



# *Landlords in Wales:* Your 2026 to-do list

Guidance to help you manage your properties confidently and make sure your tenancies stay fully compliant throughout the year. Includes:

- Updates on on law changes directly affecting landlords
- Advice on how to inform tenants of your plans by using the correct notice
- Long-term lets vs short-term lets
- Unique insight from our experts



## Giving you the expert's view from Director of Operations, Nikki Lewis

2026 is shaping up to be a year of change for landlords in Cardiff and across Wales, so staying ahead is more important than ever.

Knowing what to focus on now can save you time, money, and stress further down the line.

We've put together a practical "to-do" list to help you manage your properties confidently and make sure your tenancies stay fully compliant throughout the year.



# CONTENTS

---

Consider if you - or your agent - needs to make changes to tenant selection when new anti-discrimination laws come in	3
New EPC Regulations	4
Review and enhance the way you respond to mould complaints, in light of Awaab's law	5
Avoid repaying 12 months' rent by ensuring your Rent Smart Wales licence is in date - or you've properly appointed a licensed agent	6
Intending to regain possession, increase rent, or move house? How to inform your tenant of your plans by using the correct notice	7
Planning to expand your buy-to-let portfolio in 2026? Here's what to do when you purchase a tenant property	8
Interested in holiday or short term lets? Stay abreast of the changes that are afoot...	9

# #1 - Consider if you - or your agent - needs to make changes to tenant selection when new anti-discrimination laws come in

*Headlines may suggest The Renters' Rights Act affects all UK landlords, but only around 1% of it applies to Wales...*

---

The Renters' Rights Act received Royal Assent on 27th October 2025, marking the most significant change to England's private rented sector in decades. It introduces sweeping reforms – abolishing fixed-term tenancies, ending Section 21 “no fault” evictions, regulating rent increases, extending Awaab's Law into the private rented sector, introducing a new private rented sector database and Ombudsman that landlords must sign up to, creating a new Decent Homes Standard – plus a lot more.

However, while headlines may suggest the Act affects all UK landlords, only around 1% of it applies to Wales.

So, what does this small but important section mean for Welsh landlords?

## **Rental discrimination: What's changing in Wales**

The part of the Act that extends into Wales focuses solely on non-discrimination in the private rented sector. From 1st May 2026, it will become unlawful for a landlord – or anyone acting on their behalf – to discriminate against applicants because they have children or receive benefits. That means landlords and agents cannot refuse a prospective tenant from:

- Enquiring about or viewing a property,
- Accessing information about the property, or
- Entering into a tenancy

...if the refusal is based on them having children under 18 or receiving benefit payments...

[Click here for the full article](#)

Covering: Ineffective contract terms, Limited defences and exemptions, Insurance products taken out before the Act, Preparing for compliance, 'When does it apply, and what do I need to do?' & Our Expert View.

# #2 - New EPC Regulations

*Get the most up-to-date information from our FAQ.*

---

Landlords often ask us: "is the minimum EPC rating rising to 'C' in 2026... 2028... or ever?".

The short answer is "no, nothing has been confirmed". The Government has said not to expect any announcements until the second half of 2026.

The longer answer is more complicated. The Government is currently running, or planning to run, several consultations on various EPC-related changes – including raising the minimum standard, revising how ratings are displayed (potentially replacing the single overall A–G score with multiple performance metrics), and even altering the methodology used to calculate energy efficiency.

So, it's unlikely to be as straightforward as "'C' rating = compliant".

## **What are the proposed upcoming changes to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) assessments?**

The UK Government plans to revamp how Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) display energy efficiency. Instead of a single energy efficiency rating (A-F), EPCs are likely to feature four headline metrics:

- Fabric Performance – Measures insulation and building efficiency.
- Heating System – Assesses heating efficiency and environmental impact.
- Smart Readiness – Evaluates the property's ability to integrate smart energy technology.
- Energy Cost – Provides an estimated cost of energy use.

These changes aim to provide a clearer and fairer picture of a property's energy performance...

[Click here for the full article](#)

Covering: All general EPC changes, EPC validity & requirements, Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards from 2028, Cost & compliance, Short-term & holiday lets, Advice from our Experts, and more...

# #3 - Review and enhance the way you respond to mould complaints, in light of Awaab's law

---

We recently wrote about Awaab's Law, which has introduced strict, fixed timeframes for addressing all emergency hazards and all damp and mould hazards that pose a significant risk of harm to tenants. For now, it applies only to social landlords in England, but it will soon extend into the private rented sector through the Renters' Rights Act – likely with identical or very similar expectations. It wouldn't surprise me at all if we see it in Wales in the near future. With these timeframes clearly set out in legislation and visible to all, tenants will be more empowered to take action if they feel repairs aren't being dealt with quickly enough. Landlords will therefore need to ensure they can both:

- a) respond to hazards within the required time limits, and
- b) evidence their compliance if a tenant raises a claim.

