Lettings and Management Guide For Landlords

COBB AMOS

Property. We believe it's an ideal investment.

Over any ten year period, house prices have always grown significantly so as well as providing short term income, the long term capital growth can be lucrative.

Cobb Amos. The ideal professionals to assist you with this investment from sourcing the right property, help and guidance in renovating it and finally finding great tenants and managing all sizes and types of property.

This guide is a short introduction to property lettings and to the range of tenant finding and management services that we provide to landlords right across our region. We hope that you will find it useful and we look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Our team of professional letting agents are waiting to help you so please contact us now.

The Property Ombudsman LETTINGS

APIP Association of Professional Inventory Providers

ARLA Association of Residential Letting Agents

Welcome to Cobb Amos

We are an independent letting agent who are landlords ourselves and work tirelessly to provide landlords across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Mid Wales with a professional service that offers you flexibility, confidence and value for money.

As a landlord, we know that having the right tenant is the most important part in letting a property, so stringent checks and vetting ensure that we consistently find the best quality people for our properties. We expect all our landlords to present their properties to the highest standard and under our management, we ensure that they are kept that way. Choosing tenants that pay their rent on time and keep the property in good order is therefore essential.

We have an excellent team working with us to look after your needs. All staff are qualified or training for individual professional qualifications and will be delighted to assist you. We are registered with Propertymark, the Association of Residential Letting Agents, Association of Professional Inventory Providers and the Property Ombudsman. Please rest assured that we operate to the high standards these bodies require and we have both you and your property's best interests at heart at all times.

We are totally customer service minded and will strive to achieve the best price, in the fastest time, with the best quality tenants, whilst keeping you fully informed of developments. We have won awards for our customer services - voted for by our landlords!

Joanna Cobb

Joanna Cobb
Director

General Advice to Landlords

Gardens

Gardens should be left neat, tiny and rubbish free, with any lawns cut. Tenants are required to maintain the gardens to a responsible standard, provided they are left the necessary tools. However, few tenants are experienced gardeners, and if you value your garden, or if it is particularly large, you may wish us to arrange visits by our regular gardener. We can also arrange for any works to be done prior to a tenant moving in.

Cleaning

At the commencement of the tenancy it is the Landlord's responsibility to ensure that the property is in a thoroughly clean condition. We can arrange for this on your behalf. At the end of each tenancy it is the Tenants' responsibility to leave the property in a similar condition. Where they fail to do so, cleaning will be arranged at their expense. We can also arrange for any works to be done prior to a tenant moving in.

Information for the Tenant

It is helpful if you leave information for the Tenant, e.g. on operating the central heating and hot water system, washing machine and alarm system, day for refuse collection, etc. We can help to provide this information in a pack for the property.

Keys

Each Tenant will require a set of keys. Where we are managing the property we will need to have a full set and can arrange to have duplicates cut as required.

Mortgage

If your property is mortgaged, you must obtain the written consent of your mortgage company to let the property. They may require additional clauses in the tenancy agreement (please inform us of these). Please provide us with a copy of your mortgage, noting any additional clauses they require.

Leaseholds

If your property is leasehold, you should check the terms of your lease, and obtain the necessary written consent of the freeholder before letting. A copy of the head lease should be annexed to the tenancy agreement, so the tenant is aware of any restrictions or obligations they must adhere to. Please provide us with a copy of your lease and the written consent.

Insurance

You must ensure that your property has suitable cover for letting for buildings and basic contents insurance. Failure to inform your insurers that the property is let may invalidate your policy. The Tenant must insure their own contents. Please ask for further details of those we recommend.

Council Tax and Utility Accounts

We will arrange for the transfer of Council Tax and utility accounts to the Tenant*. Meter readings will be taken, allowing your closing gas and electricity accounts to be drawn up/. All these matters we will handle for you, however some suppliers will require instructions directions from both the Landlord and the Tenant. If your property has oil central heating, then we recommend the following procedure: Landlord provides a full tank prior to the Tenant moving in and the Tenant must leave a full tank when they vacate. *Please note this is not included in the Let Only service.

Income Tax

When resident in the UK, it is entirely the Landlords responsibility to inform the Inland Revenue of rental income received, and to pay any tax due. Where the Landlord is resident outside the UK during a tenancy, unless an exemption certificate is held, we as Landlord's Agent are obliged to retain and forward to the Inland Revenue on a quarterly basis, an amount equal to the basic rate of income tax from rental received, less certain allowable expenses. An application form for exemption from such deductions is available from our office.

Important Safety Regulations

The following requirements are the responsibilities of the owner (Landlord). Where you have signed our Full Management Agency Agreement, they are also out responsibility. Therefore where we are managing we will need to ensure compliance in these matters.

