Home + Castle Estate Agents
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Your Guide to Letting with Home + Castle

At Home + Castle, we're here to make the process as straightforward as possible.

Whether you're letting a property for the first time, expanding your portfolio or looking for a more professional approach to managing your investment, our experienced team can guide you through every stage.

Thinking About Letting Your Property?

Every landlord's circumstances are different.

You may be:

- Letting a property for the first time
- Moving home and deciding to keep your existing property
- Expanding your property portfolio
- Letting an inherited property
- An experienced landlord looking for professional support
- Looking to switch from another letting agent

Whatever your circumstances, the first step is understanding your property, the local rental market and your responsibilities as a landlord.

We'll help you understand the potential of your property and guide you through the next steps.

Understanding Your Property's Rental Value

Before marketing your property, it's important to establish a realistic rental value. The right rent should reflect both the local market and the individual qualities of your property.

Factors that may influence rental value include:

- Location
- Property type and size
- Number of bedrooms
- Condition and presentation
- Parking and outside space
- Furnishings and appliances
- Local amenities and transport links
- Demand from prospective tenants

It's also important to consider your costs as a landlord.

These may include:

- Mortgage payments
- Insurance
- Maintenance and repairs

- Safety and compliance requirements
- Service charges and ground rent
- Letting or management fees
- Periods when the property may be vacant

At Home + Castle, we can provide professional advice on your property's rental potential and help you set an appropriate asking rent.

Preparing Your Property to Let

First impressions matter. A well-presented property can help attract the right tenants and create the best possible start to a tenancy.

Before your property goes on the market, consider:

- Decorating and general presentation
- Completing any outstanding repairs
- Ensuring appliances are in good working order
- Tidying gardens and outside spaces
- Removing unnecessary personal belongings
- Professional cleaning
- Checking that all required safety measures are in place

A property that is clean, safe and well maintained is not only more attractive to prospective tenants. It also helps set clear expectations about how the home should be looked after during the tenancy.

Your Legal Responsibilities

Being a landlord comes with important legal responsibilities. You are responsible for ensuring that your property is safe, suitable to live in and properly maintained.

Your responsibilities can include areas such as:

- Gas safety
- Electrical safety
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Repairs and maintenance
- Energy efficiency
- Tenancy documentation
- Deposit protection
- Right to Rent checks
- Licensing requirements, where applicable

The rules surrounding private renting can change, so it is important to ensure you remain up to date with your responsibilities throughout your tenancy.

We'll help you stay on track

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At Home + Castle, we understand that landlord legislation can feel complicated. Our team can help guide you through the key requirements involved in letting your property.

Safety First

Your tenant's safety and the safety of your property should always be a priority. Landlords have important responsibilities for safety within their rental properties.

Depending on the property, these can include requirements relating to:

Gas Safety - If your property has gas appliances, the required safety checks must be carried out by an appropriately qualified Gas Safe engineer.

Electrical Safety - Electrical installations must be kept safe, and the required inspections and reports must be arranged in accordance with current regulations.

Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms - Appropriate alarms must be installed and maintained in accordance with the current legal requirements.

General Safety - The property must be safe for occupation and maintained to an appropriate standard.Keeping accurate records and ensuring checks are completed on time is an important part of responsible property management.

Energy Performance

Before letting a property, you will need to ensure that it meets the minimum energy efficiency rating E. An Energy Performance Certificate, commonly known as an EPC, provides information about the energy efficiency of a property. Your EPC can also help identify opportunities to improve the efficiency and comfort of your investment property.

Improving energy efficiency can offer benefits including:

- A more comfortable home for tenants
- Potentially lower running costs
- Improved appeal to prospective tenants
- Future-proofing your property against changing requirements

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Choosing the Right Letting Service

Every landlord has different requirements. Some landlords prefer to remain closely involved in the day-to-day running of their property, while others prefer the reassurance of professional support. At Home + Castle, we offer a range of services designed to give you the level of assistance that's right for you and your investment.

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Tenant Find

Our Tenant Find service is designed for landlords who would like professional support in finding and setting up the right tenancy, while remaining responsible for the ongoing management of their property. We'll help with the key stages of letting your property, including:

- Marketing your property
- Arranging and conducting viewings
- Finding suitable prospective tenants
- Referencing and application checks
- Supporting with Right to Rent requirements where applicable
- Preparing the tenancy arrangements and documentation
- Arranging the move-in process
- Helping ensure the tenancy is set up correctly from the start

Once your tenant has moved in, the ongoing management of the property and tenancy remains with you.

A professional start, giving you the confidence to manage your property going forward.

Rent Collection

Our Rent Collection service is ideal for landlords who are happy to manage their property and deal with day-to-day maintenance but would prefer the reassurance of professional rent administration.

We'll collect the monthly rent from your tenant and manage the payment process and if required, arrears on your behalf, helping to make your income more straightforward and reducing the administrative burden of chasing payments.

Giving you greater peace of mind, while you remain in control of your property.

