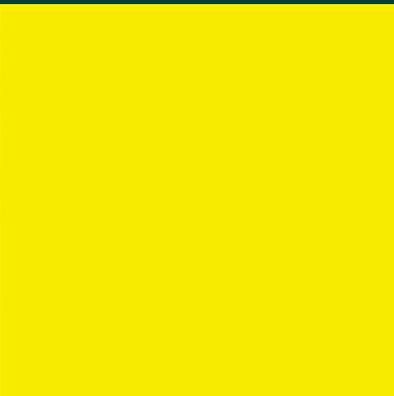


Sawyer & Co.

lettings welcome pack



The Sawyer & Co service

Local knowledge,
good communication
and a personal touch

We work hard to maintain our high standards of service and fully appreciate the importance of being highly organised to maximize our clients' rental income and provide them with absolute peace of mind.

- Experienced and knowledgeable staff
- Service tailored to your needs
- Professional tenant referencing
- Rent guarantees and other protection
- Proactive approach
- Strong company image
- Honest advice
- A friendly and professional service

The complete home moving package

Helping you to
buy, sell, let or rent
your property

Sawyer & Co can help you buy, sell, let or rent your property. Our association with Homelet allows our tenants & landlords to secure the best protection, by offering a wide range letting related of insurance products.

www.sawyerandco.co.uk

Casting the net wider

Our user friendly website now has an integrated Google Maps facility, the easy way to search and find your property.

- Easy to use
- Modern design
- Cutting edge features
- Ownership of fruitful domain names
- Links to useful local information



Your property details

Presenting your
property in the best
possible light

Professionally designed to promote your property's most attractive features and provide valuable information to buyers.

- High quality glossy brochures
- Instant marketing by text messaging & email
- High quality floor plans

We are affiliated to major property portals including:





HOME SALE NETWORK

www.home-sale.co.uk

**We are associated with
Cartus, the world's largest
relocation agent.**

Each branch can refer individuals and families wishing to re-locate in addition to the corporate re-locations facilitated by Cartus.

Homesale Network agents are invited to become members after comprehensive market research in their area.

- **National network**
- **Quality approved**
- **We are a selected member**

**latest
homes**



**High quality, eye catching adverts
every week in the latest homes**

The dynamic & colourful city magazine is seen by many local residents & available at many outlets across the city as well as online.



Flexibility to suit your needs

We have a range of services available from an **Introductory Service** - for the more experienced landlord - to a **Full Management Service** for trouble free letting and complete peace of mind.

Introductory service

- **We market your property until a suitable tenant is found**
- **Arrange an Energy Performance Certificate***
- **Comprehensive and impartial referencing via an independent company**
- **Arrange a full Inventory and Schedule of Condition***
- **Prepare the tenancy agreement**
- **Collect one months rent in advance together with a security deposit equal to one and a half months rent**
- **Forward initial rent payment with full statement and copy of the Tenancy Agreement**
- **Register the tenants deposit with a Tenancy Deposit Scheme**
- **Monitor and arrange tenancy renewals for further fixed terms***
- **Issue Section 21 notices requiring possession when appropriate***

Rent collection service

In addition to the service offered in the 'Introductory Service', the **Rent Collection Service** also includes:

- **Collection and payment of rent receipts using BACS**
- **Forwarding a monthly statement via e-mail (post if preferred)**
- **Submitting accounts to your accountant if requested**
- **Issuing of Section 21 notice included in fee**
- **We will arrange the 'check out' of the tenant at the end of the tenancy with a full inventory and condition check***

* Additional fee applies



Relax, let us do the work

Full management

In addition to the service offered in the 'Rent Collection Service' the **Full Management Service** also includes:

- **Arranging maintenance and repairs as necessary, including obtaining estimates and liaising with both contractors and the tenant on all matters**
- **Carrying out quarterly inspections of the property and providing you with, when appropriate, a written report about issues arising from our visit**
- **Gas & electrical safety inspections arranged and certificates supplied***
- **Arranging for the utilities to be registered in the tenants name for the duration of the agreement together with taking meter readings**
- **Processing the return of the tenant's deposit, less any charges for cleaning, replacement of items and outstanding rent**

* Additional fee applies

Your rental income...guaranteed

Rent protection

Even the best tenants fall on hard times. The majority of defaults occur due to a change in circumstances e.g. loss of job, relationship breakdown or long term sickness.

