



Tenant Information Pack

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GLJ

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GLJ Securities are proud to offer a quality service with excellent customer care across our portfolio of properties throughout the North West

This pack will provide you with some information about the important issues you need to consider as a tenant, guidance to the process, regulations and checks we adhere to as a landlord.

Our team of local property experts will guide you through the initial process from viewing to the handing over of the keys to your new home with extensive knowledge, professionalism, expertise and customer service.

Beyond providing information on our properties, we are pleased to advise on the local area – just ask us!

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RIGHT TO RENT

One question to ask yourself is, "**am I allowed to rent in the UK?**".

As of **1st February 2018**, all adults wishing to rent a property in the UK as their main home, must provide evidence of their right to reside in the UK. This falls under the Right to Rent Checks: Immigration 2014.

You will be asked to provide proof of residence at the point of application – acceptable documents include:

- **passport**
- **EAA card**
- **permanent residence card**

or alternatively two of the following documents:

- **driving licence**
- **birth or adoption certificate**
- **HM Forces identify card**

We will carry out three simple steps, so you know we are following correct procedure:

1. **Obtain – tenant's original documents that allow them to live in the UK, where appropriate.**
2. **Check – the documents with the tenant present.**
3. **Copy – and keep the copied documents on file and record the date of the check.**

HOW TO RENT

The Government have produced a booklet which will help guide you through the ins and outs of being a tenant. There are many things to take into account and below are some of the main points to consider, which may help.

How long do you want the tenancy for?

An Assured Shorthold Tenancy is offered for a minimum of six months initially. Longer tenancies will be reviewed on a case by case basis

What rent can I afford?

You know how much you earn, but don't forget your outgoings – do you have children, for example?

Are you entitled to Housing Benefit or Universal Credit?

You may get help with all or part of your rent. As you would be renting from a private landlord you will receive up to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) – go online for further details and to use the online calculator (www.gov.uk).

Do you have your documents ready?

We will want to confirm your identify, immigration status, credit history and possibly employment status.

Do you have a right to rent?

See previous section.

Will you need a rent guarantee?

We may ask for a guarantor (someone to guarantee your rent).

FINDING/SECURING A PROPERTY

When looking for a new home remember what is important to you and your family. Below are some top tips and advice on finding and securing a property that ticks all your boxes.

Location

Finding the right location – do you want to be in the centre of town or on the outskirts? Are there good transport links? If you don't have a car, are the transport links to further afield adequate – how easy to get from A to B? If you don't know the area, have a good drive round and check it out.

Amenities

Are the local amenities good? – How far will you have to go for that all-important bottle of milk. If you are used to having a supermarket on your doorstep, how would you cope without one?

Schools

Are there good schools? If you have children, then this is probably an important “tick box”.

Viewing

It is always better to see the property “in the flesh” than to rely on photographs. The room sizes etc, may look different when you are actually there, so might the garden and the surrounding area.

Application

If you find a property that suits your needs, securing it is the next step – this is where the referencing procedure comes into play. Completing an application will provide sufficient information for us to establish and check your personal details with regard to finance, employment, other income and citizenship. An application form is required for each occupant over the age of 18. Once all the referencing checks are done and are acceptable to the landlord then a date is set for taking the property, paying the first month's rent and paying the deposit bond. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR:) please be assured any information supplied is for the purpose provided only and we do not share data with third parties.

Guarantor

Do I need a guarantor? Yes.

A guarantor is someone who would be able to cover the rental payments should you fail to do so. Therefore, they would need to go through a similar referencing procedure as yourself.

Assured shorthold tenancy agreement

Finally, once you have been approved for a property the next step is signing the tenancy agreement, followed by getting the keys and settling in. If you have any queries relating to the agreement then our lettings staff will answer any questions, or you can consult a solicitor. Tenants should be aware that where more than one party (over the age of 18) resides at the property, all residents are jointly and severally responsible for rent and outgoings.

TENANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Once you have moved in and are settled it is always beneficial to know what your responsibilities as a tenant are, and also what you can expect from your landlord.

Rent

This is without a doubt your biggest responsibility. Rent must be paid on time, which is in line with your tenancy agreement. Not keeping up with rent payments could affect how long you stay at the property, return of your deposit and future tenancies.

Bills

Unless otherwise agreed, it is your responsibility to pay all household bills – water, gas, electricity and Council Tax. You will also have to pay for a TV licence, phone line, internet access etc.

Insurance

As a tenant you are not covered under your landlord's insurance for theft, fire or damage to your own goods. You must therefore arrange your own contents insurance.

Looking after the property

It is your responsibility to look after the property on a day-to-day basis, as per the terms of the tenancy agreement, i.e.

- Ensuring no damage to furnishings, keeping the property clean and kitchen appliances free from dust and grease.
- Reporting repairs to landlord as soon as possible.
- Changing light bulbs, as required.
- Ensuring adequate ventilation to avoid condensation/mould.
- Ensuring smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are working.
- Disposing of all food waste/rubbish (this can cause vermin which is a tenant cost to eradicate).
- Keeping outdoor drains cleared of leaves/rubbish etc.
- Keeping the garden tidy

In other words, treat the property as if it was your own.

Maintenance

It is the landlord's responsibility to ensure that any maintenance issues reported by you are taken seriously and fixed within a reasonable timescale. A landlord must have a valid gas safety certificate and appropriate electrical safety regulations for the property. Visitors' tenants must ensure their household or visitors to the property behave in a respectful manner. Antisocial behavior could lead to eviction.

Access

A tenant must be left to live in the property and experience "quiet enjoyment" without interference from the landlord. A landlord must gain permission to enter the property and must give appropriate notice to the tenant and arrange a mutually agreeable date and time.

Moving Out

A tenant must ensure that on leaving the property it is left in its original state. We would recommend the property is professionally cleaned (to include carpets and oven/cooker), which would help to ensure the deposit is returned in full. Any damage to the property caused by tenants, or resulting from tenant maintenance responsibilities not being fulfilled i.e build up of mould due to poor ventilation, may effect the return of your deposit.

DEPOSIT BOND

You will be required to pay a deposit bond prior to taking possession. Such bond will usually be equivalent to no more than 5 weeks rent and stipulated on the property particulars.

GLJ Securities is a member of the Deposit Protection Service, which is where the money will be held. You will be issued with a certificate confirming this as part of your tenancy agreement.

When a tenancy comes to an end and there are no disputes, return of the whole or the balance of the deposit, as agreed between landlord and tenant, will be made within 10 working days of written consent from both parties. If, however, a dispute arises as a result of your tenancy ending then please refer to the Deposit Protection Scheme website for helpful information on procedures etc.

www.depositprotection.com

TOP TIPS

Making Rental Payments

Rental payments will be collected by direct debit using go cardless as our service provider.

Repairs/Maintenance

We would request that all repairs are reported in a timely fashion as required under the terms of your tenancy agreement and in order to allow time for our contractors to re-arrange other booked works where necessary. Any repair that you report must be made in writing, by email or post. Once a repair has been allocated to a contractor, they will contact you directly to arrange to attend the property as they manage their own diaries directly. All contractors appointed by GLJ Securities have worked with us for a considerable amount of time and are trusted and reliable and their insurances and qualifications have been checked accordingly.

Heating System Tips

Gas/Oil Radiator Systems

- Check the thermostat is on and turned up to a temperature above that in the property (20°C recommended).
- Check the programmer times are set correctly.
- Check the fuse switch/power for the boiler is on.
- If radiators are not getting hot at the top portion of the radiator this may be due to air in the system and you should bleed the radiator in the first instance.

NOTE: During winter periods the water supply temperature into the house decreases which can sometimes be noticeable when using the hot water.

Electrical Heating System

- Check power is on to the panel radiator/night storage heater.
- Check the timer/boost and input dials (where applicable) are correctly set.

