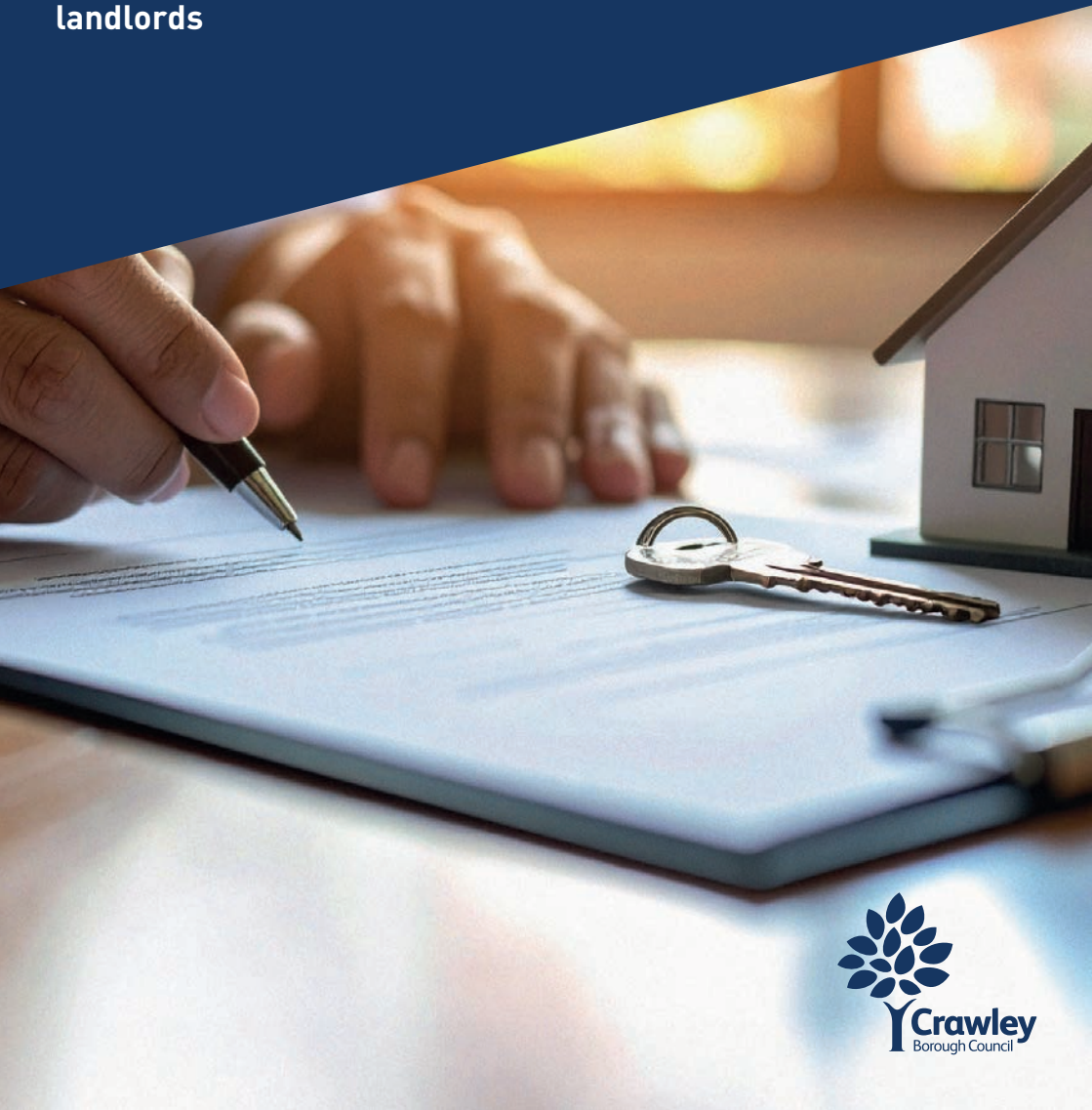
The Renters' Rights Act

Staying compliant: A practical checklist for landlords



Crawley Borough Council

The Renters' Rights Act: A landlord's guide to compliance

The Renters Rights Act 2025 was enacted on 27 October 2025 bringing significant changes to the private rented sector. The tenancy reforms and local authority enforcement powers came into force on 1 May 2026.

As a landlord, understanding these changes now will help you prepare for a smooth transition, avoid penalties, and maintain strong tenant relationships.