Gas Safety Check

Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 all gas appliances and flues in rented accommodation must be checked for safety within 12 months of being installed and thereafter at least every 12 months by a competent engineer. (I.e. a GAS SAFE registered gas installer).

Electrical

Under the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994, and certain other regulations, electrical appliances and equipment provided in tenanted premises must be safe. It is therefore necessary to ensure that all electrical items, plugs and leads are completely safe and undamaged, and to remove/replace any faulty items.

Smoke Alarms

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations became law on 1 October 2015 meaning that all properties in England - whether existing tenancies or new tenancies - will need to comply with the regulations by this date. All properties must be equipped with a smoke alarm on each storey of the premises where there is a room used as living accommodation. A carbon monoxide detector must be supplied in any room in the premises which is used as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance. This applies to any wood burning stove or coal fires. However, we also strongly recommend that a detector is placed in all properties with gas heating or appliances.

Legionella

The Health and Safety Executives have issued a code of practice for assessing the risks of Legionella in residential property. We recommend that as a landlord you should carry out a risk assessment of your property prior to any letting especially if there are open water tanks, redundant pipes, cooling systems or a swimming pool.

Useful Information

Furniture and Furnishing Fire and Safety Regulations

The Furniture and Furnishing (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (amended 1989 & 1993) provide that specified items supplied in the course of letting property must meet minimum fire resistance standards. The regulations apply to all upholstered furniture, beds, headboards and mattresses, sofa-beds, futons and other convertibles, nursery furniture, garden furniture suitable for use in a dwelling, scatter cushions, pillows and non-original covers for furniture. They do not apply to antique furniture or furniture made before 1950, bedcovers including duvets, loose covers, mattresses, pillowcases, curtains, carpets or sleeping bags. Items which comply will have a suitable permanent label attached. Non-compliant items must be removed before a tenancy commences.

The Inventory

It is important that an inventory of contents and schedule of condition be prepared, to avoid any dispute at the end of the tenancy. Without one, it will be impossible for the Landlord to prove any loss, damage, or significant deterioration of the property or contents. This is part of out Tenants Finding Service* and we provide a comprehensive and detailed inventory supported by photographic evidence. We have two fully qualified Inventory providers under the strict guidance of APIP the Association of Professional Inventory Providers. *Please note this service is not included in our Let Only service, however we would be happy to provide a quote for you.

How we can help...

For Landlords:

With a strong local presence and a fantastic reputation where 100% of both landlords and tenants would recommend us (based on recent customer feedback) we endeavour to provide you with a successful tenancy which is driven by quality tenants.
We'll present you with qualified, vetted applicants and work hard to avoid void periods, whilst keeping you updated on the minefield of legal regulations surrounding lettings. We are passionate about delivering brilliant service time after time.

For Tenants:

We understand that every tenant wants to live in a comfortable and well-maintained property – even if it's for a short time.
We have excellent relationships with landlords and many use our full management service. We look after all aspects of the property including meeting all legal and habitable standards leading to tenants getting a better property and a stress free tenancy.
Please register as relying on property portals or the local papers can mean you sometimes miss out on some opportunities that are snapped up before they make it into our window.

Tenant Finding Services

Our tenant finding service includes advertising, carrying out all viewings, carrying out all necessary credit checks and references on the tenants and any guarantor if one is required, noting the meter readings and where possible informing the utility companies of the changeover of occupant, collecting the deposit and the first month's rent (the deposit is held in the required account under the Tenancy Deposit Regulations). We will arrange the gas and electrical safety checks and Energy Performance Certificate.
Preparation of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement and a full inventory of the property, its condition and fixtures is also included.

Please note we do not provide an Inventory (cost included in some management packages OR separately chargeable for tenant finding service only).

Management Services:

After finding the tenant you have four choices:

1. You Manage The Property yourself and have no further charges from us.

2. Rent Collection Service This is a popular service where we collect all rent. If any maintenance issues arise, you are the point of contact for the tenant. You carry out periodic inspections and the check out at the end of the tenancy.

3. Part Management Our part management service collects rent and we are in charge of all legal issues. If any maintenance issues arise, you are the point of contact for the tenant, and you arrange suitable trades people to attend. However, if the tenant is unable to contact you we are able to assist and instruct essential repairs. You carry out periodic inspections and the checkout at the end of the tenancy.

4. Fully Management Services Our full management service is designed to "go the extra mile" to keep your property in order and keep the tenants living in it happy. We collect the rent, forwarding the net balance to you monthly with detailed statements. We are the point of contact for the tenant and supply them with a 24 hour emergency out of hour number. We organise any remedial works required up to a fixed amount (if any works are required over that amount, we will contact you to discuss first) and regularly check over the property.

5. Tailor Made Service We would be happy to discuss and quote for any variation on the services outline here, in order to better meet your individual needs.

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