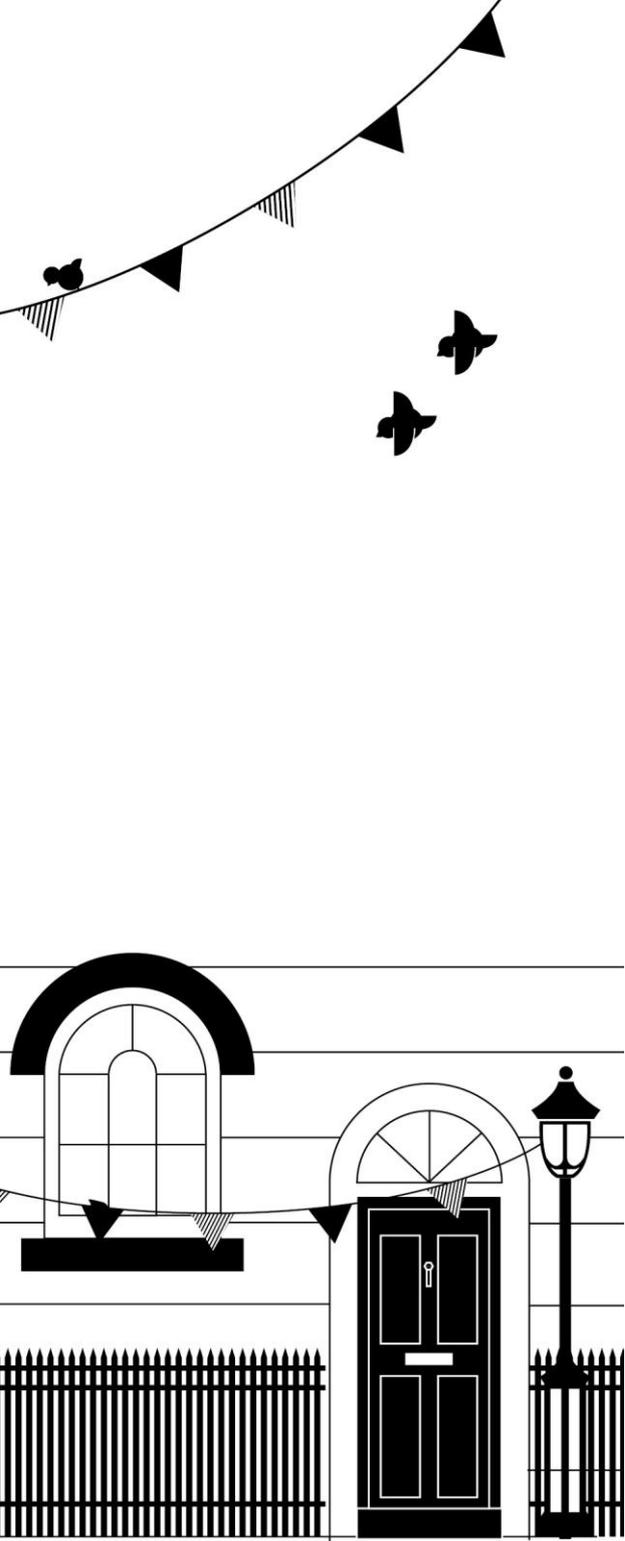


PORTICO



Landlord Check Out Manual

We know that tenants moving out can generate a number of questions; we hope this manual will be able to help.

Landlord Check Out Manual

AS SOON AS WE KNOW YOUR TENANT IS LEAVING

Marketing

Our lettings team will be in contact to discuss our marketing strategy. Your property will be immediately placed back into our lettings portfolio, unless you advise us otherwise. We will ensure that your property is advertised on our website and various property portals and we will start contacting prospective applicants immediately.

We will advise your tenants that we may erect a "To Let" board outside the property (to maximise exposure) and ask for their assistance in access for viewings.

We like to leave approximately 5 working days from the end of tenancy and the property next becoming available. This normally allows enough time to ensure that any work needed between tenancies is completed before an updated inventory is carried out and new tenants move in.

Should you wish to undertake any larger works during the vacant period please contact us so we can adjust the availability date accordingly and to discuss if we can help.

Keys

Our lettings team will require access to the property for viewings, which may necessitate the cutting of another set of keys. Keys will be cut only if absolutely necessary, the cost of which will appear on your next statement.

If you are not re-letting the property, please make contact with us once the check out has been carried out and all necessary works have been completed in order to make arrangements for the collection of keys.

Energy Performance Certificates

Legislation requires properties to be marketed with the benefit of an Energy Performance Certificate. From 1st April 2020 a property's EPC rating must be A-E or have a valid exemption. To let, renew or extend a tenancy without an A-E rating or a valid exemption could lead to some very substantial fines. In addition, if a Section 21 Notice to gain possession of the property is served, without a valid EPC or an exemption in place, the notice may be deemed invalid.

