



# Latham Smith

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## We are here to stay!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** We are here to stay!  
Have you seen our Ads?
- 2** Smoke Alarms & CO2  
Reward Scheme
- 3** Ben's Investment Advice
- 4** Meet the Team

Latham Smith has had a fantastic start and we are just about to celebrate our six month anniversary! Many of you will know that we - Rochelle Latham & Ben Smith - combined forces after working together at a lovely family run letting agency in Rickmansworth, winning multiple awards and running the town and surrounding areas in terms of residential lettings.

Sadly, the independent agency we loved was bought by a corporate entity who do things very differently to us. We wanted to provide our clients with the one to one service they had come to expect and be flexible and innovative in our own way. So, we made the decision to leave and start up Latham Smith Lettings and what a great decision that has turned out to be.

Our business is about people and this is why we love what we do. To talk about what we can do to help our clients let their property in the most cost effective and professional way possible, offering a bespoke and comprehensive lettings service for everyone, please call us.

Please see *Ben's Investment advice*  
on page 3

## Have you seen our ads in My News?

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*"An extremely friendly and helpful team – always at the end of the phone/email when I had a query. Made the letting process so easy. Top class service – I would highly recommend Latham Smith".*

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We have been advertising regularly in My Croxley, My Ricky & My Watford news magazines. Have you spotted our ads yet? We are delighted with them and the calls we have received are all very complimentary.

We also have had a fabulous response to our website and invite you to take a look. It is packed full of useful information about the lettings industry and the market as it is. All our properties are on there so you can see we are able to deal with any size and type of property.

[www.lathamsmith.co.uk](http://www.lathamsmith.co.uk) - Have a look, any feedback you have would be much appreciated.

Become a friend of Latham Smith  
at: [www.facebook.co.uk/lathamsmith](https://www.facebook.co.uk/lathamsmith)

## CO2 & Smoke Alarms

By [Department for Communities and Local Government](#), [Brandon Lewis MP](#), [Penny Mordaun MP](#), [Stephen Williams MP](#)

*"The team at Latham Smith has been invaluable to me as a 1st time landlord. They have an in-depth knowledge of the local area and excellent understanding of the current market. Would thoroughly recommend them to any landlord/tenant".*



Have you had a smoke alarm & CO2 detector fitted?

In October this year, landlords will be required by law to install working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in their properties.

The move will help prevent up to 26 deaths and 670 injuries a year.

The measure is expected to take effect from October 2015, and comes with strong support after a consultation on property condition in the private rental sector.

England's 46 fire and rescue authorities are expected to support private landlords in their own areas to meet their new responsibilities with the provision of free alarms, with grant funding from government.

This is part of wider government moves to ensure there are sufficient measures in place to protect public safety, while at the same time avoiding regulation which would push up rents and restrict the supply of homes, limiting choice for tenants.

Housing Minister Brandon Lewis said:

"In 1988 just 8% of homes had a smoke alarm installed - now it's over 90%.

The vast majority of landlords offer a good service and have installed smoke alarms in their homes, but I'm changing the law to ensure every tenant can be given this important protection.

But with working smoke alarms providing the vital seconds needed to escape a fire, I urge all tenants to make sure they regularly test their alarms to ensure they work when it counts. Testing regularly remains the tenant's responsibility".

We want to thank anyone who refers our service to a property owner and we will send you £25 for every referral you give to us which results in us letting a property.

There are no gimmicks or twists, if you know someone with 5 properties and we let them all, we will send you a cheque for £125!

The more you refer, the more you will receive. Result!

Become a friend of Latham Smith on Facebook at [www.facebook.co.uk/lathamsmith](http://www.facebook.co.uk/lathamsmith)



## Ben's Investment Advice

By Ben Smith

It is no secret that simply leaving your savings in a bank account these days will not make you a millionaire. Even with housing prices rising, investment in property is still popular and can still be incredibly profitable as long as certain rules are followed and the 'right' property is purchased.

