

Landlord Hub Newsletter

Welcome to the 16th edition of the landlord hub newsletter

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It was another great turnout at the Landlord Hub on 19th June 2019 at Greenmeadow Gof Club, with over 70 in attendance.

Thank you to everyone who attended.

As always, we as Local Authority have an administrative role within the Hub but you as landlords are the key to its success. Please let us know of any guests or topics that you would like to see covered at future events.

Together we can make the private rented sector an attractive place in which to grow and protect your business and a viable and affordable housing option of choice for tenants.

The speakers for the evening were;

- Gareth Baglow from Welsh Government, who gave a presentation on the Renting Homes (Fees etc.) (Wales) Bill.
- Sue Harris from DWP discussing Universal Credit from landlord prospective.
- Anne Garrett from Torfaen Council introducing the Eco Flexi scheme that will be introduced in both Torfaen & Monmouthshire.
- Rhian Cook from Melin Homes discussing Well@Home Wales.

Well@Home

Well@Home Wales is a three-year project running from 2018-2021 and is a partnership between Melin Homes, Cardiff Metropolitan University, Care & Repair Monmouthshire and Torfaen, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB).

It has received funding from the National Grid's Warm Homes Fund to deliver a regional programme within the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board area, targeted at improving the poor health of those with chronic illnesses which are potentially worsened due to poor energy efficiency and fuel poverty.

For more information please contact Rhian Cook,
Rhian.cook@melinhomes.co.uk/info@wellathome.co.uk

Increasing the minimum notice period for 'no fault eviction'

Welsh Government published the 'no fault eviction' consultation document on 11th July.

The consultation looks to;

- Extend the minimum notice period from 2 months to 6 months.
- Increase the period at the beginning of a contract, which a landlord cannot give notice from 4 months to 6 month.
- 6 month restriction on reissuing of a S173 notice after the previous one has expired.
- Eliminating a landlord's ability to end a fixed term standard contract, under S186.
- The use of break clauses in fixed term contracts.

To view the full consultation document please click on the below link:



<https://gov.wales/increasing-minimum-notice-period-no-fault-eviction>

Equity and Diversity for the Private Rented Sector

Equality and Diversity for the Private Rented Sector Course available to book through the Rent Smart Wales website, <https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/courses/detail/?fdCourseEventId=655>
The course is made of four modules.

Assessment - There is a short assessment at the end of the course to confirm that you have understood all elements. This must be completed in order to receive a certificate. The test is made of **10 questions** and you will need to **answer 7 or more correctly to pass**. The test can only be taken after completion of all sections. You will need to complete the assessment in one sitting.

Cost (per person): Free

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

DWP are looking at ways to help make sure that housing costs are paid on time and in full – plans include developing a video that will cover the topics relevant to landlords. In the meantime, here is a quick rundown of the key aspects of Universal Credit for landlords.

What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is for people who are on a low income or out of work. It's usually paid as a single monthly payment, and can include help towards housing costs. It replaces six benefits, including Housing Benefit.

How much will claimants get towards housing?

Private sector tenants' housing costs payments are based upon the lower amount out of their actual rent (including service charges) and the relevant Local Housing Allowance rate. If their Universal Credit payment doesn't cover all their housing costs, tenants may apply for extra local authority help through a Discretionary Housing Payment.

Moving from Housing Benefit

If a tenant received Housing Benefit up to the date they applied for Universal Credit, their Housing Benefit will automatically continue for the first two weeks of their new Universal Credit claim. This doesn't need to be repaid, and helps smooth the transition from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit. Housing Benefit will usually automatically stop when the Universal Credit claim is approved.

Housing Benefit payments from local authorities direct to landlords will not be automatically put in place when someone moves onto Universal Credit, but managed payments to landlords can be considered if the tenant tells their work coach their Housing Benefit was paid direct to their landlord.

Helping claims go smoothly

Help your tenants make a new Universal Credit claim by ensuring they have accurate documents that prove their liability to pay rent and their occupancy of the property they're claiming for. Missing or inaccurate evidence could delay their first payment.

Contacting DWP

If you need to contact DWP about your tenant, they will need to have provided DWP with their consent. They can do this through their online journal or by calling the Universal Credit Service Centre. Consent only lasts until the specific enquiry is resolved or for a limited period of time, so your tenant may need to provide consent more than once.

