

Council Housing Management Service Landlord Update

Autumn/Winter 2026 edition

Welcome to the latest edition of the landlord newsletter
Keeping Cheshire West and Chester landlords informed.

At a time of unprecedented challenges ranging from the continued drive to improve housing condition and management standards, renters continuing to face cost of living pressures as well as the changes to the way landlords are taxed, being a landlord can often seem a difficult job. Be rest assured as a Council, we will do everything we can to help and assist you starting with this newsletter which has useful information to help you keep abreast of the latest developments.

Housing Standards and licensing

Making sure you meet the necessary housing standards to demonstrate you are a good landlord / agent.

Renters' Rights Act 2025 update

New National Private Landlord Database: What Landlords in Cheshire West and Chester Need to Know

The Government is introducing a new national **Private Rented Sector (PRS) Database**, known through the registration service as "**Register your rental property**", as part of the implementation of the **Renters' Rights Act 2025**. The database will provide a central register of private landlords and privately rented homes across England, with the aim of improving transparency, raising standards, and supporting better enforcement within the private rented sector.

What are the aims of the database?

The Government has stated that the database is intended to:

- Increase transparency within the private rented sector.
- Help tenants identify legitimate and compliant landlords.
- Enable local authorities to more easily identify non-compliance and take enforcement action where necessary.
- Create a single source of information about privately rented properties and their compliance with legal requirements.
- Support improved housing standards and provide greater accountability across the sector.

The database will sit alongside other reforms introduced through the Renters' Rights Act, including the Private Rented Sector Ombudsman and wider changes to tenancy law.

How will the database work?

Landlords who let residential properties under assured or regulated tenancies will be required to register both themselves and each rental property they own. Registration will be completed through an online Government service using a GOV.UK One Login account.



There will be two linked records:

1. **A landlord entry** containing information about the landlord.
2. **A dwelling entry** containing information about each rented property.

Landlords will be required to provide information such as:

- Their contact and identity details.
- Property addresses.
- Number of bedrooms and occupants.
- Rental information.
- Evidence of compliance with key safety requirements, including:
 - Gas Safety Certificates.
 - Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs).
 - Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs).
- Landlords will be responsible for ensuring that information remains accurate and up to date. Failure to register or maintain records could result in financial penalties being levied against the landlord.

Who will have access to it?

A public-facing element of the system will allow tenants to check whether a landlord and property are properly registered and compliant with relevant requirements. This is intended to help renters make informed decisions before entering into a tenancy.

Local housing authorities will also have access to information necessary to carry out their enforcement and regulatory functions. Authorities will be able to identify non-compliance, verify information, correct errors where appropriate, and support enforcement activity.

What will it cost landlords?

The Government has confirmed that there will be an annual registration fee of £65 per property. The fee applies to each rental property individually and must be renewed annually.

For example:

- **1 property** = £65 per year
- **5 properties** = £325 per year
- **10 properties** = £650 per year

The Government has stated that the fee will contribute towards operating the service and supporting enforcement activity within the private rented sector.

When will it go live for landlords in Cheshire West and Chester?

Key dates for Cheshire West and Chester landlords

- **Registration opens:** 15 May 2027
- **Expected registration deadline:** 15 August 2027
- **Annual fee:** £65 per property per year

REMINDER – Housing Health and Safety Rating System now in force

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is the statutory framework used by local authorities in England to assess health and safety risks in residential properties.

Following a Government review, significant changes to the system came into force on 23 June 2026, designed to make the assessment process simpler, clearer and more consistent for landlords, tenants and enforcement officers.

One of the most significant changes is the reduction in the number of hazards from 29 to 21, with several similar hazards being combined into broader categories. The revised HHSRS continues to focus on identifying conditions that could cause harm to occupants, while introducing clearer guidance and assessment criteria.

The new HHSRS hazard categories are:

1. Damp and Mould Growth
2. Excess Cold
3. Excess Heat
4. Asbestos and Manufactured Mineral Fibres
5. Indoor Air Pollutants
6. Lead
7. Radiation
8. Crowding and Space
9. Entry by Intruders
10. Lighting
11. Noise
12. Domestic Hygiene, Pests and Refuse
13. Water Supply
14. Falls on the Level
15. Falls on Stairs and Steps
16. Falling Between Levels
17. Electrical Hazards
18. Fire and Explosions
19. Flames, Hot Surfaces and Materials
20. Collisions, Entrapment and Ergonomics
21. Structural Collapse and Falling Elements.