I am, on a daily basis, discussing potential properties with investment landlords and advising them on the type of properties that they should be looking for.

In my experience, there are a number of basic rules to follow and I would encourage any prospective investor to do the same.

- Always remember that the 'right' investment property is not necessarily a property that you would live in yourself.
- Landlords often get carried away with yield percentages. This is of course important but ensuring you purchase a property that is rented twelve months of the year is a far more important point to factor in when you are looking at property. After all, a property left vacant for two months of the year means a higher annual yield becomes irrelevant.
- Don't be afraid of looking at unique properties - different can be good! In my opinion as long as the price is right, they can make better investments. Firstly, many tenants like to live in properties that are different from the norm, which in turn minimises the risk of vacant periods and more importantly when it comes to resale, you can expect to receive a premium for something unique.
- Location, Location, Location! The TV programme emphasised this point for a reason and the fact is where a property is situated is probably the most essential consideration when looking at available stock. A property should ideally be located close to station and/or local amenities and if not, have easy access to major road links. Buying a pretty family house in the middle of nowhere, however beautiful it may be is not going to draw the same amount of interest as a family home near a good school and station.
- Do not overpay - There is always another opportunity round the corner.
- Service charges on leasehold properties vary hugely dependent on the style of the property, whether it is a large or small development as well as whether a property has use of leisure facilities, communal gardens, lifts etc. These are all nice 'extras' for a tenant to have use of but remember! It's the landlord that pays both service charge and ground rent and must be taken into consideration when purchasing for investment as they can significantly affect your yield.



*Have a question for Ben about a rental opportunity? Call him for a chat.*

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*"I wouldn't even consider buying a rental property without speaking to Ben Smith first. Not a chance!"*

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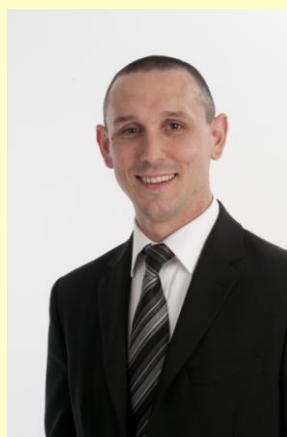
## It's all about the team!

Having worked in lettings in the area for over 13 years for a multi award winning company, I have learnt from some incredibly inspirational people the correct way of doing things and how to avoid doing it wrong. Ben and I want to use our knowledge and experience to help landlords in the area let their properties and look after them as we would our own.

Being a Fellow of ARLA, I am well aware of the pitfalls and huge amounts of legislation that governs our industry, but being aware means I can look after your property without you having to worry - leave this to us and you can just sit back, relax and watch the rent come in.

One of my biggest accomplishments was being the winner of the 2013 Sunday Times Award for Best Lettings Negotiator in the UK. This was a huge honour as there were hundreds of nominees and the judging was carried out by top industry experts. Being handed the award by Karen Brady was a highlight of my career and one that I will not forget.

Whilst not working I enjoy spending time with my two teenage sons, socialising with friends and going to local pub quizzes.



My career in lettings began as a trainee negotiator for a London based agency over 20 years ago. I have always loved property and I love people so it seemed a perfect match to have a career in the property industry. Working my way quickly up the ranks, I soon became the Lettings Manager for my company's flagship office in Ealing Broadway.

Having moved from London to Hertfordshire 10 years ago, the skills I have acquired over the years meant I have become the go-to person for valuations. As Lettings Manager of a multi award winning local company, I was able to instill my principles and work ethics into the business which created a successful & forward thinking team.

Combining this with being a Member of the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA), I believe I can provide a service second to none in the industry.

The highlight of my career was being voted the Best Lettings Manager in the UK by the prestigious Sunday Times Awards. To be recognised in this way is something I am incredibly proud of and proves that passion and a will to succeed will ultimately mean you will achieve your goals through hard work and dedication.

Being fully independent and having the ability to be flexible and offer bespoke services is one that I am incredibly passionate about and I look forward to speaking with you about your property soon.



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