



## Guide for New Tenants



Lettings - 0118 950 88 99  
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Sales & Lettings, Free Valuations, Tenant  
Finding, Property Maintenance, Property  
Management, Commercial and Residential



# Notes for tenants wishing to rent a home with Reading Estate Agent Ltd

The REA team have created a guide which gives you clear support on what is involved when you are looking to rent your property.

The guide gives you clear indication on how to tackle each element of the renting process.

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## Holding Deposit

Once you have viewed a property and have decided to proceed with the letting, you will be required to pay a **Holding Deposit equal to half a month's rent.**

Please note that we are unable to refund the Holding Deposit, should you decide not to proceed or your references are not deemed satisfactory. If however, the property is no longer available to rent, through no fault of your own (i.e. landlord withdraws property and decides to sell), then any monies paid by you will be returned in full.

## Electoral Role and proof of residency

If you are **not** registered on the electoral role at your current address, you will need to provide proof of residency (i.e. utility bill or copy of tenancy agreement – if renting).

## Proceeding with the Let

If the let proceeds you will be asked to complete one of our Tenant Assessment application forms, one for each person over the age of eighteen that will reside in the property.

This will enable us to conduct a credit search at £45.00 per person and take up the following references:

1. Current employers reference (and previous employer – if employed in current job for less than two years) or if you are self-employed, we require your accountant's details and at least 12 months of accounts.
2. Landlord's Reference – from either your existing or previous landlord / agent (if applicable).





## Housing Benefit (DSS)

If you are on Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance, you will be entitled to claim Housing Benefit and / or help with your Council Tax and possibly even if you are on a low income. As Letting Agents, we are no longer able to hold a stock of housing benefit forms or Pre-Tenancy Determination forms, which must now be collected from the relevant Local Authority:

Housing Benefit applicants will still be required to pay the Holding Deposit and have their first month's rent available. In some cases, where the Local Authority are particularly slow in processing claims for benefit applications - you may be required to pay the rent for the period whilst your claim is being assessed and no monies are being paid by the Council. We may also ask for 6 months 'top up' from you for first 6 months of the tenancy.

## Guarantors

If you are renting with the assistance of Housing Benefit, or if your references indicate that you may prove financially weak, you will be asked to provide a working Guarantor – that is someone who is earning a sufficient wage / salary to guarantee the rent on your behalf for the complete period of the letting. Your Guarantor will also be required to complete a Guarantor Application form and provide the above information for the purposes of conducting a credit search and taking up references.

The guarantor will be required to sign part of the Tenancy Agreement called a "Deed of Guarantee" and / or the Tenancy Agreement itself both of which are legally binding contracts. If you have been asked to stand as Guarantor and wish to speak to someone about this, please contact us and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Once satisfactory references have been obtained, we will contact you and at this point, you will need to confirm the date you wish to take occupation of the property (i.e. the date your tenancy will start).



## Inventory

Reading Estate Agent Ltd usually prepare a full inventory for the property (whether furnished or unfurnished); on which are noted any defects, such as stains on carpets or tears in wallpaper etc. We also read the gas, electric and water meter (if applicable) and note these on the inventory.

You will have one week to check through the inventory, sign and return, and make any amendments you feel necessary (subject to checking by a member of our staff).

On occasions where a Landlord does not use our management service there will not be an inventory produced and we suggest that you ensure that wither you or your Landlord prepares an inventory that you both agree and sign.

## Insurance

The landlord is responsible for insuring the property and any items that belong to them and are left in the property.

It is your responsibility to insure your own contents under a comprehensive insurance policy. We will be happy to arrange this for you via our special scheme and we will give you a copy of a brochure for your perusal. Cover starts from just **£79.00** for twelve months for £2,500 cover (including accidental damage).

By taking up cover you are safeguarding the return of your deposit. Please note if you do not wish to take up our Tenant Contents Insurance, you must provide proof of cover (i.e. copy of policy schedule) before you take possession of the property.