New Risk Categories

The previous A to J hazard scoring bands have been replaced with simpler risk ratings:

- **High Risk** (score of 1,000 or more) - equivalent to a Category 1 hazard, where councils have a duty to take enforcement action.
- **Medium Risk** (score of 100 to 999) - councils have discretionary enforcement powers.
- **Low Risk** (score below 100) - lower level hazards where formal intervention is less likely.

The revised system also introduces updated harm classifications, replacing Classes I to IV with the more straightforward descriptions: Extreme, Severe, Serious and Moderate.

What This Means for Landlords

Although the assessment methodology has changed, the fundamental expectation remains the same: homes must be safe, healthy and free from serious hazards.

Landlords should review their properties against the new hazard categories and ensure that issues such as damp and mould, inadequate heating, fire safety deficiencies and trip hazards are addressed promptly. The updated system is intended to provide greater clarity while supporting consistent enforcement standards across the private rented sector.

Get accredited and gain recognition that you are a good landlord

Becoming an accredited landlord with the Cheshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme (CLAS) makes good business sense as it shows both tenants and prospective tenants that you are a good landlord who wishes to house your tenants in a good home.

Don't wait! Why not show that you are a good landlord/agent and become accredited with the Cheshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme!

For more details email: housingstandards@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk or why not apply online at: [Cheshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)



Empty Homes

How you as a landlord can help us bring 800 long term empty homes back into use by 2028.

Conversion Grant Update

This financial year sees significant changes to the amount of grant available to landlords when accessing the Conversion Grant.

Landlords can now apply for a grant covering 50% of the cost of the eligible works up to a maximum of £15,000 per self-contained unit of accommodation, with a maximum of £75,000 per overall scheme.

That's an increase of £5,000 per unit and £25,000 per development that's not all though, the grant is non repayable unless a condition is breached.

For more information on how you can access a Conversion Grant contact a member of our Empty Homes Team at: emptyhomes@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Latest News, Information and Advice

Making sure you have all the latest information and advice you need to help you deliver a good housing management service to your tenants.

What Private Landlords and letting agents should be preparing for

The most important forthcoming changes for private landlords are:

- Registration on the new national landlord database.
- Compliance with the mandatory Ombudsman scheme.
- Increased scrutiny of property standards under the revised HHSRS.
- Continued tightening of enforcement powers available to local authorities.

Together, these measures represent the Government's ongoing programme to professionalise the private rented sector, improve housing conditions and provide greater protections for tenants.

Private Rented Sector Ombudsman Scheme

Although established under the Renters' Rights Act 2025, further regulations and implementation measures are continuing to be developed by Government. The new mandatory Ombudsman scheme will require all private landlords, including those who use letting agents, to belong to an approved redress service. Tenants will be able to make complaints and obtain binding decisions without going to court. This will create additional compliance obligations for landlords and provide a new route for dispute resolution.

Letting Agents to Join New Registration Scheme Under the Renters' Rights Act 2025

As part of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, letting agents will be required to be registered through the Government's new Private Rented Sector (PRS) Database and be members of the new mandatory Ombudsman scheme, which the Government says will help to improve transparency, accountability and professional standards across the sector.

The new arrangements which are part of the Register your rental property service, will mean increased responsibilities when managing properties on behalf of landlords. Although landlords remain responsible for registering themselves and their properties, agents will play an important role in helping landlords provide and maintain accurate information, demonstrate compliance with legal requirements, and meet the standards expected under the new regulatory framework.

Alongside the registration requirements, membership of a Government-approved Ombudsman scheme will become mandatory. This will provide tenants with access to independent dispute resolution without the need to pursue court action and will require agents to engage with a formal complaints process and comply with Ombudsman decisions.

The new measures introduced by the Government are expected to raise standards across the private rented sector by promoting professionalism, improving property compliance, and increasing accountability for both landlords and letting agents. The north-west England will go live in May 2027. Those who fail to comply with the new requirements may face enforcement action and financial penalties once the provisions come fully into force.