Reading through the UK Government's guidance for social landlords – which we expect will form the basis of requirements for private landlords – has really highlighted what steps landlords can take now to get ahead of the changes...

## **A contract that's clear when a breach has taken place**

Damage that is a result of breach of contract by the tenant doesn't fall in scope of the Awaab's Law repair requirements. That's sensible, but if the contract doesn't go into detail about what circumstances constitute a breach, a landlord will struggle to claim Awaab's Law doesn't apply to them in this instance. I'd be especially concerned if I (or my agent) was using Welsh Government's model written statement of occupation contract.

We've been vocal in our feelings that it doesn't do enough to protect landlords. Amongst other things, it contains no deterrent for late rent payments, it empowers tenants with its "unfit property" term, and – particularly relevant to Awaab's Law – "tenant-like manner" duties aren't included. So, unless the contracts states tenants must change light bulbs when they blow or tighten a screw when it comes loose, a landlord can't claim that a failure to do those things is a breach of contract...

[Click here for the full article](#)

Covering: Proving lifestyle-related mould, Inspection standards & documentation, Practical property design considerations, Tenant education, Email communication requirements, Assessing household vulnerabilities, and how landlords can stay ahead of Awaab's Law.

## #4 - Avoid repaying 12 months' rent by ensuring your Rent Smart Wales licence is in date - or you've properly appointed a licensed agent

*Get the most up-to-date information from our FAQ.*

---

In Wales, landlords and agents who undertake “letting and management work” are legally required to have a Rent Smart Wales licence, ensuring they’re suitable and appropriately trained in their rights and obligations. This is a legal requirement that comes from the Housing (Wales) Act 2016.



**Agent exemptions are available in a number of situations. If the agent doesn't qualify for any of them, they must obtain an agent licence and a number of business safeguards. it's important agents understand the scale of their obligations before taking on work - [click here for the full article.](#)**

There are two types of Rent Smart Wales licence: a landlord licence and an agent licence. A landlord managing their own properties obtains a landlord licence. Landlords who are not involved in letting and managing do not need a licence, but they must appoint a licensed agent if the agent is collecting rent or doing more than one of these activities.

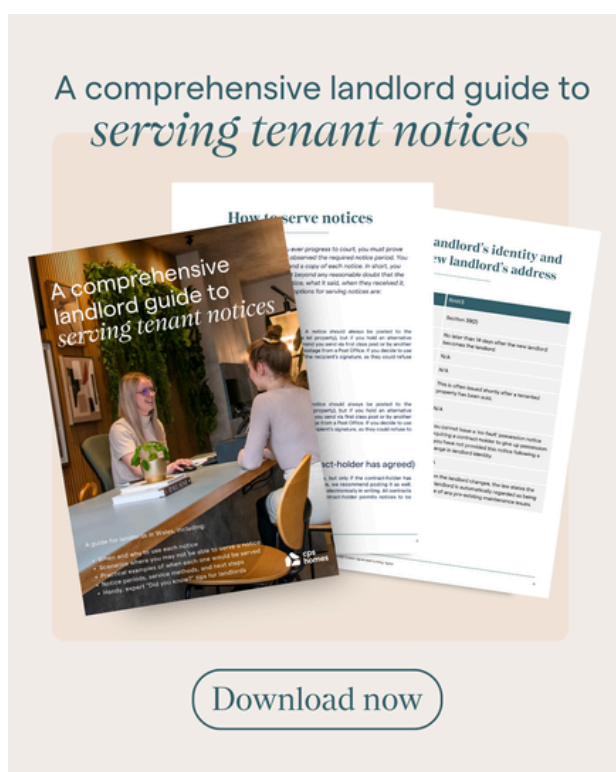
The term “agent” doesn't just apply to commercial agents. It also applies to friends, family, partners – basically anyone who is not the landlord.

So, if you've appointed a friend or relative to look after your property, it's vital you check they have an agent licence.

To appoint an unlicensed agent is an offence under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, for which you as the landlord would be prosecuted. You wouldn't want Rent Smart Wales writing to your tenant advising them that they're able to apply for a Rent Repayment Order of 12 months' rent – which is exactly what happened to this landlord.

