How does the future look?

Navigating changes in the private rented sector

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1^{st} May 2026: Phase 1

What changed!

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Tenancy reform

Periodic assured tenancies

- Rental periods limited to no more than one month.
- No rent can be required before agreeing tenancy; rent in advance restricted after that (except existing tenancies).
- Tenants can give two months’ notice at any time.

Written statement

- Key terms to be given in writing before the tenancy begins, usually as part of a wider tenancy agreement.
- NRLA draft periodic tenancies available on the website now

Rent increases

- Rent can be increased once per year via Section 13 process.
- The tenant can challenge this for free, delaying the rent increase until the Tribunal has decided on a new rent level.

Advertising and discrimination

Banning bidding wars

- Must list asking rent on any adverts and offers.
- Banned from encouraging or accepting rents above this.
- Fines of up to £7,000 for breaches.

Preventing discrimination

- Bans discrimination against tenants in receipt of benefits, or with children, including when:
  - Enquiring about or seeking information on the property.
  - Attending viewings.
  - Entering a tenancy.

Pets in properties

- Right to request a pet for tenants. Can only be refused on reasonable grounds.

Ending a periodic tenancy

Section 21 has been abolished, therefore new and amended Section 8 grounds including:

- Grounds for sale or moving family in.
  - Require four months' notice.
  - Cannot relet, or try to relet, for (probably) more than a year after serving.
- An updated mandatory rent arrears ground.
  - Three months' arrears and four weeks' notice.
  - Any Universal Credit delays don't count as arrears.
- A new student ground.
  - Only applies to student HMOs, June-September, where tenancy entered less than six months before move-in.

- New offence for recklessly or knowingly misusing a possession ground, fine of up to £7,000.
- New civil penalty for illegal eviction or harassment, up to £40,000.

Enforcement

New fines and powers

- Local authority fines of up to £7,000 or £40,000 for a host of new offences, including:
- Not joining the database, offering a fixed term tenancy, misusing a possession ground, not giving a written statement, taking rent in advance and breaching the Decent Homes Standard.
- Local authorities may also enter business and rented properties without a warrant or notice for certain offences.

Rent repayment orders

- Rent repayment orders are to be expanded to cover two years instead of one and become available for a range of new offences.

Renters' Rights Training

Renters' Rights overview plus specialist courses on:

- Pre-tenancy
- Enforcement
- Social housing
- Student lets
- Ending a tenancy

Book your place now!

Discount Code
AD10

The Training Academy

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (I)

Regulations were laid on 1 June 2026 and are set to come into force on 23 June 2026. The new rules apply only to inspections starting on or after 22nd June 2026; those before will be assessed under the old system.

Changes are to make the HHSRS easier to understand for landlords and tenants.

Key changes include:

- The old ten lettered bands A to J → replaced with three bands – **High** (score of 1,000 or above), Medium (score of 100 to under 1,000), and Low (score under 100).
- Classes I, II, III and IV have been renamed **Extreme, Severe**, **Serious** and **Moderate.**
- The number of prescribed hazard descriptions has been reduced from 29 to 21.
- The definition of a "prescribed fire hazard" has been broadened. It now covers the risk of harm from uncontrolled fire and associated smoke/fumes, explosions, or building collapse caused by fire or explosion.
- A new set of case studies has been developed to replace the worked examples and provide more guidance on scoring
- A simplified numerical system will replace the old complex ratios and scale points. Landlords will still receive a score indicating the severity of a hazard, but assessors should find it easier to apply consistently.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (II)

Several of the existing hazards will be consolidated or updated:

Indoor Air Pollutants A new consolidated category includes exposure to chemicals for timber treatment and mould growth, along with carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, smoke, uncombusted fuel gas, and volatile organic compounds, merging previously separate hazard descriptions.

Domestic Hygiene (new category) includes inadequate food storage and cooking facilities, poor design for cleanliness, pest exposure, insufficient waste disposal and storage, inadequate personal hygiene facilities, and poor sanitation and drainage.

Falls on the Level (new consolidated category) covering falls associated with toilets, baths, showers or other washing facilities; falling on any level surface

The enforcement framework is divided into two tiers:
For a Category 1 hazard, now classified as the "High" band, local authorities must take action.
For a Category 2 hazard (now "Medium" or "Low") the council has discretion to act.

The maximum civil penalty for failing to comply with a notice has increased from £30,000 to £40,000.