NOTE: Night Storage Heaters take 24 hours to work initially as they store electricity overnight which they release during the day dependent upon how they are set.

TOP TIPS

Locking Yourself Out

If you lock yourself during office hours, a replacement key can be provided at a cost of £5. If you lock yourself out of your property outside of working hours you will be required to call a locksmith to gain entry and will need to have cash available to pay the locksmith at the time of their visit. A replacement key must be issued to GLJ Securities Ltd. if any locks are changed. Please be aware that any damage to the property resulting from gaining entry is chargeable to you as the tenant.

Light Bulbs

If you find that bulbs, particularly in spotlights, are blowing regularly this is primarily found to be due to the bulb itself. Cheaper bulbs purchased from supermarkets or discount stores commonly cause this problem and you should try using a recognised brand bulb, such as Phillips, before reporting this as an electrical issue.

Showers

Where you are using pumped or electric showers please bear in mind that the shower head supplied with the shower is designed to give you an optimum flow rate of water as part and parcel of the shower fitting. Changing a shower head on a pumped or electric shower can affect the performance of the shower and can cause issues in operation of the shower, equally, it is also important that shower heads are descaled regularly to ensure that they are functioning correctly and not causing problems with the shower.

In the Event of an Emergency

An emergency is classed as an immediate threat to life or property. Here we cover what you should do in the event of some familiar problems which may occur during the course of your tenancy. If any incident that could be classed as an emergency occurs outside of our normal working hours then you should contact the emergency services immediately and call us the next working day to discuss.

Gas Leak

If you smell gas and suspect that you have a gas leak (gas has a distinctive smell) turn the gas off at the meter. During working hours please call the office. Outside of working hours please call **National Grid 0800 111 999** who will attend.

NOTE: Do not use any naked flame within the property and avoid switching on any electrical devices (including lights) as an electrical spark could ignite a severe gas leak.

Electrical Failure

If you experience any failure of the electrical system please check the mains fuse board (usually located in the entrance hall or cloakroom) to ensure that all switches are in the upright 'on' position. If a switch has tripped into the 'off' position, please reset the switch to 'on'. Some modern fuse boards require you to push the switch in and up. If none of the switches are in the 'off' position, please check that there is not a power cut in your area.

NOTE: Many electrical issues result from a faulty electrical appliance. If you experience continual tripping of an electrical circuit please unplug all appliances and, by elimination, try to establish which appliance is causing the problem to ensure it is not one of your own, otherwise you may incur charges for any call out.

TOP TIPS

Water Leak

Turn the water off at the mains stopcock (usually located under the sink in the kitchen or in the cloakroom), switch off the boiler/any immersion heater, open all taps and run these until the system is empty. During normal working hours call the office. Out of working hours please call your suppliers leak reporting line and notify the office by leaving a voicemail.

Boiler Breakdown

Repairs to boiler systems cannot be carried out outside of working hours and over holiday periods due to parts suppliers being closed. If your boiler has simply lost pressure you can repressurise the boiler yourself. Instructions on how to do so will be located in the boiler's user manual. If your user manual is not readily available, you can find a copy online by googling the make and model of the boiler. Alternatively, if you would like a printed copy please call the office with the boiler details. You may also find other useful hints and tips for solving simple problems with the boiler in the manual too.

Holidays/Absence from the Property

When you go away on holiday or are absent from the property for any prolonged period of time it is advisable that you turn the water off at the mains stopcock and drain the system down. During the winter period you must ensure that the property's heating is left on low (not less than 15°C). It is also advisable that upon your return to the property any water system is run for 5 minutes prior to use to refresh the water in the system. The same advice is applicable to any water supply that is not used regularly.

Insurance Claims (Accidental Damage)

In the event of accidental damage to a landlord's property you must notify us and your insurer of the damage immediately and not leave this until the final inspection. Should you wish to claim for the damage from your insurer you should be aware that most policies have a time limit for notifying them of the claim. Please be aware that, in the event of a claim, you will be responsible for the payment of any excess on your insurance policy.

