

Property Management Service for Landlords

Professionally managed properties are increasingly in demand from both private and corporate tenants as it gives them peace of mind that any issues will be professionally and promptly dealt with.

At Mountgrange Heritage our Property Management Department will take over the often tedious and time-consuming work that comes with being a landlord, giving you the peace of mind that both your property and your tenants are well looked after during the tenancy. It also helps ensure tenants remain in your property for the longest term possible.

You can take advantage of our Property Management Services even if another agent has found the tenant or if you have found the tenant yourself.

Our Property Management Service

Our Property Management Service encompasses the following:

Day to Day Management

With tenants in central London paying premium rents, many have high expectations of the management of the property they chose to rent, especially if they are corporate tenants. We will take over the hassle of day to day contact with tenants and quickly resolve any issues that arise such as plumbing and heating problems, water leaks, replacement of faulty appliances and much more. We work with a team of reliable suppliers and tradesmen, most of who have worked with us for many years or have been well vetted by us before they are trusted to work on our behalf.

Payment of Outgoings

We will pay ground rents, service charges and water rates together with insurance premiums pertaining to the property on your behalf and account to you on a monthly rental statement. To enable us to do this you will need to inform the various parties to send all bills and invoices to us for payment. Since we are unable to make payment in excess of the funds available to us in the landlord's account, we will retain a management float to cover any outgoings which may be payable between rent payments.

Faults and Repairs

We will investigate any reported faults or necessary repairs required to the property. Minor repairs or emergency works will be carried out immediately and paid for from funds held. Where major works are required an estimate will be obtained and sent to the landlord for approval.

Insurance Claims

We will submit and negotiate insurance claims on your behalf when necessary.

Inspections

We will inspect your property at least twice a year throughout a tenancy.

Inventory

The inventory is an essential part of any tenancy, providing written evidence of the condition and contents of a property at the start of the tenancy so that any damage at the end of the tenancy can be accounted for. We will arrange for your inventory to be prepared by a professional, independent inventory clerk. In addition to preparing your inventory the clerk will produce a check-in report detailing the condition of the property at the start of the tenancy and a check-out report detailing the same at the end of the tenancy. This will assess any damage, aside from fair wear and tear that may have occurred.

Tenancy Deposit Scheme

This scheme was introduced in April 2007 by the government to improve the often difficult area of damage deposits. It is essentially designed to stop landlords withholding tenants' deposits or making arbitrary deductions. The scheme requires that all tenancies must have a professionally prepared inventory attached to them at the commencement

of tenancy and that the tenancy is registered on the scheme by way of one of the nominated companies that have been set up to administer the deposits should a dispute arise. We are members of The Dispute Service Limited and, as required in law, we will automatically register all Assured Shorthold Tenancies on the scheme.

Settlement of Deposits

Dealing with dilapidations and negotiating claims and settlement of deposits can be tricky and we have years of experience in dealing with this.

Tenancy Renewal

We can manage the negotiations of tenancy and contract renewal on your behalf, ensuring you get the deal that's right for you.

Key holding service

We will hold a spare set of keys for your property to allow access to suppliers or to help tenants who have lost their keys.

Management of Empty Properties

Our Management Service does not automatically include the supervision of empty properties, although we can arrange this service on an individual basis. Once a property is untenanted we cannot pay bills on your behalf or instruct contractors unless you have made prior arrangements with us. However, we can arrange to have untenanted properties redecorated and/or refurbished in readiness for reoccupation.

Rules & Regulations

There is a huge amount of legislation relating to letting property these days. We help all our landlords comply with the relevant rules and regulations for their property. Below are the key ones to consider:

The Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 & (Amendment) Regulations 1993

As from 1st March 1993 it is a criminal offence punishable by a fine and/or a prison term to let a property with furniture or soft furnishings which cannot be proven to comply with the above fire safety regulations. Furniture manufactured before 1st January 1950 is exempt from the regulations.

Items covered by the Regulations include:

- Beds, headboards, mattresses, sofa beds and futons
- Sofas, armchairs including loose and stretch covers
- Scatter cushions, seat pads and pillows

Items which are exempt from the Regulations:

- Sleeping bags
- Bed linen including duvets, pillowcases and mattress covers
- Curtains and carpets

All new furnishings should display the following swing tickets depending on their ratings. They must also be fitted with permanent labels, which must be securely attached to the furniture. Each piece of furniture must have an attached label.

The permanent label must display the following information:

- The caution (CARELESSNESS CAUSES FIRE)
- Batch/identification number
- Whether a fire resistance interline is included
- Summary of measures taken to ensure compliance with regulations

Should you be in any doubt about any furniture complying our Management Department will be able to advise you.

Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998

It is a criminal offence to let a property with gas appliances, installations and pipe-work that have not been checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer. You will need to provide us with a copy of a Gas Safe Certificate (GSC) carried out no more than 12 months previously. If this GSC is not sent to us within five working days of the commencement of a new tenancy you give us authority to arrange for a gas safety check. The GSC will need to be renewed at 12 monthly intervals. If we are managing the property we will arrange for a new GSC automatically at your expense if you do not provide us with a new one at least five working days before the existing one expires. We need to give your tenant documentary proof of your compliance with these regulations at the commencement of the tenancy and within 28 days of the GSC being renewed. If you use your own contractor we will need proof of their Gas Safe registration. No tenancy can commence until we are in receipt of a valid GSC. If we are not managing the property it is the legal responsibility of the landlord to arrange for the gas safety check and for a copy of the Gas Safe Certificate being given to the tenant annually. We have no liability if the landlord fails to comply with the regulations.

Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 & Plug & Socket Regulations 1994

All plugs must have a safety sheath and the correct fuse. All sockets must comply with the current regulations which state that they should have an "off" switch and must be flush with the wall.

The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994

Landlords have a responsibility to ensure that all electrical equipment and appliances must be maintained and in a safe condition which could not cause danger throughout the tenancy. New electrical equipment must carry a CE marking, affixed by the manufacturer.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

The PAT test is the electrical safety testing of portable electrical equipment. It consists of a visual inspection and various electrical tests carried out using test equipment. Appliances that have passed the test are deemed to be safe to use until the next test date. A sticker is attached to the equipment indicating pass or fail and next test date. The interval between tests is normally 12 months.

Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR)

Landlord electrical certificates are an important part of ensuring the safety of your tenant and being able to prove that you have taken reasonable steps to do so. It is recommended that you have a full electrical inspection carried out every three to five years dependent on previous inspection advice. This investigates the state of electrical wiring throughout the property and thoroughly checks the safety of the electrical installation. Once this is done you will be issued with an 'Electrical Installation Condition Report'. It will declare if the property meets current safety standards and highlight any areas that need attention; such areas will be given an order of priority.

Energy Performance Certificates

As of October 2008, all properties marketed for letting need a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The landlord is responsible for ensuring a valid EPC is made available prior to a prospective tenant receiving written details of a property or first viewing a property. If you already have a valid EPC for your property we will require a copy or we can arrange on your behalf for an EPC to be prepared. The EPC is valid for five years.

Smoke Alarms

Under the Building Regulations 1991 the Law requires that all newly built properties from June 1992 and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) must have mains fitted smoke alarms with battery back-up. With effect from October 2015 under the Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015, all premises occupied by a tenancy must be equipped with a smoke alarm fitted on each storey of the property where there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation. The landlord is obliged to ensure the alarm is in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins and remains in proper working order.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

It is a legal requirement for Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) to have a carbon monoxide alarm fitted. However, we advise all landlords to consider the installation of alarms to protect the occupier and help prevent any legal action being taken against a landlord. If we are managing the property we will arrange for an alarm to be fitted at your expense.

NOTE – under the Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015, when the premises are occupied under a tenancy they must be equipped with a carbon monoxide alarm fitted in any room which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance. The landlord must ensure that the alarm is in proper working order on the day a new tenancy begins and remains in proper working order.

Repairs/Statutory Repairing Responsibilities

Sections 11 to 16 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 state that you must:

- (a) keep the structure (including the drains, gutters and down pipes) and the exterior of the property in good order and repair;
- (b) keep the appliances for supply of gas, electricity and water in good repair;
- (c) keep the appliances for supply of space heating and water heating in repair;
- (d) keep the sanitary appliances in repair.

The landlord is obliged under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement to ensure that necessary repairs are carried out. Should he fail to meet his obligations, with the result that the tenant withholds all or part of his rent, we reserve the right to instruct contractors at our discretion and to deduct any costs incurred from rents received.

Legionnaires' Disease

Landlords of residential accommodation have responsibilities for combating Legionnaires' Disease. Health and safety legislation requires that landlords carry out risk assessments for the Legionella bacteria which cause Legionnaires' Disease and thereafter maintain control measures to minimise the risk. Landlords have a duty to ensure that the risk of exposure to tenants is properly assessed and control measures introduced. This applies to houses or flats with domestic type water systems. Provided the risk assessment shows that the risks are insignificant and the control measures are being properly managed no further action would be necessary. It is important, however, to keep the assessment under review periodically in case anything changes to the system.

Tax advice for overseas landlords

If you are considered to be non-resident for tax purposes, you will have to pay UK Income Tax on any rents received from your property in the UK under the Finance Act 1995, unless you have obtained an Exemption Certificate from the Inland Revenue. We can advise you on the rules and help you apply for an Exemption Certificate if this applies to you.