

# Private Landlords Newsletter

WELCOME to the seventh edition of the Private Landlords Newsletter.

## The benefits of Smart Meters for Landlords and Tenants

In the ever-evolving landscape of energy efficiency, we are excited to share insights about the positive impact smart meters can have on both landlords and tenants.

**Understanding Energy Usage:** Smart meters offer a valuable tool for tenants to comprehend and manage their energy consumption effectively. Recent surveys indicate that nearly 90% of private renters with a smart meter express a willingness to have one again if they were to relocate.

**Landlord Perspectives:** Encouragingly, seven in ten private landlords are open to the idea of having a smart meter installed, and a quarter have already embraced this energy-efficient technology.

**Tenant Decision-Making:** It's important to note that the decision to install a smart meter ultimately rests with the billpayer. If your tenant covers the energy bills and the account is in their name, they have the autonomy to opt for a smart meter. Communication is key, so we recommend that tenants inform you before making this change.

**Understanding Energy Usage:** Smart meters offer a valuable tool for tenants to comprehend and manage their energy consumption effectively. Recent surveys indicate that nearly 90% of private renters with a smart meter express a willingness to have one again if they were to relocate.



**Open Communication:** We strongly advocate open dialogue with your tenants regarding any proposed changes to the property. Your understanding and cooperation can foster a positive environment and contribute to the overall well-being of your rental property.

**Permission Guidelines:** According to Ofgem, if your tenancy agreement stipulates that your tenant requires your permission, it is advised not to unreasonably withhold consent for this energy-efficient upgrade.

**Overcoming Resistance:** In cases where tenants may be hesitant, landlords have the option to manage energy bill payments themselves and incorporate it into the monthly rental charges. However, this involves exploring changes to the rental contract in detail.

For more detailed information and resources on smart meters for landlords, we recommend exploring: [Smart Meters for Landlords | Smart Energy GB](#)



If you identify any tenants struggling with paying for energy bills Green Rose CIC offers free energy-saving advice to low-income households in North Lancashire. They provide free energy efficiency measures, assistance in switching energy tariffs and personalised advice on reducing energy costs. They also offer benefits checks. Please visit [About us - Green Rose CIC](#) for more information.



## Cabinet Decision on the introduction of Landlord licensing

Cabinet reviewed a decision to introduce Selective Licensing in the West End of Morecambe and a decision was made on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The main highlights of the meeting were:

While any form of landlord licensing may initially appear to be a straightforward solution to improving standards in the private rented sector, its implementation comes with significant drawbacks including administrative burdens, and potential unintended consequences such as disincentivising landlords from participating in the market and passing on costs to tenants. By contrast, a targeted approach offers a more nuanced and flexible strategy for addressing non-compliance and poor standards as well as safeguarding tenants' rights. By focusing resources on properties with a history of compliance or safety concerns, this approach can achieve improvements in housing standards without burdening compliant landlords. This approach proposed fosters a culture of cooperation and shared responsibility among landlords, tenants, and other stakeholders.

Currently agrees not to implementing Landlord licensing at this time from this consultation, but to concentrate on a more intelligence led, targeted enforcement approach.

To explore the introduction of a Good Landlord Charter;

Cabinet agrees to the commissioning of a full stock condition survey to support the work in the Homes Strategy.

To view the full cabinet decision please see [Decision - Review of the Consultation on Landlord Licensing and the enforcement of housing standards in the West End of Morecambe. - Lancaster City Council](#)

## Leasehold reform becomes Law



The leasehold and Freehold Reform Act become law on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

The main points are:

- The Act makes it cheaper and easier for leaseholders to buy their freehold leading to greater security for leaseholders;
- Increases standard lease extension terms to 990 years for houses and flats;
- Provides greater transparency over service charges;
- Removes barriers for leaseholders to challenge their landlords unreasonable charges at Tribunal;
- Ban the sale of new leasehold houses other than in exceptional circumstances;
- Scrap the requirement for a new leaseholder to have owned their house or flat for two years before they can buy or extend their lease.

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