Fully Managed

For landlords looking for a more hands-off approach, our Fully Managed service provides ongoing professional support throughout the tenancy.

We can help with the day-to-day management of your property, including:

- Ongoing communication with tenants
- Rent collection
- Maintenance co-ordination
- Routine property inspections
- Tenancy administration
- Supporting with issues that arise during the tenancy

Professional support throughout the tenancy, helping you protect your property and your investment.

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Not Sure Which Service Is Right for You?

We'll take the time to understand you and your property, your experience and how involved you'd like to be.

Whether you're looking for help finding a tenant, managing your rent payments or taking care of your property throughout the tenancy, we'll help you choose the service that's right for you.

Your property. Your choice. Our support when you need it.

Marketing Your Property

Once your property is ready, it's time to introduce it to the market. Effective marketing is about more than simply advertising a property. It means presenting your home in the best possible way and reaching suitable prospective tenants.

A strong marketing strategy may include:

- Professional property photography
- Clear and accurate descriptions
- Prominent online advertising
- Local market exposure
- Accompanied viewings
- Communication with registered applicants

At Home + Castle, we'll work to showcase your property and help attract suitable tenants.

Finding the Right Tenant

Finding a tenant is one of the most important stages of the letting process.

While there is no such thing as a completely risk-free tenancy, careful referencing can help landlords make informed decisions.

The referencing process may include checks such as:

- Identity verification
- Employment and income checks
- Affordability assessments
- Credit checks
- Bank verification and open banking
- Previous landlord references
- Guarantor checks, where appropriate
- Right to Rent checks

Our role is to help ensure that the appropriate checks are carried out as part of the letting process.

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Right to Rent

Before a tenancy begins, agent & landlords in England are required to carry out a Right to Rent check to confirm that prospective tenants have the legal right to rent a property in the UK. These checks involve reviewing the appropriate documentation or completing an online check where applicable. It's important that Right to Rent checks are completed correctly and that the necessary records are retained. In some circumstances, follow-up checks may also be required. At Home + Castle, we can help guide landlords through the Right to Rent process as part of setting up a new tenancy.

Your Tenancy

Private renting in England has changed significantly. Since **1 May 2026**, most private assured tenancies are periodic rather than fixed term assured shorthold tenancies.

This means landlords need to ensure that their tenancy arrangements and documentation reflect the current legal framework. A tenancy agreement or written tenancy information should clearly set out the important terms of the arrangement.

These can include:

- The property being rented
- The amount of rent
- When and how rent is paid
- Deposit information and where it is held
- The responsibilities of the landlord and tenant
- Responsibilities for bills and utilities
- The arrangements for maintaining the property
- Other agreed terms relating to the tenancy

Getting the tenancy set up correctly from the beginning helps create clarity for everyone involved and it is crucial that its set up correctly from the start.

Setting the Rent

Setting the right rent is an important balance. You want to achieve the best possible return from your investment while ensuring your property remains competitively positioned within the local market.

When setting your rent, we'll consider:

- Current local rental values
- Demand for similar properties
- Your property's size and condition
- Location and amenities
- Features that make your property stand out

Under the current rules in England, landlords must also follow the correct legal process when increasing rent during a tenancy. Rent cannot simply be increased whenever you choose, and the current framework generally limits increases to once a year using the prescribed process.

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We'll be happy to explain how this applies to your tenancy and go into more detail regarding when you can increase, how you increase, when that increase becomes effective and the first tier tribunal process, should that increase be challenged.

Your Tenant's Deposit

Where a tenancy deposit is taken, there are strict rules about how it must be handled.

For most qualifying assured tenancies:

- The deposit cannot exceed the applicable legal limit
- It must be protected in an approved tenancy deposit scheme
- Required information about the protection arrangements must be provided to the tenant

A detailed inventory and schedule of condition can also be invaluable. This provides a clear record of the property's condition at the beginning of the tenancy and can help avoid disputes at the end.

Moving Your Tenant In

A smooth move-in creates the right start to a tenancy.

Before your tenant receives the keys, it's important to make sure everything is ready.

This should include:

✓ Completing the necessary safety checks
✓ Ensuring required documentation has been provided
✓ Confirming tenancy arrangements
✓ Protecting the deposit where required
✓ Preparing an inventory or schedule of condition
✓ Recording relevant meter readings
✓ Making sure the property is clean and ready for occupation

Once everything is in place, your tenant can begin making the property their home.

During the Tenancy

A successful tenancy relies on good communication.

Landlords have responsibilities throughout the tenancy, and tenants also have responsibilities for looking after the property and meeting the terms of their agreement. During the tenancy, you may need to deal with:

- Repairs and maintenance
- Tenant enquiries
- Routine inspections
- Safety checks

- Rent payments
- Changes in circumstances

Keeping on top of these responsibilities can help prevent small issues from becoming larger problems.

Repairs & Maintenance

Landlords are responsible for many repairs within a rental property. This can include important areas such as:

- The structure and exterior of the property
- Heating and hot water systems
- Plumbing
- Electrical installations
- Other installations provided as part of the tenancy

Promptly dealing with maintenance issues helps protect both your property and your relationship with your tenant.

