

What does the Selective Licensing Scheme mean for me as a Tenant?

What is the Selective Licensing Scheme?

The Selective Licensing Scheme was launched in Oct 2015. It aims to improve conditions, management standards and tenancy practices in the private rented sector. This in turn, will ensure that properties have a positive impact on their area.

All privately rented property in Braybrooke, Castle, Gensing, Ore, Old Hastings, Tressell and Central St. Leonards wards must now be Licensed.

How do tenants benefit from licensing?

When a property is licensed checks will be made to make certain that the Landlord has ensured that the property is in a good condition, that it is safe and that it is being managed it suitably. Also that proper tenancy arrangement has been put in place.

Tenants and prospective tenants will know that landlords are 'fit and proper' persons who have agreed to abide by the conditions of their license.

All licensed property will be listed on a public register, which tenants can access to find out whether the property is licensed before deciding whether to rent.

How do landlords benefit from licensing?

Licensing will help identify irresponsible landlords who impact negatively on the reputation of responsible landlords. It will assist landlords that are not familiar with all the requirements for establishing a rental business with what they need to do. It will raise conditions, management standards, improve tenancy arrangements and help tackle Anti-Social Behaviour.

Will my rent go up?

If you're already renting a property when the scheme comes into force, then licensing should not affect the rent which is contractually agreed between you and your landlord through the terms and conditions of your tenancy agreement. It is only after the contract has ended that your landlord can consider whether to increase the rent.

We would expect responsible landlords to absorb the cost of licensing as part of operating a rental business, much in the same way a food business would have a cost associated with registering their business. The cost is not unreasonable and if a responsible landlord applies within the first 6 months of the scheme, the cost will be as low as £150 or £2.50 per month over 5 years and the cost of the license fee can be offset against the business tax costs.

Some landlords may subsequently increase rents to recover the costs of the license but this will be a business decision for them to make.

My landlord said they will evict me, what should I do?

If you have an assured short-hold tenancy agreement then your landlord must follow the correct legal procedure before evicting you. This can only be done once a license has been received, where a property falls under the scheme. Therefore it would be illegal for your landlord to evict you simply because they do not wish to obtain a license for the property if it requires one.

Anti- social behaviour.

One of the purposes of the Selective Licensing Scheme is to try to reduce anti-social behaviour. It is therefore important to consider whether you, other occupants of the property or visitors are behaving anti-socially. Your Landlord is now required under the Selective License conditions to take steps to prevent or reduce this. Ultimately, where warnings fail, Landlords can terminate tenancies for persistent ASB issues.

Will I need to do anything?

Your Landlord may wish to inspect the property and undertake any necessary repairs and/or improvements. He may also instruct other electricians or gas engineers to carry out checks. Please ensure that all reasonable access is available for this work to commence.

Reasonable access will also be required to enable an inspection of the property by the Local Authority. This is to ensure that all the required conditions of the Selective License are being met.