## #5 - Intending to regain possession, increase rent, or move house? Inform your tenant of your plans by using the correct notice

*You'll need to serve your tenant with a notice - find out how, when, and which one to use...*



There's a lot of detail for landlords to get to grips with here, so we strongly recommend giving our other PDF a read too - and even keeping it bookmarked or printed so you can easily refer back to it whenever you need to. It's designed to be a reliable, go-to resource for anything notice-related under Renting Homes (Wales). We cover:

- When and why to use each notice
- Scenarios where you may not be able to serve a notice \_\_\_\_\_
- Practical examples of when each one would be served
- Notice periods, service methods, and next steps
- Handy, expert "Did you know?" tips for landlords

### **Planning to renovate? Read how you might be able to regain possession earlier than you think**

Question from a landlord:

*Hi Nik, I've got big plans to renovate one of my rental properties, but the tenants still have nine months left on their fixed-term agreement. I was hoping to get vacant possession sooner so I can crack on with the work. Is there any way around having to wait? Thanks, Sean*

**Click here to read Nik's reply!**



# #6 - Planning to expand your buy-to-let portfolio in 2026? Here's what to do when you purchase a tenant property

## **Question from a landlord:**

*Hi Nik, I've recently purchased a property that has tenants in place.*

*I don't have any previous experience as a landlord and I'm not sure what I need to do straight away. Is there anything urgent I should be aware of?*

*Thanks, Geraldine.*

---

## **Nik's reply:**

Thanks for your message – and welcome to the world of being a landlord.

The first thing I'd flag is your legal responsibility around property condition, which kicks in the moment ownership transfers to you – whether you realise there's a problem or not.

Under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, if the previous landlord was aware of any repairs or issues that made the property unfit for human habitation, you are legally considered to be aware of them from the date the ownership changed. The idea is that tenants shouldn't be left in limbo or have to start from scratch just because there's a new name on the paperwork.

So, if a tenant had reported a dodgy boiler, faulty electrics or damp to the previous owner and nothing was done, and you now unknowingly sit on it for months, a court could later decide the property was unfit during that time – and potentially order you to pay the tenant rent back for that entire period.

I suggest you carry out an inspection as soon as possible. Don't just look around – speak to the tenants and ask if they've raised anything previously too. Some issues won't be visible and will only present themselves when used, e.g. an appliance.....

[Click to read Nikki's fully reply...](#)



## #7 - Interested in holiday or short term lets? Stay abreast of the changes that are afoot...

---

Back in April 2024, we reported on changes Welsh Government were introducing for landlords of short-term or 'holiday' lets, including increased council tax and a new registration and licensing scheme.

Since then, further measures have been unveiled – one still in draft form, another already law – which are set to make the short-term lettings market more challenging for property owners.

### **1. Draft "Airbnb law" – the Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill**

This month, Welsh Government published a draft bill aimed at regulating self-contained short-term accommodation (31 days or less), which media outlets are calling "the Airbnb law". While still subject to debate and amendment in the Senedd, it highlights how much more onerous operating short-term lets could become.

Key points include:

Applies to self-contained accommodation offered for 31 days or less. Excludes hotels, aparthotels, B&Bs, hostels, campsites and caravan sites.

- Premises must be "fit", meaning landlords will need to provide a fire risk assessment, a mains smoke alarm on every storey (linked to each other), an EICR, a gas safety certificate, and CO alarms where relevant.
- Public liability insurance is mandatory.
- Operators must obtain a licence and complete training. The licence must be displayed for visitors. Costs for both the licence and training are likely.
- The registration number (from the mandatory register, see below) must appear on all adverts.
- Local authorities can inspect premises if they believe there's reason to do so.

Even at this early stage, the proposals leave more questions than answers. Aparthotels are exempt because they are lumped in with hotels under the legislation, despite being very different things in our book. And what if a provider includes a breakfast: do they become a B&B, and therefore exempt? We anticipate more clarification as the bill progresses.

[Click here for the full article](#)

Read on for a clear breakdown of the new Visitor Accommodation Register, upcoming levy charges, and what these changes mean for your short-term rental.

# Let CPS Homes help...

Frustrated by the complexities of the industry's ever-changing laws & regulations? We're specialists in navigating through Welsh landlord legislation and the intricacies that other agents might miss. By instructing us to manage your property, we will...

- Work with you to put efficient processes in place well in advance of key dates for new legislation and regulations, ensuring you and your properties are compliant, safe and legal.
- Provide you with the most robust Written Statement of Occupation Contract you can find in Wales.
- Save you the cost of a Rent Smart Wales landlord licence and the hassle of ongoing training.
- Maximise your rental income by ensuring the property is always achieving its full potential.
- Provide you with your own representative within our Lettings and Accounts departments.
- Produce free, professional photography as part of our standard marketing package.
- Place you on our VIP Investor list where you'll get priority access to pre-market investment properties before they're listed online.
- Provide you with peace of mind via our Client Money Protection (CMP) policy, professional indemnity insurance, and redress scheme membership.



To discuss CPS Homes taking over management of your property, contact our Senior Property Investment & Market Advisor, Rhys Owen, today via [rhys.owen@cpshomes.co.uk](mailto:rhys.owen@cpshomes.co.uk) or 02920 668585.