We can arrange, on your behalf, rent protection which will guarantee the rent for the term of the tenancy in addition to offering legal protection. Our associated insurance company can also offer Landlords Emergency Assistance, Buildings Insurance and Portfolio Insurance.

Please contact any member of our friendly and professional team to discuss our services further.



Working to the highest standards

Protection & peace of mind

We are bonded to organisations that lead the way in regulating our industry and promote the highest possible standards from their members.

We strongly believe in the codes of practice enforced by these organisations.



Two offices marketing your property for one fee



Brighton & Hove Office
46 Church Road, Hove BN3 2FN
Tel 01273 778844

Situated in this central location,
covering Saltdean to West Hove



Portslade Office
10 Station Road, Portslade BN41 1GA
Tel 01273 383830

Situated in this 'high street' location
adjacent to Portslade Station covering
West Hove to Shoreham by Sea

Sawyer & Co.

sales & lettings

Residential Lettings Guide

We LET...

...You
RELAX



A LANDLORD'S GUIDE TO RESIDENTIAL LETTING

Letting a property is a serious business. Your property is a valuable asset that, over time, should prove to be a rewarding investment. To achieve these rewards, you should seek the services of a professional agent who will maximise your return and make the whole process as stress free as possible.

Whether you are an experienced landlord or a private individual letting your home for the first time, Sawyer & Co. aim to advance standards in the local lettings market to ensure that all our Landlords receive a service that is second to none.

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3 First Step

4 Legal Position

7 Energy Performance Certificate

8 Taxation

9 Tenancy Deposit Scheme & Inventory

10 Marketing and Service



THE FIRST STEP

A PROPERTY APPRAISAL

A Sawyer & Co letting agent will meet with you, at your property, to discuss the lettings process and advise you on the maximum rental income that you are likely to achieve. We will also advise you on any action that is appropriate to facilitate the letting of your property and achieve the highest possible rental yield.

Beware, some agents over-value to win your business; remember void periods cost you money! Make sure you choose an agent who has produced plenty of evidence to back up their valuation.

PRESENTATION

First impressions count! A well presented property will let quicker and produce a higher rental income. We will advise you on cost effective measures that you can take, to present your property in the best possible light. With your permission, we can obtain quotes for, and arrange on your behalf: clearance, professional cleaning, property maintenance and gardening services.

WHO SHOULD I INFORM?

- If you have a mortgage on the property you should seek permission from the lender.
- If your property is leasehold you may be required to seek permission from the Freeholder (see the terms of your lease).
- Your insurers. Some insurers charge higher rates for let properties or may refuse to insure at all. We are able to offer landlords buildings and contents insurance specifically designed for rented properties via 'Homelet'.
- Your accountant. They will assist you in declaring your property income to the Inland Revenue.
- The Post Office. If you are personally vacating the property, you should make forwarding arrangements for you post.

FURNISHED OR UNFURNISHED?

The majority of landlords now offer their properties on an unfurnished basis. There are two reasons for this: the cost of furnishing a property is not always reflected in the additional rent received. Furthermore, recent legislation has placed heavy burdens on landlords; for example, all furniture in a rented property now has to comply with modern fire regulations.

Certain types of property, such student properties, are unlikely attract a tenant unless they are furnished. We can advise you on whether your property needs to be furnished and the likely rent that it will command on a furnished versus unfurnished basis. Even let unfurnished it is advisable to provide white goods, i.e. fridges, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, cookers, etc. These are quite expensive and awkward for tenants to transport and most tenants expect them to be provided. If you are supplying electrical goods you will need to have them safety tested once a year.

THE LEGAL POSITION

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (amended in 1989 and 1993).

Landlords letting residential property must ensure that all upholstered furniture complies with the above regulations. Upholstered furniture must have fire resistant filling and pass the 'match' and 'cigarette' test to comply. The correct way for a landlord to demonstrate compliance is to ensure that all relevant furnishings have attached a permanent label which confirms that the item meets the required standards.

Items that must comply include:

- Three-piece suites, armchairs and sofas.
- Futons, bed sofas and other 'convertible' furnishings.
- Beds and bed bases as well as mattresses, headboards and pillows.
- Cushions and fitted or loose seating, pillows and pads.
- Stretch, loose and fitted covers for furniture.
- Dining and kitchen chairs with upholstered seats, backs or arms.
- Nursery furniture including baby chairs, cots and changing mats.
- Garden furniture containing upholstery that might be used indoors.