Future Legislation: Phase 2 & 3

Get prepared, more change is coming

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Standards

PRS Database and Ombudsman

- Register on the database and sign up to the new Ombudsman, for a fee, before a property is let. **Database – phased, regional roll out from end of 2026. Ombudsman – Expected 2028.**

Decent Homes Standard

- New standard will require “reasonably modern facilities” and homes in a “reasonable state of repair.” **Not expected to apply before 2035.**

Awaab’s Law

- Address damp and mould issues within set timeframes, as well as new standards on emergency repairs. **Pending consultation.**

Minium Energy Efficiency Standards

How will this impact private landlords?

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Background

In early 2025, the Government launched two consultations:

- On a new EPC to replace the current rating system with new standards.
- On a new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES), which would prohibit landlords from letting a property if it does not meet the new standard *(different from the current EPC C requirement)*.

The Government also announced that it would consult later in 2025 on the Home Energy Model, the new method for calculating EPC scores, which will be used to set the new standard.

What was proposed in the consultations?

- New EPC replacing the current Energy Efficiency Rating (EER).
- Three metrics: fabric efficiency, heating system, smart readiness.
- Fabric efficiency mandatory for all properties.
- Landlords required to meet one secondary metric (heating system *or* smart readiness).
- New EPC C for new tenancies by 2028, and new EPC C for existing tenancies by 2030.
- £15,000 cost cap, applying only to works carried out after 2026, and for exemptions where the cap is reached.
- Proposed £10,000 affordability exemption for some properties.

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The new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

From 1 October 2030, privately rented properties must meet the new energy efficiency requirements. Failure to do so means the property cannot be legally let. To comply, one of the following must be in place:

A valid EPC rated C or above under the current system, which can be obtained until September 2029.

Meet the new EPC standard, which is still under development and will be available from October 2029 onwards.

Hold a MEES exemption where a C rating cannot be achieved for a valid reason.

How will the new EPC work?

The new standard will evaluate performance using multiple metrics, providing individual scores. The relevant ones for the PRS are:

- **Fabric performance -** relates to how well heat is retained, including insulation and double glazing. Insulation standards should align with the old EPC system. This is the primary metric to achieve a C rating.
- **Smart readiness -** this covers technology to help manage the energy, including things like smart meters, storage batteries and solar panels.
- **Heating system -** this covers the heating system, and gas boilers will score poorly while heat pumps score much better.

Under MEES, properties must first meet fabric performance standards, then select and meet one of the other two metrics. If unable to achieve a C rating in two metrics, an exemption must be registered.

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Exemptions

Landlords who don't meet the EPC requirements will have to apply for an exemption. Several new or updated exemptions will be available to landlords, in addition to the existing exemptions. These include:

- **A 'cost cap' exemption.** This option is available if the landlord spends up to £10,000 and the next-cheapest measure cannot be installed within that budget. The cost cap covers work done from October 2025 and the cost of obtaining the EPC.

- **A solid wall insulation exemption** allows landlords to choose not to install solid wall insulation (SWI) if there are concerns about damp and mould. Enabling other measures to be used to achieve an EPC C rating.

- **Property value exemption.** Where the property is worth less than £100,000, the landlord will not have to spend more than 10% of the property's value.

What else is changing in EPCs in 2030?

A number of other changes are being proposed that will mean more tenancies will need EPCs more frequently:

- **Houses in multiple occupation that are let by the room** will be expected to also have EPCs once the new standard is published.
- **Listed buildings** will be expected to have an EPC but are likely to remain exempt from performing significant works to the property.
- **Continuous records of EPCs** will need to be maintained. Currently if an EPC lapses while you have a sitting tenant you don't need to get a new EPC until you change tenant. The Government is proposing changing this so that you must always have a current energy performance certificate.

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What happens next?

If you obtain an EPC before October 2029 with an EER of A, B, or C, **you won't need a new one until it expires**, and you can continue letting the tenancy without exemptions.

By October 2029, if you don't already have an EPC with an Energy Efficiency Rating of A, B, or C, then you will need to commission a new-style EPC. You will then need to either:

- Register an exemption, or
- Follow the recommendations on that EPC and achieve a C rating in the fabric performance metric and one of the other two metrics. After completing the work, you will then need to commission a second EPC confirming the property has met the standard.

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Energy Efficiency & MEES Compliance e-Classroom

NEW: Fully updated training reflecting the latest Government announcements.

Understand what the latest Government announcements mean for you and stay compliant with MEES and wider energy efficiency law.

Navigate EPC requirements now and prepare for upcoming changes by identifying available grants to reduce costs, using MEES exemptions correctly, and avoiding enforcement risks.

Upcoming dates (limited availability): Join us on Thursday 12 February 2026, Tuesday 24 February 2026 or Tuesday 28 April 2026.

Discount Code AD10

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