## Tenancy Agreements

The Tenancy Agreement you sign is a legal document, it is between the owner of the property (The Landlord) and yourself (The Tenant). The initial term of the tenancy is usually six or twelve months, depending on your own wishes and those of the Landlord.

You are usually given the option to renew your tenancy for a further six or twelve months and where we are acting as managing agents, our Property Management department will write to you approximately two months prior to the end of your Tenancy Agreement in this regard.

You should read the Tenancy Agreement carefully and ensure you understand it fully. The Tenancy Agreement places legal obligations upon you, some of which are explained below.

The Tenancy Agreement you sign will be an Assured Shorthold, which means that you can stay in the property for the period of the Tenancy Agreement (provided you meet all the obligations of the Tenancy Agreement). If the landlord wishes to end the tenancy you will be given two months' notice to quit the premises.

You can only leave the property at the end of the period stated in the Tenancy Agreement (if you wish to leave when the Tenancy Agreement is due to expire you must notify us in writing giving a minimum of one month's notice from your next rent due date). If you vacate the property early and do not give a full months' notice **YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RENT PAYMENTS FOR THIS PERIOD.**

Everybody living at the property over the age of eighteen must be named on the Tenancy Agreement. You cannot move anyone into the property unless you have informed us (in writing) and we have permission for you to do so from the landlord.



## Deposits

We require a deposit for every tenancy, **equal to a months and half rent**. This deposit is refundable only after you have vacated the property and provided that:

Your rent is paid up to date  
All sets of keys have been returned  
You have supplied us with your forwarding address  
All bills relating to the tenancy have been paid  
The property has been well maintained  
The items listed on the inventory (if applicable) are all present and in good condition.

The landlord must be satisfied with the property before the deposit is refunded. Please allow 28 working days after you vacate the property to receive your deposit, which will be returned by way of Company Cheque to your forwarding address. N.B. If you do not have a bank account, we can, with your written authority, make the cheque payable to a third party of your choice.

If the property is managed by Reading Estate Agent Ltd, it will be held on your behalf as 'Agents' for the landlord.

If we are not managing the property, your deposit will be held by your landlord, who will be responsible for repaying this to you at the end of the tenancy. In either case, NO interest will be paid on your deposit.

## Decorating

Should you wish to make changes to the property, **YOU MUST INFORM US IN WRITING** (or in the case of Letting Only Tenancies – your landlord) and wait until permission is granted before any work commences.

## Faults and repairs

If there is a problem with the property you are renting you must inform us in writing immediately or if we are not managing the property, you should contact the landlord direct (failure to do so may mean that you are held partially responsible should the delay result in added deterioration).

Once we have been informed of a fault we will contact the landlord and act upon their instructions. You must not instruct a contractor to undertake any work; if you do it will be at YOUR own expense.

*Please, if in doubt of your responsibilities, refer to the Responsibilities Reference table.*



## Responsibilities Reference Table

Maintenance Issue	Landlord	Tenant	Comments
Replacing taps	✓	✓	
Replacing tap washers	✓		
Replacing light bulbs		✓	Including those in appliances and outside lighting
Replacing consumables		✓	Filters, batteries etc.
Tightening screws		✓	Curtain poles, door handles, kitchen cupboards etc.
Mowing lawn, weeding, clearing leaves & general gardening		✓	
Light pruning		✓	Do not cut down or undertake severe pruning of mature plants, shrubs etc., without the landlord's permission
Cleaning of patio/paving		✓	To avoid slip hazards
Removal of moss & leaves from gutters	✓		It is your responsibility to notify the landlord if the gutters need cleaning, clearing or repairing
Bleeding radiators		✓	
Radiator leaks	✓		If caused by erosion or wear, however it is you have caused the damage*
Re-igniting pilot light/boiler (initial troubleshooting)		✓	As long as you have been provided with a manual/instructions you should undertake initial troubleshooting before reporting it to the landlord
Boiler maintenance & servicing	✓		

