



# Latham Smith

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## How will the ban on tenant fees effect you?

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This idea has been bounced around the halls of Westminster for several years and came into force in Scotland in 2012. The first noticeable change was an increase in rents to compensate landlords having to bear the additional cost of referencing and contract fees. After this, came letting agents closures, inventory clerks and other micro businesses went out of business and it's suggested it may be 15 times worse when the ban hits us here. ARLA Propertymark have been lobbying parliament hard since this proposed ban in England and have pushed for a cap on fees, rather than an outright ban, but our politicians are fighting for a full ban.

We will keep you updated on how this progresses, but this is going to be a major change within our industry.

### AUTUMN OFFER! (Quote SUM16LS)

Refer us to someone you know who is looking to rent out their property, ask them to quote this offer and we will give you £75 if we successfully find tenants & rent it out. Be quick, this offer is only valid for this 2017!

Tel: 01923 447192 or email us at [lettings@lathamsmith.co.uk](mailto:lettings@lathamsmith.co.uk)

## Why have a professional clean?

Landlords ask 'Why do I have to pay for a professional cleaner to come in before the tenants move in? I can clean the place just as well myself!' This is something we hear from landlords when we advise them to have a full, professional clean at the start of their tenancy. Well, you may ask why then, do we push this?

- Well, firstly, if a property is professionally cleaned (as opposed to domestically cleaned) then the tenants are obliged to return it in the same professionally cleaned standard when they leave. The Inventory Clerk will log this in the inventory. This reduces deposit disputes when it comes to the end of the agreement thus saving you what can be a very stressful stressful experience and lots of valuable time as cleaning is the number 1 reason a deposit goes to adjudication.
- Landlords only pay once, even if their property is rented for many years with a turnover of tenants, as tenants then always pay when they vacate.
- Yes, a landlord can opt to clean the property themselves (A domestic clean), but everyone has a different opinion on what is 'spotless' and what is not! Following our advice means there is no misinterpreting how it must be returned - for all concerned.
- We have cleaners who we can recommend, so do ask as services do vary and you do tend to get what you pay for.

*"Ben & Rochelle are real professionals in all aspects of their business from finding tenants to managing the property, maintenance and even renovations! They have a great service mindset that translates in business success. Great job, highly recommended."*

## Changes to EPC (Energy Performance Certificates)

It became law in 2007 that all properties needed to have an EPC but the law is being updated and changes are coming in early next year. The Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) will most likely be bringing in changes on a gradual basis, but the three options are as follows.

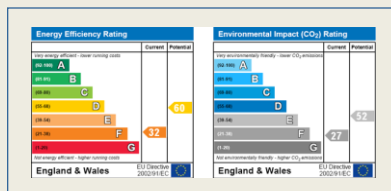
- 1) A soft start - meaning only new leases will need to comply with the minimum EPC rating of 'E' by 1st April 2018;
- 2) A hard start - affecting all leases from the 1st April 2018; or
- 3) A phased introduction - meaning a soft start of 1st April 2018 for all new leases with a hard backstop of 2023 for all existing leases. This is the Government's preferred option.

Keep an eye out on this, particularly if your current EPC has a low rating.

Enforcement of the regulations will be via local Trading Standards Officers (TSOs) who will determine whether a penalty should be imposed, as well as the value of that penalty. The Government intends to disclose the exact detail around compliance, including specifics on exemptions and timeframes, as well as guidance to help the market understand exactly what is required. The level of penalty has not yet been disclosed, but the Government believes that the penalty should be set to a level that encourages landlords to comply. Their preferred formula for calculating the penalty is to use a percentage of the property's rateable value, but they are seeking views as to whether this is the most appropriate, simple and fair method to follow.

Once a landlord has received a penalty notice by the local TSO, they will have 28 days in which to challenge this penalty.

Again, once decisions have been made, we will keep you updated on how this will affect you, as landlords.



**Will your property pass the EPC test?**

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

## A few words from Rochelle & Ben

Hello!

Welcome back! We have been a little busy here at Latham Smith headquarters, so it has been a while since we last put together a newsletter for you.

We are now in our third year of trading and continue to grow at a fantastic rate. Our growth comes, in the main, from happy clients who refer us to their friends and families who subsequently join us. This summer has been good for us here, with Brexit perhaps moving a few properties that were on the sales market over to lettings as rentals remains strong and a potential alternative for many people in this area who are finding the sales market slow at the moment. Do talk to us if you have found yourself in this situation and we can advise you of the rental you could achieve and see if this would be a viable option for you. Check out our offer for the rest of the year too and be the recipient of £75 for a successful referral!

We hope you found the information interesting in our newsletter and should you wish us to cover any topic that you feel may be helpful, do let us know and we will happily look into this and include in our next issue.

Don't forget, we can easily, quickly and efficiently take over the management of your rental property, even if you still have tenants in-situ with another agency. Our landlords who have already come over continue to be totally satisfied with the service they are getting, which is exactly what we want to be hearing. Don't just 'put up' with your letting agency, be 'delighted'. Check out our Google reviews and testimonials on our website

If you would like a fresh, motivated and proactive managing agent looking after your property, call us today or drop us an email at [rochelle@lathamsmith.co.uk](mailto:rochelle@lathamsmith.co.uk) or [ben@lathamsmith.co.uk](mailto:ben@lathamsmith.co.uk) and see how Latham Smith can help you.

We look forward to speaking to you soon, Rochelle & Ben ☺



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*"Both of them have gone above and beyond and it's a rarity in today's market to find a letting/estate agency like them. Thank you so much!"*

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