If a managed payment to the landlord is in place, DWP can speak to the landlord about the payment without the need for consent, but consent will still be required for all other subjects. Once consent has been provided, you can call the Universal Credit Service Centre on **0800 328 5644** or by using the Welsh language line on **0800 328 1744**.

FREE FIRE SAFETY COURSE FOR LANDLORDS

RENT SMART WALES, THE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING AUTHORITY FOR ALL LANDLORDS AND AGENTS WITH PROPERTY IN WALES, HAS DEVELOPED A NEW FIRE SAFETY COURSE FOR LANDLORDS.

DEVELOPED IN CONJUNCTION WITH WALES' THREE FIRE AUTHORITIES - **SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE, MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AND NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**, THE ONLINE COURSE AIMS TO INCREASE LANDLORDS FIRE SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AND MAKE THEM AWARE OF THEIR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS TO ENSURE THEIR TENANTS AND PROPERTIES ARE PROTECTED FROM THE POTENTIALLY DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF FIRE.

The course, available on the Rent Smart Wales website, is the first online Continuing Professional Development course to be offered by the scheme and provides more in depth information on fire safety than the basic responsibilities covered in the mandatory training course for all self-managing landlords in Wales.

The main objectives of the course are:

- To improve your knowledge of your legal duties in regard to fire safety.
- Understand your obligations in relation to fire safety precautions on houses of multiple occupancy.
- To help you to understand the steps required to carry out a fire safety risk assessment.
- Understand your legal requirements in relation to gas safety, electrical safety, furniture and furnishings and smoking.

This course aims to provide a general awareness of fire safety within the Private Rented Sector (PRS). It is not designed to give you specific training or competence to carry out fire risk assessments or use of fire-fighting equipment. This course covers the broad principles of fire safety but does not aim to address issues that are specific to your circumstances. You should always take expert advice if you have any doubts about your competence to carry out fire safety related tasks.

Assessment

The assessment is made of 10 multi-choice questions. You will need to achieve a score of 70% (7 correct answers) to pass the assessment and complete the course.

You will need to complete the assessment in one go. Unlike the course modules where you can save your progress and return to it at a later date, this is not possible on the assessment. Please make sure you read the question and the respective answers before you make your selection.

Cost (per person): Free

<https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/courses/detail/?fdCourseEventId=618>

PRIVATE RENTING AND MENTAL HEALTH



Mental Health Awareness Tyfu Tai Cymru and Tai Pawb have published research on mental health support in the Private Rented Sector. Findings suggest that: Two-thirds of landlords have had a tenant with a mental health problem.

Almost 50% of landlords felt they didn't have enough information to support their tenants. Landlords want better information and support. Early intervention is proven to help people maintain their tenancies.

Please see below link to private renting and mental health report;

<http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Wales%20Policy/0409%20TTC%20private%20renting%20and%20mental%20health%20report%20FINAL.pdf>

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING REFURBISHMENT LOANS

New criteria, terms and conditions have been introduced on loan products available to owner occupiers, empty property owners and landlords/developers who wish to refurbish houses in Monmouthshire and Torfaen.

For further information please contact the following officers:

For Torfaen residents contact Hayley Gray

E-mail: hayley.gray@torfaen.gov.uk

Telephone: 01495 742629

For Monmouthshire residents contact Steve Griffiths

E-mail: stephengriffiths@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01633 644455



OVER TO YOU!

We are always happy to receive suggestions and feedback concerning the Landlord Hub. We invite Landlords and Agents to make suggestions on what topics you would like us to cover in future forums.

- What would you like to be updated on?
- Is there any information you require?

Please let us know and we will make every effort to include your chosen topics. Send us your requests to Hayley.gray@torfaen.gov.uk or StephenGriffiths@Monmouthshire.gov.uk

Monmouthshire County Council

Your local authority officer:

Stephen Griffiths

Tel: 01633 644455

E-mail: stephengriffiths@monmouthshire.gov.uk



Landlord Hub



@Landlord_Hub

Torfaen County Borough Council

Your local authority officer:

Hayley Gray

Tel: 01495 742629

Email: Hayley.gray@torfaen.gov.uk

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY -

**THE PROVISIONAL DATE FOR THE NEXT FORUM IS
WEDNESDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2019**