And finally, another successful landlord forum

Thursday 24 September saw approximately 80 landlords and letting agents attend the annual landlord forum. This year speakers gave presentations on the new Landlord/Letting Agent Database (see previous articles), fire safety as well as the revised Housing, Health and Safety Rating System. There was also the opportunity for landlords and agents to catch up with one another and visit the exhibitor stands.

Delegates commented on how useful the session was and how it was a great way to keep abreast of the latest legislation. Many landlords commented on how they are looking forward to next year's landlord forum.



Waste and Recycling - Are your tenants managing their waste correctly?

Do they have the correct containers and understand what goes in them and when their collection day is?

Please see below for some useful links and information to share with your tenants.



Garden waste

We offer a chargeable garden waste collection service, emptying garden waste bins fortnightly until **Friday, 11 December** for £55 per bin. Tenants can opt-in and subscribe at:

cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/gardenbin

*Cheshire West and Chester Council provides 20 fortnightly garden waste (green bin) collections per year over a 40-week period.



£55
per bin*

Useful links

General information on containers and collection days:

Your bin collection

Tenants can get a **free food caddy** to recycle their food waste weekly. Order at

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/orderbin or call us on **0300 123 7026**.

If tenants need to dispose of larger items, such as white goods and furniture, find out more about our chargeable service for domestic households or our Household Waste Recycling Centres:

- [Bulky items collection](#)
- [Find a recycling centre](#)
- You can sign up and subscribe for email updates about the [Council's Waste and Recycling service](#)





Housing Initiatives

Calling all landlords with a vacant let

Do you have a vacant let and need a tenant? Fed up paying tenant finding fees? Well read on.....

The Council has launched a new Private Rented Sector Service which has been especially designed for those landlords who have a vacant let.

The offer to landlords has been developed to provide a tenant matching service for those landlords who are able to deliver on affordable rents for their private sector properties. When we say 'affordable rents', we mean rents that fall in-line with the current Local Housing Allowance rates within Cheshire West and Chester.

As a team we are here to support both the landlord and the tenant; and we can also help with preventative work if the tenancy runs into any difficulties. However, we aim to minimise such problems by trying to get things right from the start.

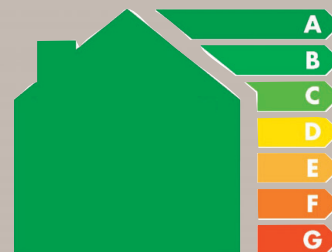
We can offer a range of landlord incentives as well so what are you waiting for contact the Private Rented Sector Service now on:

Telephone: **0151 337 6322**

Email: **privaterentenquiries@cheshirewest.gov.uk**



Warm Homes Grant



Warm Homes Grant funding is expected to be available until 31 March 2028 in west Cheshire for home insulation and renewables such as heat pumps and solar panels. The grant has been made possible by funding from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero.

Grants are available for homes which have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) that is Band D, E, F or G. You can check on the Energy Performance Certificate Register <https://www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate> for your address.

If your property doesn't have a certificate, we can help you to arrange one if you qualify for this scheme.

The amount of grant you can apply for varies depending on your property and the type of work that is needed. Homeowners are typically not expected to pay anything towards the scheme unless building repairs are needed before the insulation or renewables can be installed.

In private rented properties, the landlord is expected to make a minimum 50 per cent contribution to the scheme after the first property.

Typical improvements to your home that may be carried out using the grant, include:

- solid wall insulation (internal or external)
- cavity wall insulation
- loft, room-in-roof and flat roof insulation
- under-floor insulation
- heat pump
- solar photovoltaic (PV) panels for electricity generation
- high heat retention electric storage heaters, where a heat pump isn't suitable
- heating controls.



To qualify, you must be a homeowner who is living in the property as their main residence, or a private tenant, and meet the income criteria listed below.

To find out more information and apply online, please go to [National support schemes](#).

- You receive an income related benefit (for example, Universal Credit, Pension Credit Guarantee, Council Tax Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, or Tax Credits), or
- Your total household income before tax, National Insurance and other deductions is no more than £36,000, or
- Your total household income before tax, National Insurance and other deductions is no more than £20,000 after your housing costs have been deducted (by housing costs, we mean mortgage payments, rent payments and Council Tax).