We can arrange this for you, contact your local branch for further details.

Electrical Installation Condition Report

To guarantee compliance with the strict requirements of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020, all new lets must have a valid Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) to ensure fixed electrical installations at the property have been inspected. The EICR will be valid for 5 years.

Proven breaches of the regulations could result in the local housing authority imposing a financial penalty of up to £30,000.

We can arrange this for you, contact your local branch for further details.

Gas Safety Record

If you have gas at the property, you may already have a current valid gas safety record. However, if you replace any gas appliances or boilers between tenancies you will need to obtain a new gas safety record. If the current record expires before new tenants are due to move in, we recommend that this is carried out at least 5 days before the proposed start date, just in case any works are required.

We can arrange this for you, contact your local branch for further details.

Refurbishing the property between tenancies.

Any works carried out can help relet the property; and may even result in an increase to the advertised rent. Let us know what you

are planning, not only can we use this information to help let the property when carrying out viewings, but we may also be able to assist you.

We have a bank of experienced and referenced contractors. We may also be able to help project manage any refurbishments for you. Contact our Property Management teams for further information. (Please refer to Terms of Business and Fee Schedule for costs.).

What happens to the utilities?

We will endeavour to inform gas, electricity, and water suppliers of the meter readings. Utility providers and the council tax department will be sent the tenant's forwarding address for the closing accounts. Utility accounts will be returned to the landlord's name until the start of a new tenancy.

Note: Whilst notifications will be sent to the utility companies, we cannot guarantee they will act on our instructions.

Telephone/Broadband

Many tenants do not require a landline. You should therefore be aware that when you eventually take back final possession of the property, any numbers may have been lost and in some cases there may no longer be a landline assigned to the property.

If you are returning to the property and you are a Virgin Media customer, we may be able to help you transfer your account. Alternatively, as a preferred partner of Virgin Media, we may be able to arrange a special deal for you! Why not give us a call?

Winter Protection

If your tenants vacate during the winter months (1st October - 1st April) we will endeavour to leave the heat set on low in order to protect the pipes from freezing.

Insurance

Buildings and contents insurance policies should be checked to ensure compliance; any breach could render the insurance invalid. Some insurance companies insist that water systems are drained down whilst a property is empty. Please inform us immediately if this is a requirement. Any costs relating to heating and system draining are charged to the landlord.

If your property is empty for a period of time insurance policies should be checked to ensure compliance. Many policies insist on regular visits and stipulate minimum periods of occupancy to ensure cover is valid. A Vacant Property Service is available which will ensure compliance with most insurance policies with respect to regular, recorded visits. We will clear the inevitable pile-up of mail, check each room, report on the condition of the garden and make appropriate recommendations. Contact us to see if we can help.

As a landlord, you'll want to protect your rental property should the worst happen – do you currently have the right amount of cover? What level of cover do you need?

Your landlord insurance will be different depending whether your rental property is freehold or leasehold. The number of properties you have may also make a difference (you could be eligible for discounted premiums when you have a portfolio of properties).

Bode Insurance Solutions, an insurance intermediary company within the Leaders Romans Group has made arrangements with specialist intermediary Uinsure so you can compare a number of specialist landlord insurers who provide similar cover and select the insurer which offers the most competitive price. To get a quote, simply visit <https://portico.uinsure.co.uk/>, call 01903 890 044 (calls are charged at your local rate) or ask in branch for details.

Leaders Limited t/a Portico Property is an introducer appointed representative of Bode Insurance Solutions (company no 03101637) Registered Address: Crowthorne House, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 3GZ. Bode Insurance Services Limited are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) under firm reference 313541. You may check this on the Financial Services Register by visiting the FCA's website <https://register.fca.org.uk/s/> or by contacting the FCA on 0800 11 6768

If the property is no longer available for letting, all the taps and showers should be run and WC's flushed before use.

AFTER THE CHECK OUT

What happens on the day of check out?

Check outs usually take place on the last day of the tenancy or on the next working day, if the tenancy ends on a weekend or a Bank Holiday.

The check out is undertaken by a trained and experienced Inventory Clerk. They will carefully check the property against the ingoing inventory, taking into account fair wear and tear. Unfortunately, appliances will not and cannot be tested for operational use during check out. We ask that you refrain from entering the property until after the tenants have vacated and the check out report compiled. Entering the property before this may affect any claims that might otherwise be made against the tenant.

What happens after check out?

The Inventory Clerk produces a detailed report, noting the condition of the property. The report covers two areas of responsibility; items of tenant responsibility and items of maintenance for the landlord's attention (as well as any recommendations).

We aim to send the report to you within 48 hours of the check out via our Deposit Portal. We will then contact you to discuss any areas of concern before instructing any contractors and liaising with your tenants. If we are unable to contact you, we will of course take the necessary steps in your best interest.