Since 1990, manufacturers have been legally bound to manufacture safe products and all furnishings purchased new should comply with the minimum legal requirements. Furniture manufactured prior to 1950 is exempt from the regulations.



The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

The Landlord must:

- Ensure there are no open-flue gas appliances in any bedroom or any room where people may sleep, a bathroom or shower-room.
- Ensure that any work to, or installation of gas appliances, fittings or equipment is conducted by a CORGI registered engineer.
- Ensure that both fixed and mobile gas appliances, associated pipes and flues are safely maintained and that a formal safety inspection is conducted at least once a year by a CORGI registered engineer.
- Ensure that, following any work to any gas appliance, a CORGI registered engineer conducts a defined series of tests to guarantee safety.
- Give tenants access to all appropriate manuals, safety notices and labels, and all instructions, for any gas appliance supplied.
- Keep adequate records of gas appliances including: the dates of formal inspections, the details of any defects identified as well as work required or conducted. A copy of the records must be made available to the tenant within 28 days of the inspection or prior to occupation if it is a new tenancy.
- Keep safety inspection reports and certificates issued by a CORGI engineer for a minimum of two years.
- Prevent tenants from using any gas appliance where its safety or proper installation is suspect or a fault is known.

We can arrange for a Corgi registered engineer to inspect your property to ensure compliance with the above regulations on request.

The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994

These regulations oblige every landlord to ensure that any electrical appliances in the property are safe.

To become compliant, the following are recommended:

- Check that all appliance manuals, instructions, safety notices and labels are available so that copies can be issued to tenants.
- Have a qualified electrician check that all appliances are safely wired and operate properly.
- Do not buy second-hand electrical goods unless you can prove they are safe and have the appropriate instructions.

It would also be advisable to have a qualified electrician inspect the property's wiring (power and lighting), earthing, sockets, switches and fusing system, to ensure they meet current regulations (as set out in Part P of the Building Regulations).

We can arrange for an electrical engineer to inspect your property on request.

Smoke Detectors Act 1991

Any building built after June 1992, must be fitted with smoke detectors and alarms that are mains operated. However, we advise all our landlords to fit smoke alarms, since the landlord can still face serious claims in the event of a fire.

Health & Safety Issues

By supplying accommodation, furnishings, appliances and equipment to tenants, you are required by law to observe the health and safety issues that may affect them. The laws and regulations previously mentioned in this section apply, as do the following additions with regard to health and safety:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990

The implications of these Acts mean you must conduct a risk assessment of the property you intend letting and satisfy yourself that the property and its contents are safe.

For most non-HMO landlords, the following represent the more likely and significant areas of health and safety concern:

Asbestos

Does the property contain asbestos? Older properties were often built using asbestos for sewerage pipes, drainage, and roofing and to line walls. Removal is usually required unless it is in good order and safely encapsulated. Consult the local environmental health department for further advice.

Damp and mould

High levels of humidity, combined with inadequate ventilation, are a serious health hazard for occupiers. Any condensation or dampness should be investigated and the cause remedied.

Ventilation

Unventilated bathrooms and kitchens should have a ceiling or wall-mounted extractor fan. Opening windows should be tested after any painting has been undertaken.

Sharp objects

Examine the property for protruding nails, broken or cracked glass and any splintered timbers that may cause injury. Repair or replace as necessary before the property is occupied.

Sanitation

Basins, sinks, baths, shower bases, toilet bowls and cisterns should be free of defects. Any that are cracked or damaged should be replaced.

Safety rails

The banister rails leading up a staircase must be securely fixed, as should bath-handles (where fitted), any rails leading down into a cellar, and any gallery or balcony railings.

Carpets

Floor coverings should always be in a good condition with no threadbare, loose or worn areas that could cause an accident.

It is impossible for all eventualities to be considered and the law recognises that tenants must employ a degree of commonsense when occupying a property. However, landlords have a duty of care to their tenants and must take all necessary precautions to supply safe accommodation, free of any obvious hazard.



Energy Performance Certificates

From 1st October 2008, all new tenancies in England & Wales are required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

The EPC shows the energy efficiency, environmental impact rating, the cost to provide heating, hot water and lighting to the home and recommendations to improve the energy efficiency of the subject property.

The EPC includes rating graphs that resemble those found on modern appliances, such as washing machines and fridge/freezers.