Maintenance Issue	Landlord	Tenant	Comments
Replacing fuses		✓	
Appliance repairs	✓		Unless the damage is caused by you*
Appliance upkeep		✓	Includes filter & general cleaning, checking pipes, adding chemicals as required etc.
House alarm servicing	✓		If the system is used by you, any security company charge should be paid by you
Electrical repairs/checks	✓		Unless the damage is caused by you*
Unblocking drains			Please refer to your tenancy agreement for full details
Replacing shower heads, clasps, hoses	✓		Unless the damage is caused by you*
Repairs to bath & shower seals	✓		
Preserving bath & shower seals		✓	
Damp – external	✓		Unless this is caused by you (e.g. poor installation of satellite cabling)*
Damp – internal	✓	✓	If the damp is a result of your lifestyle, it is your responsibility
Locks	✓	✓	Depending on the cause of the problem*
Chimneys	✓	✓	The landlord is responsible for having the chimneys swept prior to your tenancy; it is your responsibility to arrange this during and at the end of the tenancy*
* Work to be undertaken by a suitably qualified contractor			

Please note that if we or the landlord arrange for maintenance work to be undertaken and the fault is found to be caused by you, you will be responsible for the cost. Normally you do not need to be at home when maintenance work is being undertaken; we can liaise with the contractor for access.

## Inspections (managed properties only)

We have an obligation to conduct regular inspections to all tenanted accommodation. Inspections will be carried out on a periodic basis (approximately every 3-6 months) and are to ensure the property is not in need of repair and to ensure you are looking after the property. You will be given notification by our Property Management department when an inspection is due to be conducted in writing.

## Pets

You cannot have any pets unless we have permission from the landlord in writing. You must consult us prior to obtaining a pet and submit a written request to have a pet stating age / type / breed. Some landlords will accept a NON REFUNDABLE deposit of £200.00.



## Gardens

It is the Tenant's responsibility to maintain the garden (if any) in a neat & tidy condition (i.e. keep the grass cut regularly and weeding of flower beds etc.) unless stated otherwise in the tenancy agreement.





## On the day

If not already paid, you must bring with you your first month's rent along with your month and a half deposit in cleared funds (i.e. cash, banker's draft or building society cheque). Please note that a personal cheque is not sufficient and you will not be able to move in at this time!

The day you move in to the property, you will be required to come in to the letting office to sign the Tenancy Agreements and inventory *unless they have been signed electronically*. You will be given one copy of each for your safekeeping. We will also supply you with the key/s to the property.

Tenants of managed properties will be given Reading Estate Agent Ltd account details, to set up a monthly direct debit. Once you have moved in to your

property, any matters relating to your tenancy (i.e. repairs, payment of rent, renewal of contract etc.) will be dealt with by our Property Management department.

If you are not taking Rent4sure Contents Insurance please ensure that you bring a cover note from your insurance company giving details of amount insured and policy number.