What if there are any damages?

As the tenant's deposit is held as stakeholder, the deposit, by mutual agreement between the parties, can be charged to restore or compensate for damages in excess of fair wear and tear. Betterment is not permitted. Where possible we will notify you via our Deposit Portal of our findings and send this to you for approval.

What is fair wear and tear and betterment?

Legal definition: damage to the property caused by the natural effects of time and normal human usage. This may include chipped or broken china or lost teaspoons that the landlord would be expected to replace. The rule of thumb is that wear and tear is not dirt; if it can be rubbed off or removed then it is not fair wear and tear.

Betterment means improvement. It is unreasonable to expect the property to be in better condition than it was at the start of the tenancy. The tenant cannot be charged to improve a property.

What does stakeholder mean?

As the tenant's deposit is held as stakeholder, the deposit, by mutual agreement between the parties, can be charged to restore or compensate for damages in excess of fair wear and tear. Betterment is not permitted.

Instructing contractors

We will instruct contractors to carry out any necessary agreed works immediately following the check out. Therefore, it is vital that we are notified if our contractors should not be instructed to carry out any work. Fully qualified contractors and valid invoices must be received for any work chargeable to the tenant against the tenancy deposit.

It is standard practice for the costs of works to be initially charged to the landlord's account. As and when the costs are finalised and agreed with the tenant, the landlord will be reimbursed from the tenant's deposit or from the No Deposit Option Scheme (terms apply). It may be necessary to contact you for funds before we are able to proceed with any works. Where necessary we may retain a float from the last month's rent to help with these costs until any claim can be finalised with your tenant.

When will my tenant's deposit be returned? (Standard deposit)

We endeavour to return any undisputed tenancy deposit within 10 working days.

What if the tenant does not agree with the costs?

Where we hold a deposit the tenant has up to 90 days, from the end of the tenancy to submit a dispute to the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS) in order to benefit from the free adjudication service. If the deposit is held in an alternative scheme the tenants will need to refer to the individual scheme rules for raising a dispute.

Under the No Deposit Option (NDO) – Leaders Romans Group indemnify you, the landlord, for any damage or dilapidations arising under the tenancy where the limit of indemnity will be a sum equivalent to 7 weeks rent under the tenancy (terms apply). In the event of a dispute, your tenant has the option to refer the matter to adjudication; we will of course submit any evidence on your behalf. We will contact you accordingly should we need any additional information. Should we not hear from the tenant or the tenant does not raise a formal dispute within a satisfactory timescale, then we will assess each potential dispute and where necessary will proceed to a formal dispute. The adjudicator's decision is final on all disputes submitted.

What happens if my tenants have a Letter of Guarantee?

Corporate tenancies on occasion guarantee a tenancy deposit by letter. The check out report will be sent to the company. Once agreement is reached and the work is carried out, monies will be claimed from the company tenant. Where a new tenancy is due to start, the check out work is completed and charged to the landlord's account pending receipt of funds from the company.

What happens if my tenants have not paid their last month's rent?

Tenancy deposits are held in accordance with the tenancy agreement. If the deposit is protected under the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS) or is covered by the No Deposit Option (NDO), the deposit will be used for cleaning and repairs and overdue rent, subject to the approval of both the landlord and tenant.

The landlord may also pursue the tenant through the Small Claims Court for any shortfall of rent (or dilapidations) not covered by the deposit indemnity or tenancy deposit.

Overpaid Rent

If tenants have made an overpayment of rent, they are due a rent refund. In order that tenants can be reimbursed the correct sum should be forwarded as soon as possible quoting the contract number on all correspondence. This cannot be held back to cover any potential costs at the end of the tenancy.

Is the Inventory updated?

Subject to your service level, we will update the inventory between tenancies. This ensures that an up to date and accurate record is kept of the property condition and contents. It is therefore very important to ensure we are informed of any changes made either during the tenancy or whilst the property is empty. (Please include a full and thorough description). If major refurbishment work is carried out between tenancies, it is necessary to remake the inventory.

My service level does not cover a check out?

If this is not included in your service level we may be able to help you with this process by discussing the options available. Please contact us for further details.

What is the Deposit Portal?

Where possible deposit negotiations are managed via our Deposit Portal when the deposit is registered with the TDS Insured Scheme or is a No Deposit option. This means that you and the tenant can log into the portal at any time to see where we are with regards to negotiations allowing for transparency and access 24/7.

If you plan to carry out your own check out, or we do not manage the property for you, you may need to discuss/agree deposit deductions with the tenant direct.

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Portico Property is a member of Propertymark (which includes their Client Money Protection Scheme) and The Property Ombudsman, being the largest lettings redress scheme in the UK.

