



24th February 2026

(updated from original version, dated 20th November 2025)

Renters' Rights Act 2025

Guide for Landlords

Introduction

The Renters' Rights Act is one of the most significant overhauls of the private rental sector (PRS) in England in decades, with the first phase of reforms set to take effect on **1st May 2026**. Its aim is clear: to provide greater security and fairness for tenants, while tightening compliance standards for landlords.

The wide-ranging reforms will reshape the landscape for the rental market in England, ending Section 21 evictions, changing tenancy structures, and introducing new compliance requirements. The bottom line is that there is more that landlords (or their managing agents) need to do to remain compliant.

Preparation for the new legislation is key and we are here to help.

Timelines for Implementation

The Renters' Right Act received Royal Assent on 27th October 2025 and is now law. On 13th November the Government announced that the Act will be implemented in three stages to help landlords, agents and tenants get ready for the changes.

- **Phase 1** will start on 1st May 2026 and will include key changes relating to tenancies including the transition to periodic tenancies and the abolition of Section 21 evictions.
- **Phase 2** is expected to follow on at the end of 2026 and continue through to 2028. It will include the introduction of a new PRS database and a landlord ombudsman.
- **Phase 3** is expected to start from 2030 onwards and will include the new Decent Homes Standard and the application of Awaab's Law.

Key Changes on 1st May 2026

The key Phase 1 changes to be implemented on 1st May 2026 are set out in the table below along with some of the support measures that we will provide to landlords where we are managing the property(ies).

Phase 1 changes from 1 st May 2026:	What support we will provide:
All tenancies become periodic.	
New and existing fixed-term Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs, the current standard contracts) will be immediately replaced by rolling, Assured Periodic Tenancies (APTs), with no minimum term.	We will support the transition of existing tenancies from ASTs to periodic tenancies. Note:

This means that tenants can stay in the property indefinitely until ended by a notice from:

- a. the tenant, who is able to give two months' notice at any time, or
- b. the landlord serving a valid Section 8 notice to regain possession with specific reasons.

Any existing tenancy agreements can remain in place, although they will automatically change over to the new rules from 1st May.

- There is no requirement to issue a new contract – the existing one will rollover under the new rules.
- We will also issue existing tenants with the government Information Sheet which explains the new tenancy regime to tenants.

We will set up new, fully compliant APT agreements for tenancies which start after 1st May.

The end of Section 21 'no-fault' evictions.

Landlords will no longer be able to use Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to evict tenants without giving a reason.

We will continue to manage Section 21 evictions whilst they are still permitted up to the 30th April. This includes Section 21 notices served before 1st May but which are not executed until after this date.

New grounds for possession which are fair for both parties.

While Section 21 is ending, new grounds for possession will be introduced under Section 8 to reflect landlords' needs to:

- Sell the property,
- Move in themselves or allow a family member to move in,
- Handle serious rent arrears (three instances of one month's arrears in three years),
- Address persistent anti-social behaviour.

Where the landlord wants to move in or sell the property, they will not be able to do so during the first 12 months of a new tenancy.

We will advise you on the application of the updated Section 8 grounds to gain possession.

We will support landlords in collating evidence needed to justify a possession claim, including detailed records of tenant communication, repairs and any rent arrears.

We will also ensure that the deposit is protected correctly at the start of the tenancy so the possession order is not rejected.

Rent increases limited to once a year.

Landlords will only be able to increase rent once per year using the revised Section 13 procedure and giving the tenants at least two months' notice.

Any rent increase must be "fair market rate" and can be challenged by tenants via the First Tier Tribunal.

We will continue to use our rent review calendar to plan annual rent adjustments, as well as manage the issuing of Section 13 notices.

We will ensure that rent increases are based on local market conditions with evidence of other similar properties.

We will keep detailed records of rent changes and justifications, including an audit trail of when notices have been served.

We will be ready to support landlords in dealing with possible Tribunal applications from tenants challenging rent increases.

Ban on rental bidding and paying rent in advance.

The rent-bidding process - where tenants offer over the asking price to secure the tenancy - will be illegal.

Landlords and agents will also not be able to request more than 1 month's rent in advance.

We will make sure that rental values are accurate to ensure the best return to landlords, whilst minimising void periods.

We will keep clear records of all offers and communications.

We will support tenants in obtaining a guarantor (including from approved third-party providers) where they cannot satisfy pre-tenancy checks.

New anti-discrimination measures.

Landlords and agents will no longer be allowed to discriminate against tenants who receive benefits or have children. This includes withholding information about a property, stopping someone from viewing it, or refusing to grant a tenancy.

Landlords will still be able to carry out affordability checks and not grant a tenancy based on income.

No change here – we do not discriminate.

We will maintain best practice in tenant referencing and screening processes, focusing on affordability, income, references and credit history when assessing applicants.

Greater rights for tenants to keep pets.

Landlords may not unreasonably refuse a request from a tenant to keep a pet.

While landlords can still refuse pets for valid reasons, blanket bans will no longer be acceptable and landlords must provide written reasons for refusal.

We will work with landlords to consider requests for pets on a case-by-case basis.

We will work with landlords to develop a fair pet policy based on the suitability of the property and the type of pet.

We will manage the process of responding to pet requests from tenants within the mandated 28-day window.

Stronger local authority enforcement.

Councils will have greater powers to investigate landlords and enforce compliance. Higher fines and penalties will be introduced for breaches of rental laws.

We will continue to carry out inventory and check-in/out reports on all tenancies, as well as conduct regular property inspections to ensure ongoing compliance.

We will continue to keep records of all property checks, quotes, invoices and communications.

We will engage with the local authorities where we are managing properties to make sure we are aware of local stipulations.

Follow-On Changes

The second and third phases of changes are set to follow from the end of 2026 onwards and will include:

1. Registration on a PRS Database.

All landlords must register on a new national Private Rental Sector (PRS) to include landlord and property details, as well as safety and compliance information such as gas and electric safety and Energy Performance Certificates. This is not expected to be implemented until the end of 2026.

2. Signing up to a new Landlord Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman will provide a redress service to handle disputes between landlords and tenants, as well as provide tools, guidance and training to support landlords. This is not expected to be fully operational before 2028.

3. Meeting a new Decent Homes Standard.

A Decent Homes Standard (DHS) will be introduced to ensure that all PRS properties meet a minimum standard of housing quality and safety. This will include meeting Awaab's Law which will require landlords to address damp and mould within set timescales. Dates for the DHS are still some way off and will be agreed following a consultation period.

Further Information & Advice

We will continue to keep on top of the detail of the changes being introduced under the new legislation and will keep in touch with any important updates.

We continue to add new information to our website at www.victoriaallman.co.uk, including the latest information from the government and leading industry trade organisations.

We always welcome the opportunity to check-in and discuss how we can best support you. Please get in touch to talk through any particular questions or concerns on how the Renters' Rights Act will impact you.

And if you are not currently using our managed service and would like to find out more about what we do, we would love to tell you more.

Contact Us

Telephone: 01666 338866

Email: lettings@victoriaallman.co.uk

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lettings@victoriaallman.co.uk

Telephone: 01666 338866 www.victoriaallman.co.uk

Victoria Allman Lettings Ltd, Orchard House, Cherry Orchard House, Luckington, Wiltshire SN14 6NX. Company No. 16132764