do



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Our services support you as a landlord, maintaining high services.

not become involved in retaining deposit funds unless you instruct us on the Full Management basis, as detailed opposite.

Letting and Rent Collection

Our letting and rent collection service includes all the benefits of our tenant find service and in addition, Agent Names Property Management will:

- Arrange for the collection of rent in accordance with the terms of the tenancy agreement.
- Prepare and submit a regular Statement of Account to the landlord and/or the landlord's accountant.
- Transfer the net monies to the landlord.
- At the end of the tenancy, we will arrange for the inventory to be checked by the inventory clerk and for a schedule of dilapidation (if any) to be prepared. A copy of this is normally sent to both landlord and tenant for approval before a tenant's deposit can be returned.
- As instructed by you, we will pay ground rent, service charges, insurance premiums and any other outgoings from the rental income as and when it is received. We do our best to query any obvious discrepancies but it must be understood that we are entitled to pay, without question, demands and accounts which appear to be in order.

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 above, this includes:

- Taking meter readings and transferring utilities.
- Regular visits to ensure that the tenant is taking care of the property and to investigate proceedings are necessary or defects brought to our attention by the tenant. You will be provided with a written report following each visit.
- 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 BACS.
- Provision of a detailed statement of account on a monthly basis.
- Transferring the utilities at the changeover of tenants.
- Production of a check-out report and negotiation with regard to the retention of deposit funds, when appropriate.
- 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.





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 Tenancy Deposit Scheme

At the outset of each tenancy we will collect a deposit from the tenant. The amount of the deposit is usually equivalent to six weeks' rent. Since April 2007, in line with The Housing Act 2004, all deposits collected under an Assured Shorthold tenancy (or any renewal thereof) must be protected in one of the Government's authorised custodial tenancy deposit schemes. As an ARLA accredited agent we are approved members of the Tenancy Deposit Scheme. This allows us to retain custody of your tenants deposit under the scheme.

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.

Security Deposits

We will obtain a deposit equal to 6 weeks' rent from the tenant. This security deposit is held by ourselves, as stakeholder, throughout the tenancy. Once damages, if any, have been agreed and copies of all receipted final invoices have been checked, the balance of the deposit will be returned to the tenant.

Drivers & Norris Property Management is a member of The Tenancy Deposit Scheme, which is administered by:

The Dispute Service Ltd
PO Box 541
Amersham,
Bucks
HP6 6ZR

Tel: 0845 226 7837
Fax: 01442 253 193
Email: deposits@tds.gb.com



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.

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 and to pay it to the Inland Revenue on a quarterly basis, within thirty days of the end of the quarter.

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We keep
you up to date
on all legislation
you need to
comply with.



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You can
be assured
we have
everything
covered.



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 allowing 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.

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 two sets of keys. If your property is being managed by Agent Names Lettings and Management, 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 Agent Names Lettings, will be subject to Value Added Tax at the prevailing rate.

You Can Be Reassured

Agent Names Property Management are proud to be members of:

- The Lettings Ombudsman
- National Association of Estate Agents
- Association of Residential Letting Agents
- The Guild of Property Professionals



WE ARE PROUD MEMBERS OF THE GUILD

KNOWLEDGE. INTEGRITY. RESULTS.

We have our own strict Code of Conduct which ensures every Member of The Guild is either a qualified Member of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) or a Member of The Property Ombudsman.



PARK LANE W1
CITY OF WESTMINSTER

National Network

As a Member of The Guild, we demonstrate a real commitment to local, regional and national marketing. We are part of a national network of offices working together to serve you better.

Trust and Confidence

The Guild have their own strict Code of Conduct which ensures every Member of The Guild is either a qualified Member of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) or a Member of The Property Ombudsman.

The Guild Standard of Service

Every Member company of The Guild of Property Professionals is

a carefully selected independent estate agency – as such, we adhere to the highest standards of estate agency practice and all work together to provide you wider marketing and better service.

As part of the national network of property professionals, we have access to a myriad of other services all bound together in an enterprising spirit of teamwork and professionalism that helps with selling houses.

Training

You can be sure you are dealing with professionals as The Guild offers training through its Guild Associate Scheme. This is an educational

training system for Member's staff to ensure fundamental technical competency throughout the network. It covers the basic legal estate agency practice, plus knowledge of The Property Ombudsman, The Guild and Money Laundering. Entrants are examined on their competency and, when an adequate level of proficiency is achieved, are invited to become a Guild Associate.

Auditing

The Guild is committed to raising industry standards with compulsory auditing for new Members. This ensures that every agent operates to the same level.

Find your local Guild agent at guildproperty.co.uk





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Call us: 020 7607 5001
Email us: info@drivers.co.uk

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735 High Road, London N12 0BP
Call us: 020 7348 4846
Email us: finchley@drivers.co.uk

Associated Mayfair Office

Call us: 020 7318 7009



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