

The Renters' Rights Act - What Every Landlord Needs to Know

Coming into force from 1 May 2026

The Renters' Rights Act represents the most significant shift in the private rented sector for decades. For landlords, it brings new responsibilities, clearer regulatory expectations, and a far greater emphasis on property compliance and tenant protection.

At Maddisons Residential, we know that legislative change can feel daunting, particularly when you already have a portfolio to manage and tenants to support. Our aim is to make this new landscape simple to understand and straightforward to navigate; giving you complete confidence that your property remains fully compliant and well protected.

What Is the Renters' Rights Act?

The Act replaces long standing tenancy structures, strengthens tenant protections, and introduces new compliance frameworks for landlords. Its measures will be introduced in stages, beginning in May 2026, with later requirements following across 2026 and beyond.

While the Act is wide reaching, every update shares a common thread: improving standards, enhancing transparency, and creating a more stable rental environment. For landlords, the impact varies, but with the right guidance and systems in place, these changes can be navigated smoothly and professionally.

Phase 1 Reforms (From 1 May 2026)

1. Periodic Tenancies Replace Fixed Terms

All new and existing assured shorthold tenancies will convert to periodic agreements, meaning that tenants will be able to give two months' notice at any time.

Following the recent release of the written statement, we are reviewing revisions to the wording of our Tenancy Agreements and also our Terms of Business to ensure that all of our landlords remain fully compliant, whilst preserving flexibility.

2. Ban on Rental Bidding

You will no longer be able to invite offers above the advertised rent which formalises a fair bidding environment and ensures consistency across the sector.

We have always worked hard to ensure realistic, fair and competitive market valuations and this is now more important than ever. This in turn helps minimise unwelcome void periods.

3. Cap on Rent in Advance

The Act limits how much rent can be requested upfront, which will help level expectations and provide clearer protection for tenants, whilst still allowing landlords to carry out necessary affordability checks.

We have worked hard with our partners to ensure that a robust and compliant tenancy set up and payment system will be ready.

4. Updated Rules Around Non Discrimination & Pet Ownership

These changes strengthen tenant protection. Landlords must now provide a lawful reason for declining a request to keep a pet, and blanket policies prohibiting certain groups or circumstances will not be permitted.

Our referencing system has long provided a balanced approach, advocating that a reliable and safe decision should be reached for all parties, be they two or four legged.

5. Rent Reviews and Rent Increase Process

Landlords can only raise rents once a year and must use a formal Section 13 notice, giving tenants at least two months' advance warning before any increase takes effect. Tenants are entitled to challenge rent hikes through the First-tier Tribunal, which may delay or reduce the amount if it's found to exceed market rates.

We have an established system to ensure that each aspect of the rent review is handled correctly, and to minimise the risk of disputes or tribunal delays, have taken the additional step of championing market leading Rent Guarantee and Legal Protection insurance for all of our landlords.

6. Regaining Possession

With the ability to issue a Section 21 ending, repossession of your property will rely solely on fair, defined grounds under a Section 8 Notice. These measures ensure that landlords can still recover their property if they wish to sell or move back in, but with enhanced notice requirements.

Our updated Terms of Business clearly set out these revised measures and are supported by the strength of an all-encompassing insurance policy which covers any legal costs.

Phase 2 Reforms (Late 2026)

1. Landlord Property Portal

A new Government run database will require landlords to register every property and demonstrate compliance. We expect that this will require landlords to ensure that:

- Gas, electrical, safety, and EPC documentation is up to date
- Property records are accurate and accessible
- Registration is maintained for the duration of each tenancy

This marks a step toward full transparency and more rigorous enforcement.

We will support our landlords with each element of the stipulated requirements and ensure that all necessary documentation is fully recorded and in timely manner.

Phase 3 Reforms (Date TBC)

1. Decent Homes Standard

For the first time, the Decent Homes Standard will apply to the private rental sector, meaning that properties must meet minimum standards for safety, warmth, and repair; aligning private rentals with social housing requirements, such as Awaab's Law.

This includes swift action on:

- Damp and mould
- Health related hazards
- Urgent repairs

Landlords will be expected to respond and resolve issues within tight statutory timeframes.

With the Maddisons property App, Street, each landlord can access live tracking of our response to maintenance issues and resolution.

Consequences of Non-Compliance

The Renters' Rights Bill gives councils more power to enforce rules and issue higher fines since they shall be able to inspect properties, request documents, and fine for breaches.

- £5,000: For taking or demanding illegal advance rent.
- £7,000: For not registering on the PRS Database or advertising without registration.
- Up to £40,000: For repeated or serious violations, like providing false information.
- Rent Repayment Orders now apply to more offences at up to 24 months' rent.

Maddisons supports landlords with a full compliance audit, accurate records, the property portal registration, and ongoing legal guidance and protection.

Why Landlords Need Professional Support

These reforms place compliance, and accountability, firmly at the forefront of property management. For landlords balancing multiple responsibilities, keeping on top of every new requirement can be challenging.

As the legislation evolves, so too does the expectation around:

- Accurate record keeping
- Responsive maintenance
- Transparent communication
- Fair and consistent tenancy processes
- Evidence based rent reviews
- Lawful and well documented possession routes

A robust, detail led management approach is no longer optional; it is essential and this is exactly what Maddisons provides and continues to support.

How Maddisons Supports You Through the Act

At Maddisons Residential, we take a meticulous, protective approach to property management. Our team will:

- 1. Ensure Your Tenancy Agreements Are Updated**
We will transition all agreements to the new periodic format, ensuring that they meet every legal requirement.
- 2. Manage Compliance & Portal Registration**
We'll organise documentation, prepare your property records, and manage registration on your behalf once the portal opens.
- 3. Handle All Rent Reviews Professionally**
Rent adjustments will be made through the correct statutory procedure, with supporting data and clear communication to tenants.
- 4. Respond to Repairs Quickly & Transparently**
Our proactive maintenance management means issues are logged, tracked, and resolved within the statutory deadlines, protecting you from potential penalties.
- 5. Guide You Through Possession Grounds**
Should you ever need to regain possession, we'll manage the process precisely and lawfully, providing clarity at every step.
- 6. Protect Your Investment & Peace of Mind**
We take care of the details so you can focus on your life, career, or wider portfolio with complete confidence.



Ready for Expert Support Through the Renters' Rights Act?

At Maddisons Residential, we take a meticulous, protective approach to property management. Whether you manage a single property or a growing portfolio, we are here to help you navigate the new legislation with clarity and confidence.

Call us on 01892 514100 or email: lettings@maddisonsresidential.co.uk

Let's ensure your property, you, and your tenants, remain fully protected at every stage.