The EPC rating graphs must be made available, free of charge by a landlord, to a prospective tenant at the earliest opportunity and no later than:

- when any written information about the building is provided in response to a request for information received from the prospective tenant; or
- when a viewing is conducted.

A full EPC report must be made available to the prospective tenant on request, or before entering into a contract to let.

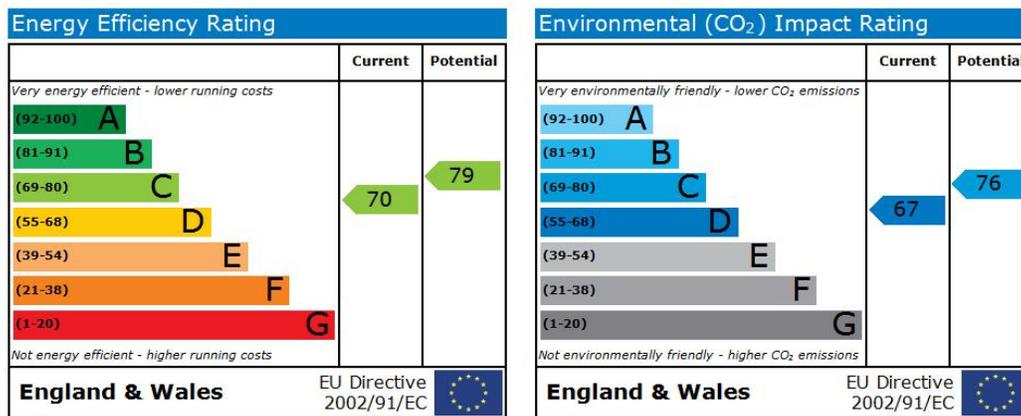
An Energy Performance Certificate does not have to be made available if:

- the landlord believes that the prospective tenant is unlikely to have sufficient funds to purchase or rent the property or is not genuinely interested in renting that type of property; or
- the landlord is unlikely to be prepared to rent out the property to the prospective or tenant (although this does not authorize unlawful discrimination)

An EPC for rented property is valid for ten years.

The only person who is able to produce an Energy Performance Certificate is an accredited energy assessor.

Sawyer & Co can obtain an EPC for your property on request but we will be unable to market your property without one.



TAXATION

UK Resident Landlords

Income from property is taxable at standard rates, although certain expenses in letting the property are tax deductible. We advise our landlords to seek advice from their accountant, but the following give a brief overview:

Working out your taxable profits from residential lettings:

Step one

You work out your 'net profit' as follows:

- add up all your rental income
- add up all your 'allowable expenses'
- take your allowable expenses away from your income

If you have more than one residential letting, you group all the income and all the expense figures together.

Step two

To arrive at your taxable profit deduct any allowances you're entitled to from you net profit:

If you let furnished property, you can deduct either of:

- a 'wear and tear' allowance - based on a percentage of your rent
- a 'renewals' allowance - the cost of replacing old items with a new equivalent (but you deduct any money you get from selling the old item)

Reporting your profits to your Tax Office

-If your profit is less than £2,500

If you're employed, or getting a pension through PAYE, and your taxable income from property is less than £2,500, your Pay as You Earn (PAYE) tax code can be adjusted to collect the tax on your property income each year. Just ask your Tax Office to send you form P810 to report your income each year.

-If your profit is £2,500 or more or you're not on PAYE

In this case you'll need to fill in a Self Assessment tax return (you may do this already, if not contact you're Tax Office).

If your total income from UK property is £15,000 or more in a tax year you must declare it on the land and property pages of the full Self Assessment tax return. If it's below £15,000 you may be able to complete a shorter four-page return.

How much tax will you pay?

Your taxable profit from property letting is added to your overall income. If this is more than your tax allowances you'll pay tax on it at your normal Income Tax rates.

Non UK Resident Landlords

If a landlord is living abroad we have a legal obligation (Taxes Management Act 1970) to deduct basic rate tax from rents received, and account to the Inland Revenue on a quarterly basis. This is unless the landlord can provide Sawyer & Co with an exemption certificate from the Inland Revenue. Details concerning allowances and exemption application can be obtained from the Inland Revenue at:

NRL Scheme
Fitzroy House, PO Box 46
Nottingham NG2 1BD

Tel: 0845 0700040 or web: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/cnr/nr_landlords.htm

THE TENANCY DEPOSIT SCHEME

The Housing Act 2004 (Chapter 4, sections 212-5; & Schedule 10) made provision for both the protection of tenancy deposits and the resolution of disputes over their return.

