

June 2025

EASTERN LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

We are almost at mid-year point in 2025 and the Renters' Rights Bill is drawing ever closer. Government's summer recess is just a few short weeks away and the Bill is currently sitting in the report stage. There will be a period of time for landlords to make the necessary changes following Royal Assent and landlords will be given a compliance date. The best guess at the moment is still looking towards anytime between October 2025 – January 2026.

Whilst many of us have enjoyed some nice summer weather it may seem odd to think about heating! But the summer months are often the best opportunity to capitalise on booking in your heating engineer as these are potentially their quieter months. You may find it easier to book in your gas safety inspections and boiler servicing now rather than waiting until winter.

Most landlords are vigilant with keeping up to date with these legal obligations and fully understand their duty of care, but it is surprising how quickly the expiry date can come round for these requirements.

The gas boiler must be serviced annually and a certificate provided by a registered Gas Safe engineer.

The advice for all landlords is to keep efficient records so that you know when your property is due for a service renewal.

Of course, at the start of each tenancy you need to ensure your tenant is handed over a copy of the current valid Gas Safety Certificate anyway, but for those longer standing tenancies that tend to look after themselves, and with the requirements for landlords to keep on top of their paperwork and housekeeping, it is ever more important to ensure your ducks are in a row.

Landlords are also responsible for ensuring the hot water systems are maintained and functioning, so getting regular and appropriate boiler checks should form part of your maintenance programme.

Repairs and maintenance are part and parcel



of being a landlord but in addition to the annual boiler check, landlords must respond to broken heating systems within 24 hours during cold weather to ensure tenant safety and comfort. If the malfunction causes cosmetic damage to walls or flooring, landlords are also responsible for redecorating. For private landlords, especially those managing multiple properties, this can be a significant challenge.

So, who should do what?

A Landlord's Responsibilities

The 1985 Tenancy Act is clear "landlords have to keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for space heating and hot water"

- Provide some form of heating in every habitable room and ensure it remains in good working order during the term of the tenancy
- It would be good practice to bleed radiators before their tenants move in
- 'Duty of Care' to provide a reliable source of hot water
- Repair when needed and maintain the boiler (annual check)
- Redecorate for any cosmetic damage to walls and floors for any damage caused by faulty or repaired works
- Ensure the Gas Safety is carried out by a qualified engineer who can install and service your boiler
- Address and endeavour to fix any hot water issues within 24 hours or as soon as possible thereafter

A Tenant's Responsibilities

- Repair any damage that they cause to the property or equipment
- Bleed radiators during their time in the property
- Take necessary precautions against things like frozen pipes by running the heating regularly during cold weather
- Report any leaks or issues as soon as they are discovered

How Does the Renters' Rights Bill Affect Me if I Want to Sell?

These are the proposed rules – don't forget, it's still not through parliament just yet! You will be able to serve notice on your tenants using the mandatory grounds 1 and 1A. There will be a 12-month protected tenancy period for the tenant and a 4 month notice period will apply.

We also know that there will be a restriction on remarketing the property for rent.



Those grounds!

If the landlord or his close family members wish to move back into the property you are able to use Ground 1 and serve notice from month 8, which will provide your tenant with the 4 months' notice that is required (this is an existing ground and the only change is the notice period moving from 2 months to 4).

Alternatively, if the landlord wishes to sell the property, notice can be served on the tenant using the *new* Ground 1A (this cannot be used for the first 12 months of a new tenancy) and again 4 months' notice must be given.

The advice here would always be to ensure landlords are fully and consistently transparent with your tenants throughout the decision-making process.

ELA Landlord Conference and AGM

Last month we saw our most successful conference and AGM held in recent years. Our aim is always to provide our members with quality service, helpful insight and an easy and supportive contact for landlords to touch base regarding any of their concerns.

So to receive such positive feedback from the event made it feel incredibly rewarding for the Directors and Staff of ELA.