Cleaning and Gardening

When you move into your new home you should find the property to be clean and the garden maintained. It is essential that the cleanliness of the property and the condition of the garden are maintained during your tenancy, in line with the clauses detailed within your tenancy agreement pertaining to the same to ensure that at the end of the tenancy you are able to return the property and garden in the same clean and tidy condition. Allowing a buildup of limescale, fat or other substances may result in professional intervention being able to return the property to the required standard.

The following information will hopefully assist you in relation to the current standard of the property and the standard expected at the end of the tenancy (further information will be provided at that time). If you are employing professional cleaners it is advisable to supply them with the list shown in TOP TIPS below so that they are also aware of what needs to be done, as ultimately, you will be held accountable for their standard of workmanship meeting the required standards.

TOP TIPS

Cleaning

1. Lampshades, light fittings and shades to be washed/dusted as suitable and non-functioning light bulbs replaced.
2. Ceilings and walls to be dusted/swept down and be cobweb and dust-free.
3. All gloss work (skirting, door frames, internal doors, etc.) to be washed to remove marks and buffed to be dust and watermark-free.
4. Windows, window frames and external doors to be washed, inside and out to remove any debris/marks and buffed to be watermark-free.
5. All switches, sockets, radiators and any other fixtures/fittings to be cleaned to remove any marks/dust/dirt.
6. Sinks and taps to be cleaned and buffed to remove stains, lime scale and watermarks.
7. Worktops, tiles, splashbacks, cupboard/drawer fronts should be washed down and insides of cupboards/drawers vacuumed/washed to remove debris, grease and marks and buffed.
8. All appliances to be thoroughly cleaned inside and out, filters changed and descaled where necessary (extractor fan, washing machine, tumble dryer, dishwasher, kettle, toaster, microwave, etc.)
9. Fridge/freezer to be defrosted and completely washed out to remove marks and debris, turned off and doors left ajar.
10. Oven and hob fully cleaned to remove any grease, carbonization or cleaner residue to include shelves, trivets, grill pans and trays,
11. All crockery, cutlery, utensils and cookware to be washed clean and put away in the correct place as detailed on the inventory.
12. Bathroom suite to be cleaned and buffed to be free of stains, limescale and watermarking to include shower (including any screen), bath, basin, toilet and shower curtains washed or replaced where soiled.
13. All other surfaces within the property to be polished, dusted or washed down and buffed to ensure marks/dust/dirt removed.
14. All carpets to be vacuumed and professionally cleaned/shampooed (and receipts to confirm the same supplied) and all hard floors to be cleaned and washed including under any appliances or furnishings.
15. Floor drains to be removed and cleaned, where applicable.
16. Curtains, blinds, nets/voiles and any other window coverings washed or dry cleaned and ironed/pressed as required in accordance with care instructions.
17. Soft furnishings to be cleaned and stains removed in accordance with care instructions (sofa, mattress, etc.)
18. Any towels, linens and/or bedding to be laundered in accordance with care instructions.
19. Sweep out garage.
20. Empty and wash out refuse receptacles.

- No foodstuffs are to be left in the property whatsoever and all rubbish is to be removed from site and correctly disposed of. If it is necessary to remove any rubbish from the property or associated bins after you have vacated any charges will be offset against your deposit.
- If you have had pets in the property, with or without consent, the property must be fumigated by a member firm of the BPCA (British Pest Control Association) and the carpets professionally cleaned and receipts to confirm the same supplied.
- If fireplaces have been used, with or without consent, a receipt must be provided for chimney sweeping.
- If the property is served by a septic tank or cesspit this must be emptied at the conclusion of the tenancy and a receipt for the same supplied.

TOP TIPS

Final Inspection

If receipts for carpet cleaning, fumigation, chimney sweeping and/or emptying the septic tank/cesspit, where applicable, are unavailable at the time of the Final Inspection we will arrange the works to be carried out. All associated costs for remedial works will be offset against the deposit.