This guide outlines the key requirements and steps you can take to ensure full compliance.

The end of Section 21 'no fault' evictions

What's changed?

Section 21 evictions will be abolished, meaning landlords can no longer evict tenants without a specific reason.

All tenancies will become periodic (rolling contracts). Possession will only be granted under legally defined grounds, such as:

- selling the property
- moving in yourself or for a close family member
- tenant rent arrears or anti-social behaviour

What to do:

Familiarise yourself with the new possession grounds and understand when and how you can lawfully regain possession.

Keep clear records if you plan to sell, refurbish, or move into a property to support any future possession claims.

Improve tenant communication. A strong landlord-tenant relationship will help reduce disputes over possession.

Changes to rent increases

What's changed?

- rent increases will be limited to once per year
- landlords must give tenants at least two months' notice of a rent increase
- tenants will have the right to challenge unfair rent hikes through a tribunal
- only one months rent in advance can be requested once any tenancy agreement has been signed, and before the tenancy commencement date

What to do:

- set up a rent review calendar and plan rent adjustments in a structured way
- ensure rent increases are based on market conditions to avoid disputes. Keep clear records of rent changes and justifications
- do your research and get to know your local market

New rules on pets in rentals

What's changed?

Tenants will have the right to request a pet, and landlords cannot unreasonably refuse.

What to do:

Create a fair and transparent pet policy, balancing tenant need, property upkeep and property suitability.

Stronger protections against tenant discrimination

What's changed?

The new law bans discrimination against tenants on benefits or with children.

Tenant selection must be fair and transparent, based only on financial suitability.

What to do:

Review your tenant screening process and ensure it complies with non-discrimination rules.

Focus only on affordability, references, and credit history when assessing applications.

Remove any outdated policies that might unintentionally exclude certain groups.

If you are using an agent, ensure they are following the guidance on your behalf.

Stronger local authority enforcement

What's changed?

Councils will have greater powers to investigate landlords and enforce compliance.

Higher fines and penalties will be introduced for breaches of rental laws.

What to do:

- conduct regular property inspections to ensure ongoing compliance
- engage with local authorities pro-actively to stay ahead of any new requirements

The Renters Rights Act 2025 will also bring in a number of other significant changes over the coming years, including the introduction of the decent homes standard to the private renteal sector, and a private rented sector database.

Meeting the Decent Homes Standard

What's changing?

For the first time, private landlords must meet the Decent Homes Standard, ensuring properties are:

- safe and well-maintained
- free from serious hazards (such as damp, faulty wiring, or poor insulation)
- fit for human habitation
- meet **Awaab's Law** which will be extended to the private rented sector, requiring landlords to address damp and mould and serious issues within set timescales

How to prepare:

- conduct an inspection, either yourself or with a professional, to identify and fix potential hazards
- budget for necessary repairs, as non-compliance could lead to fines
- respond to tenant repair requests promptly, ensuring you meet the new legal timeframes
- ensure you have a clear process in place for communicating with your tenants
- ensure your tenants know how to contact you should they have a problem
- make clear plans for when you go on holiday or have any unexpected absences i.e. sickness

Private rented sector database

What's changing?

All landlords must register their properties on a new national **private rented sector** database. This aims to improve transparency and enforcement in the rental market.

How to prepare:

Gather essential documents ahead of time, including:

- **Gas Safety Certificate**
- **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)**
- **Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)**

Ensure your records are up to date, as missing documents could lead to compliance issues.

Ensure all your property certificates and documents are easily accessible and in one central place and you have a robust system in place to ensure you do not miss any key deadlines.

Tenant dispute resolution and the ombudsman scheme

What's changing?

A **private rented sector landlord ombudsman** will handle disputes between landlords and tenants.

The ombudsman's decisions will be legally binding.

All landlords must register with the scheme.

How to prepare:

Sign up for the **Ombudsman Scheme** as soon as it's available as it will be mandatory.

Keep detailed records of maintenance requests and tenant interactions to help resolve disputes.

Focus on clear communication with tenants to prevent conflicts before they escalate.

Ensure you keep up to date with all the latest information by checking for advice and guidance on **gov.uk** and the councils' website at **crawley.gov.uk**

The Renters Rights Act 2025 represents the most significant change in the private rented sector since 1989. While adapting to the new rules may seem challenging, preparing now will protect your business, strengthen tenant relationships, and ensure you remain fully compliant.

This document is available at **crawley.gov.uk** .

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