"All the stalls were very helpful if I asked a question, I received helpful advice"

"It was a great chance to meet other landlords and hear of their plans with all the changes coming"

"I found it useful for keeping up to date on the Renters' Rights Bill changes and chatting to exhibitors"

"It was well organised, engaging and informative"

We were joined by many familiar suppliers but also welcomed some new ones too



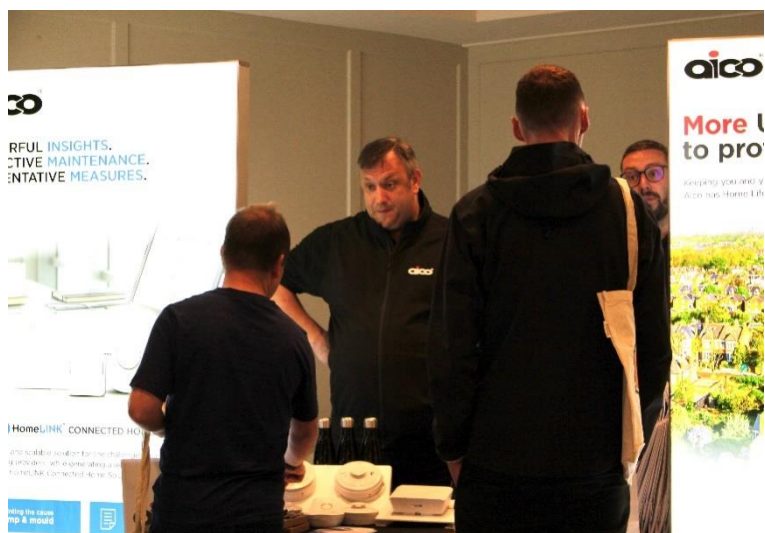
including Broadland and South Norfolk Council, Aico, B&Q, Certified Rooms, Federation of Small Businesses and IHI Insulation and Heating.



Sophie represented her company, Pink Plumbing, breaking down the stereotypes, and with 50% of landlords being female we were delighted that Sophie was able to join us.

If members need to get hold of any of these contacts, some appear on our Trades Page on the website but you can of course simply contact the ELA team who will be happy to find forward these on to you.

If you have a business or know someone who would like to exhibit with us next year, do get in touch.



Does the Electricity Meter at Your Property Need Upgrading?

We have received this energy advice from Suffolk Centres for Warmth*.

It is estimated that there are more than 10,000 properties in Suffolk and Norfolk with older electricity meters using the Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS).

The RTS signal is being switched off in June 2025, so everyone with an RTS electricity meter will need a new one installed.

The RTS tells the meter when to switch between peak and off-peak rates – so it often found in homes with Economy 7 or Economy 10 (often rural off-gas homes, as well as flats, with storage heaters). Those households that haven't upgraded to modern smart meters could end up with their heating and hot water supply no longer working as normal after the RTS switch off. This could also mean higher energy bills (if they are not making use of cheaper night-time rates).

Energy companies are contacting households to arrange installation of new meters. If the RTS meter isn't changed, households could also end up with bigger energy bills.

Find out more here:

www.ofgem.gov.uk/replacing-your-radio-teleswitch-electricity-meter

**Suffolk centres for warmth are hosted by East Suffolk council and provide energy and financial inclusion support to Suffolk residents.*

Communication

We use many forms of communication to get the right information to our members in ways they choose fits them best.

So many members still prefer good old-fashioned telephone calls with familiar voices, and emails are always perfect for those that "can't get to the phone right now". But we are also finding the WhatsApp



Community Chat and Announcements channels are being positively used, and of course we can be found on Instagram too.



With regular weekly Blogs coming out with topical and helpful information, many are also enjoying receiving their intel from this method.



If you are in business, we have a LinkedIn account which is another great way to network with other landlords and associated businesses in the property field.

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/easternlandlordsassociation?utm_source=qr&igsh=bWt1Z29vdW5ub290

WhatsApp

[whatsapp acceptance form](#)

LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/paula-daynes-14a908342/>

Blog

<https://www.easternlandlords.org.uk/blog>

We are also launching 'The Landlord Hub' which launches this week.