If cleaning is not carried out to the required standard in accordance with these instructions by the time of the Final Inspection, we will arrange for remedial cleaning works to be carried out.

Gardening

- Grass cut and edged.
- Shrubs, plants, small hedges pruned back and tidied.
- Borders, paths, patios and driveways weeded.
- Fallen leaves and any garden waste removed and disposed of.
- Pet faeces removed and disposed of and any damage to lawns repaired.

TOP TIPS

IMPORTANT HEALTH & SAFETY – Cleaning

Serratia Marcescens

It is extremely important to maintain the cleanliness of your home for your own health and safety. This includes your bathroom. A failure to clean your bathroom regularly may well result in the appearance of orange/pink stains to the grout/sealant/shower door surround/around drains.

What you are seeing are bacteria. Serratia are common inhabitants in the environment; they can be found in human and animal faeces, dust, soil and surface waters. They grow in almost any moist location where there is a food source. Specifically, this bacterium likes to feed on fatty, oily substances such as soap residue in showers, faeces residue in toilets and soap and food residue in pet bowls. In some cases, these bacteria can cause urinary tract infections, wound infections and pneumonia in hospital patients.

Ok, here's the bad news. Once established, Serratia is almost impossible to get rid of completely. It has been proven to be resistant to most types of medicines and anti-bacterial. Which is why it is so important to clean your bathroom regularly to avoid its appearance altogether.

However, if you do find that this appears, you can control it. Again, the way to do this is to clean your shower and toilets regularly. In the shower area, use a squeegee to dry your shower doors, walls and floor as much as you can after use alongside the use of a shower cleaning spray to avoid a build-up of limescale and soap scum.

Serratia loves standing water and will grow well in it. Using a squeegee and shower spray on your shower walls and doors also wipes away soap residue which the bacteria feeds on. You can remove the bacteria each time you clean; it wipes right off. The other thing you can do is to use a cleanser containing chlorine bleach.

Bleach will temporarily kill the bacteria, but, as we mentioned before, it will be back, so the best option is to prevent its occurrence' with regular cleaning.

TOP TIPS

Prevention of Condensation and Mould Growth

Condensation occurs when air containing moisture meets a surface colder than that air and condenses into water droplets visible on the cold service. The risk of condensation is therefore based upon activities within the property that add moisture to the air which, if allowed to build up, cause mould growth. These activities include, but are not limited to, cooking, drying laundry, showering, etc. Even whilst sleeping the warm breath that you expel contributes to moisture in the air.

How to Reduce Condensation

There are three main ways to tackle the problem.

- Prevent moisture build-up wherever possible.
- Ventilate/air the space.
- Heat the space.

Prevent Moisture Build-Up

- Wipe down surfaces where moisture settles.
- Cover pans when cooking.
- When cooking/bathing close kitchen/bathroom doors to avoid the moist air reaching colder areas.
- Cover fish tanks to stop the water evaporating into the air.
- Dry clothes outside wherever possible.
- Make sure tumble dryers are externally vented.

Ventilate/Air the Space

- When cooking or washing, open windows and make good use of extractor fans.
- Ensure extractor fans are kept clean to maximise their efficiency.
- If drying clothes inside is absolutely necessary, try to do so in a small room with the windows open and door closed.
- Open windows for a while each day or make effective use of the trickle catches and trickle/night vents.
- Do not block air vents or chimney openings.
- Allow air to circulate around furniture and inside cupboards. You can do this by ensuring that cupboards are not overfilled and there is space between the wall and your furnishings. This is particularly important on external facing walls.
- Do not 'draught-proof' rooms - a certain amount of air circulation is required to maintain a healthy living space.

Keep Your Home Warm

Maintain a low heat throughout the day when the weather is cold/wet. This is more effective at managing the issue and more cost-effective to you than having bursts of high heat within the home.

Removing Mould

Mould is a living organism and as such, must be killed to remove it. To do this you should wipe down the affected areas with a fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety Executive approved number, making sure you follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

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