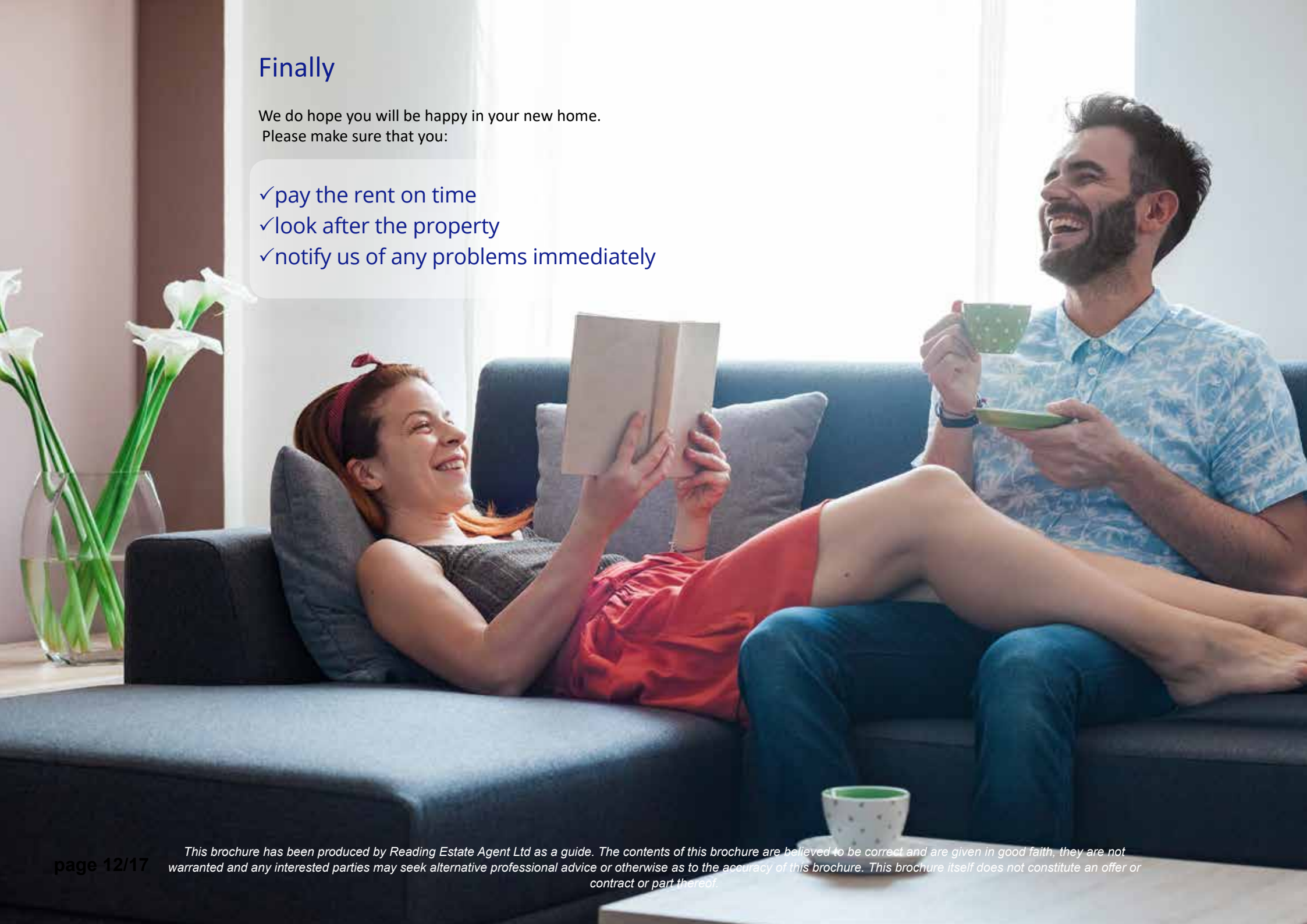
In the case of Letting Only tenancies (i.e. where we are not acting as managing agents), you will be given bank account details and contact details for your new landlord and any queries after you have moved in (i.e. repairs, rent payments etc.) should be directed to your landlord and not Reading Estate Agent Ltd.



## Finally

We do hope you will be happy in your new home.  
Please make sure that you:

- ✓ pay the rent on time
- ✓ look after the property
- ✓ notify us of any problems immediately





# Tenant Fees

Reading Estate Agent are not members of a client money protection scheme.

Reading Estate Agent Are members of The Property Ombudsman independent redress scheme.

Description	Fee
Tenancy Set Up(one tenant) including tenant referencing, production of tenancy agreement,(fee shared with landlord),obtaining safety certificates, deposit registration and required pre-let works	£330.00
Bedsits and shared accommodation Set up Discounted by 50%	£165.00
Tenancy Set Up additional tenant	£80.00 each
Guarantor referencing and production of Deed of Guarantee	£80.00 each
Alteration of tenancy dates given in subject to Contract letter-Administration Fee	£75.00 each
Check-in Fee(fee covered by Landlord)	£0.00
Change of Sharer Redrafting tenancy agreement referencing new tenant(s) re-registering the deposit and producing prescribed information notice	£360.00 (£60.00 per additional tenant)
Landlord Reference for New Tenancy	£75 per reference
Credit Check Per Tenant or Guarantor	£45.00 Each
Extension Set Up 6 Months - 12 Months	£100.00 / £175.00

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