If you need any help with getting set up on any of these channels, do get in touch with us and we will be happy to help.

An Interview With...

..Mike. An experienced landlord with some interesting stories!

How did you become a landlord and why – please share your story with us?

"I became a landlord accidentally if you like, when a Norwich estate agency which is no longer in existence signed us up to selling our house as we had found another. They said it should sell at what we thought was a high price, but once signed on the proverbial dotted line, after a while there were no takers and suggested we reduce the price which we did. This continued until we were at quite a low price and 'hey presto' they found a buyer very quickly. We learned the buyer was a 'friend' of the person at the agency!!!

Feeling a 'stitch up' we investigated if we could keep the first house and buy the second one. Which is what we did then let the first house out".

We know you have had extensive experience with HMOs. Can you share some of experience in this field?

"We have a few properties now like private sector leasing and HMO's and just a private let.

So with HMO's it is much more regulated and generally more issues you have to attend to shall we say, but as long as you are not too unlucky with tenants you will make money. The big thing is trying to judge your tenant. You get better at this over time,

and improve with experience.

If you must evict through the court, it's a pain, I've had judges make mistakes and this is at your cost and seemingly you can't sue the judge! I once had a judge decide to let the tenant stay until after Christmas, when they should have been evicted just before! I have seen a judge feel sorry for the tenant even though the tenant has spent the rent money for the last couple of months, often on alcohol or drugs.

I've had other tenants who decided going to some festival in Scotland, spending all the promised rent money on that, instead of valuing the roof over their head.

When you do evict the court sends the poor innocent tenant piles of documents to try and fight the eviction by the 'evil money grabbing landlord!'

Also, after you have evicted, the tenant often goes to St. Martins Housing Trust for help, who asks them to contact the landlord to get the arrears total with the view to repaying it. In my experience I have been offered 50p a month on £1600 debt!! I never saw one payment, so it was just a waste of time".

We often ask about the challenges of being a landlord so we know there will be plenty of those – please share. But also, how have you benefited?

"I have pretty much answered much of this but I do get comments like 'you're the best

landlord I have ever had', which is quite nice. Some tenants though do begrudge the rent they pay and have no idea of costs of keeping them safe etc".

Many landlords feel that there have been easier times in the past – what would you say and why?

"Yes certainly times were easier with less red tape etc. Tenants frequently are full of their rights but not so willing on their responsibilities. They are also much better informed today and more able to game the system".

We love to hear of comeback stories too – so what would you say have been your epic fails that have led to some form of glory?

"I'm not sure I have any that I could confide".

With the Government poised for all sorts of negative implications to landlords, how are you protecting yourself and do you have any advice for others?

"Try and keep the paperwork etc up-to-date so that you know, should the tenant need to be evicted, you have you supplied them with all documents".

And any last thoughts?

"To me landlording is a long-term thing, over time you should make some money but you have to expect there will be problems. HMOs make the most money but it can be demanding.

You become a better judge of the tenants over time, you will make mistakes but you should learn by them. Remember, the councils, courts and quite often the tenants don't like landlords".

Fosters Partnership

Many of our newer members may not have used the benefit of direct contact with our legal affiliation, Fosters Solicitors.

ELA were delighted to celebrate a 10-year partnership with them last month and to continue our relationship with them over the forthcoming years.



Along with all the other perks of being an ELA member, landlords can access a free 15-minute legal helpline with Fosters on the last Wednesday of each month. Due to growing popularity of this service, we are now able to offer membership increased time slots for this and the service increased from 2 hours to 3 hours recently, providing more opportunities for members to raise their legal issues.



The next legal surgery is on
Wednesday
25th June 2025

To register for a **free** 15-minute legal surgery appointment, please contact ELA on 01603 767101 or email us info@easternlandlords.org.uk

Telephone appointments held with Chris Fielding or Tyler Clayton
 3.00pm - 6.00pm