The legislation came into effect on 6 April 2007. All deposits taken for Assured Shorthold Tenancies after that date must be covered by a tenancy deposit protection scheme.

Sawyer & Co are members of the Tenancy Deposit Scheme whereby we are authorized to hold tenants deposits, as stakeholders, under an approved insurance backed scheme.

As well as registering the tenants deposit we must, within 14 days of receiving it, give the tenant details about how their deposit is protected including:

- the contact details of the tenancy deposit scheme selected
- the landlord or agent's contact details
- how to apply for the release of the deposit
- information explaining the purpose of the deposit
- what to do if there is a dispute about the deposit

At the end of the tenancy:

- if an agreement is reached about how the deposit should be divided, we return all or some of the deposit.
- if there is a dispute, we must hand over the disputed amount to the scheme until the scheme administrators have resolved the dispute.
- if for any reason we fail to comply, the insurance arrangements will ensure the return of the deposit to the tenant - if they are entitled to it.



INVENTORY

PROTECTING THE LANDLORD & TENANT WITH AN INDEPENDENT INVENTORY

The greatest decider in any dispute over deposit monies is impartial, hard evidence. If damage occurs to the property during the tenancy the landlord needs to be able to prove that the property was in good condition at the start of the tenancy. The best way to achieve this is with an independent inventory & condition report.

Sawyer & Co can arrange for a professional company to produce an Inventory & Condition Report, which will be ratified by the tenant at the start of the tenancy.

MARKETING YOUR PROPERTY

Sawyer & Co provide unrivalled market coverage from: two local offices, local property publications and a vast number of websites. An extensive list of prospective tenants will be contacted immediately by email, text message and phone. Our friendly and professional team is committed to finding the right tenant for your property at the maximum market rent, and in the fastest possible timescale – see our marketing brochure for more details.

A SERVICE TO SUIT YOU

We have a range of services available from an Introductory Service - for the more experienced landlord - to a Full Management Service for trouble free letting and complete peace of mind. We can also arrange quotes for rent protection and other letting related insurances. See our marketing brochure for more details.

TENANT VETTING

Each prospective tenant is interviewed by one of our lettings team and references obtained from an independent referencing company. Checks and references are as follows:

- Credit Score
- Bankruptcy CCJ / court decree
- Anti fraud check
- Personal identity check
- Report on detrimental credit history
- Undisclosed addresses
- Landlord / Managing Agent reference
- Employers reference
- Previous employers reference (if applicable)

PREPARING THE TENANCY AGREEMENT

If the referencing agency has passed the applicant as a suitable tenant, we will produce a tenancy agreement. This will usually be an Assured Shorthold Agreement for a term of six months. Our Tenancy Agreements are approved by The Law Society and The Office of Fair Trading.

UTILITIES

We will arrange for the utilities to be registered in the tenants name for the duration of the agreement, together with taking meter readings.

FIRST PAYMENTS

We will ensure that a deposit equivalent to a month and a half's rent along with the first month's rent is cleared in our 'ring fenced' client account before the tenant moves in.

DURING THE TENANCY

Sawyer & Co's computerised system logs the rent due date. Tenants are encouraged to set up a standing order. When the rent is received it is forwarded to you by BACS and a

statement emailed or posted. Reminders are sent where necessary to ensure that you receive payments as quickly as possible.

We will carry out quarterly inspections of the property and provide you with, when appropriate, a written report about issues arising from our visit.

RENEWING THE TENANCY

Most tenants will renew their tenancy. We will adjust the rent, terms and length of tenancy, when appropriate, and complete the necessary paperwork.

THE END OF THE TENANCY

Sawyer & Co will issue the necessary notices for possession and arrange for the inventory clerk to re-inspect the property. When the landlord and tenant are satisfied, the deposit monies are returned less any appropriate deductions.

GOOD LUCK?

As you can see there are a large number of issues to consider when letting your property. Do not leave it to luck! Make sure you choose an agent in which you have full confidence. If you feel confident in their professionalism, you can trust that any advice they give or action they take, will be in your best interests.

Please contact us if you wish to discuss any letting related issues. We will be delighted to help.



Hove 01273 778844 Portslade 01273 383830