We recommend encouraging tenants to report problems as soon as they arise and with our tenant app, they can report issues in real time, meaning we can action them, the same way.

A small leak, for example, can quickly become a much larger and more expensive issue if left unresolved.

Property Inspections

Regular inspections can help you stay informed about the condition of your investment.

They can provide an opportunity to:

- Check the general condition of the property
- Identify maintenance issues
- Discuss any concerns with the tenant
- Ensure problems are reported early

However, it is important to remember that the property is your tenant's home. Tenants have the right to enjoy their home without unnecessary interference, and appropriate notice should normally be provided before access is requested, except in genuine emergencies.

Respectful communication and reasonable arrangements are key to maintaining a positive landlord and tenant relationship.

Rent Collection

Reliable rent payments are an important part of protecting your investment. Having clear payment arrangements in place from the beginning helps avoid confusion.

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Your tenancy documentation should make clear:

- How much rent is due
- When it must be paid
- How payments should be made

If a tenant falls into arrears, early communication is often important. The situation should be handled professionally and through the appropriate legal processes.

If you have a managed service with Home + Castle, we can provide support with rent collection and communication.

Insurance

Your property is a significant investment, so appropriate insurance should be an important consideration. Standard home insurance may not provide the protection required for a rental property.

Landlord insurance may offer protection for areas such as:

- The building
- Landlord's contents
- Loss of rent in certain circumstances
- Property owner's liability
- Specific risks associated with letting a property

The level of cover you need will depend on your circumstances and your property. We recommend speaking to an appropriately qualified insurance provider to ensure you have suitable protection in place.

Tax & Financial Considerations

Letting a property can have tax and financial implications.

Depending on your circumstances, you may need to consider:

- Rental income
- Allowable expenses
- Mortgage arrangements
- Capital Gains Tax
- Your wider property investment strategy

Tax rules can be complex and will depend on your individual circumstances. For specific tax advice, we recommend speaking to a qualified accountant or tax adviser.

Pets

The rules surrounding pets in privately rented homes have changed.

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Tenants may request permission to keep a pet, and landlords must consider these requests in accordance with the current legal framework.

A request cannot simply be refused without a valid reason. If you have concerns about a pet request, it's important to seek appropriate advice and follow the correct process.

Home + Castle can help guide landlords through these situations.

When Things Don't Go to Plan

Most tenancies run smoothly, but occasionally problems can arise.

These might include:

- Rent arrears
- Property damage
- Breaches of tenancy terms
- Antisocial behaviour
- Disputes between landlord and tenant

The most important thing is to deal with problems early and professionally. Good communication can often resolve issues before they become more serious.

Where a situation cannot be resolved, it is important to follow the correct legal process and seek appropriate professional advice.

Ending a Tenancy

The rules around ending private tenancies in England changed significantly in 2026. Landlords can no longer rely on the previous Section 21 "no-fault" eviction process for qualifying assured periodic tenancies.

Instead, a landlord who wishes to recover possession must use the appropriate legal grounds and follow the correct notice and court procedures.

Depending on the circumstances, grounds for possession may relate to issues such as:

- Serious rent arrears
- Antisocial behaviour
- Property damage or breaches of tenancy obligations
- The landlord needing to sell the property
- The landlord or qualifying family member needing to move into the property

Different grounds have different requirements and notice periods.It is essential that the correct procedure is followed.

A landlord must never attempt to remove a tenant without following the legal process.

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Preparing for the End of a Tenancy

When a tenancy is coming to an end, preparation can help make the process smoother for everyone.

This may involve:

- Agreeing the relevant arrangements with the tenant
- Organising a check-out inspection
- Reviewing the inventory
- Checking the property's condition
- Taking final meter readings
- Recovering keys
- Considering any legitimate deposit deductions

Remember that tenants are not responsible for **fair wear and tear** resulting from normal use of the property.

A detailed inventory from the start of the tenancy can be extremely helpful when assessing the condition of the property at the end.

Protecting Your Investment

Successful property letting is about taking a long-term view. Looking after your property, choosing tenants carefully, staying compliant and dealing with maintenance promptly can all help protect your investment.

Regular reviews can help you consider:

- The condition of your property
- Maintenance requirements
- Energy efficiency
- Rental performance
- Changing legislation
- Your long-term property goals

With the right support, letting a property can be a much more straightforward and rewarding experience.

We're Here to Help

At Home + Castle, we understand that your property is more than just bricks and mortar. It's an investment you've worked hard for. Whether you're a first-time landlord or have years of experience, our team is here to provide straightforward advice, professional support and a personal service throughout your letting journey. From understanding your property's rental potential and finding the right tenant to supporting you throughout the tenancy, we're here to help make letting your property simpler.

Whatever stage you're at in your landlord journey, Home + Castle is here to help. Speak to our team today for straightforward, professional advice about your property and the local lettings market.

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