Renters' Rights Act

What it means for landlords in Lancaster

Eleanor Bowden
Supported by DASH

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Who is in the room?

Who was here last time?

Who manages their own properties?

Who lets to students?

This evening

Tenancy reforms in everyday practice

Setting and increasing rents

Student lettings for 2027/28

Register your rental property (PRS Database)

Questions and further support

What changes, and when?

From 1 May 2026: most ASTs became rolling tenancies (Assured Periodic Tenancies). New rules cover possession, rent increases and letting practices.

From December 2026: the government's Register your rental property service begins its regional rollout. North West registration opens in May 2027.

Later: Property adverts will need landlord and property registration numbers. Tenants will be able to see specified database information. Date and details will follow.

2028: Landlord Ombudsman - membership for PRS landlords is expected in 2028, providing an independent route for tenant complaints.

Tenancy paperwork

Existing written agreements: usually no replacement needed.

New tenancies: give the required written information about the terms before signing or in the tenancy. An appropriate agreement can contain it.

An existing **entirely verbal agreement** needs specified written information. Keep copies and evidence of delivery.

Letting a property

Advertising: state the asking rent. Do not invite or accept an offer above it.

Applicants: no blanket exclusions eg for children or benefit recipients. Use consistent affordability and referencing checks.

Rent in advance:

1. **Before signing -** do not request or accept it.
2. **After signing, before the tenancy starts:** you can usually collect up to 1 months' rent.
3. **During tenancy:** you can't request rent before it's due (tenants can voluntarily pay any amount).

Pets: consider requests individually and normally reply in writing within 28 days, explaining any refusal.

Ending a tenancy

Landlords can no longer serve a section 21 notice. They need a valid ground, such as sale, occupation, arrears or antisocial behaviour.

A **section 8 notice** must identify the ground and give the correct notice. Conditions and evidence differ between grounds.

1. A mandatory ground requires possession if its legal conditions are met.
2. A discretionary ground also involves the court's assessment of reasonableness.

If tenants remain after notice, apply to court. A notice alone does not authorise eviction.

Selling or moving in

Ground 1 covers occupation by the landlord or qualifying family. Ground 1A covers a genuine intention to sell.

Both normally need four months' notice.

For a new tenancy, notice for these grounds cannot require departure within its first 12 months. (Other grounds can apply earlier under their own rules).

Keep evidence of the intention. Restrictions apply to subsequent letting or marketing after using these grounds.

If plans change, **take advice before re-letting.** These grounds cannot be used simply to replace tenants.

Ending a tenancy - the process

1. **Identify the possession ground.**
   Check that you meet all its conditions, including any advance-warning requirements.

2. **Download the current Form 3A.**
   The GOV.UK assured tenancy forms page provides the form, completion guidance and the legal wording for each ground.

3. **Complete the grounds and explain the facts.**
   Include the required legal wording and explain why it applies to this tenancy. Gather supporting evidence, such as an accurate arrears statement or evidence of intent to sell.

4. **Calculate the correct notice and serve it properly.**
   The period depends on the ground. Follow the form's guidance and applicable service requirements, allowing for delivery. Keep a copy and evidence of when and how it was served.

5. **If the tenant remains, apply to court.**
   Normally you must wait until the notice period expires; some antisocial-behaviour grounds allow an earlier application.

Rent increases

For an assured periodic tenancy, use section 13 and **Form 4A e**ach time, even when the tenant agrees to the increase.

Give at least two months' notice. An increase cannot take effect in the first year, or less than a year after the previous increase.

The rent should reflect the open market.

Discuss the proposed increase with your tenant. Check the dates, deliver Form 4A correctly, and keep evidence of when and how you delivered it.

Tenants can ask the tribunal to assess a proposed above-market increase.

Evidence for the rent

Compare similar nearby homes: type, size, condition, location, furnishings and included bills all matter.

Keep dated screenshots and your explanation. Evidence of actual agreed lettings is stronger than advertised asking rents.

ONS data and third-party checkers provide context. Explain how your chosen comparisons relate to this property.

Three listings can be a practical starting point.

Student lettings for 2027/28

A private assured student tenancy is periodic. The academic-year cycle does not create a fixed tenancy end date.

Ground 4A can support possession for the next student intake if its conditions are met. It does not cover every student property.

Check eligibility, advance written warning, signing date and possession-notice timing before offering a tenancy.

Ground 4A: the main checks

Property: a house in multiple occupation (HMO), or a dwelling within one. Tenants must be full-time students, or expected to become so. The next letting must be intended for students.

Before signing: give the written statement explaining the intended use of Ground 4A. Do not agree the tenancy more than six months before it starts.

Later: serve the correct possession notice with four months' notice, ending between 1 June and 30 September. If you omitted the advance written warning, you cannot simply serve Ground 4A at the end of the academic year to fix it.

Students - securing next year's lets

A holding deposit can reserve a property while checks take place. It is capped at one week's rent.

The usual deadline to enter the tenancy agreement is 15 days after receipt. Agree any different deadline in writing.

A holding deposit and a signed tenancy are different steps. Check signing dates against Ground 4A's six-month condition.

Keep deadline and payment records. Statutory refund and retention rules apply if the letting does not proceed.

When a student leaves early

Serving Ground 4A does not remove a tenant's right to give valid notice and leave sooner.

Tenant notice is normally two months, subject to the terms and applicable rules. An earlier end can be agreed in writing.

One joint tenant can usually end the whole joint tenancy. If others stay, agree the continuing or new arrangements clearly.

Training:

DASH's free student-landlord course covers these student lettings: dashtraining.org.uk, **enrolment code RRA123**.

Register your rental property - PRS Database

The government's Register your rental property service will hold information about private rental properties and key safety requirements.

It is being introduced to:

- **Help landlords** understand their responsibilities and demonstrate compliance.
- **Help tenants**, through later public access, make better-informed choices about where they rent.
- **Help councils** identify rented properties and target action against poor practice.

Registration will roll out regionally first. Public access to specified information will follow later.

Register your rental property - PRS Database

For North West properties, registration opens on 15 May 2027 and must be completed by 14 August 2027.

The **property's** region sets the deadline, even if the landlord lives elsewhere.

The initial scope includes occupied assured and regulated tenancies, with an exception for supported exempt accommodation.

Online registration uses GOV.UK One Login. A paper application route will be available for landlords who need it.

What landlords will need

Prepare landlord identity, contact and ownership details, property information and relevant management contacts.

Tenancy information includes occupancy and rent. Supply licences and required gas safety, electrical safety and energy performance certificate (EPC) evidence.

Joint landlords each register. One registers the property and invites the others to link to its record.

A licensed house in multiple occupation (HMO) needs one registration for the whole property. Use the full government checklist.

What your agent can do

You start property registration and pay the fee. **Delegation does not transfer your legal responsibility.**

Agents can supply licensing, occupancy, furnishings, rent, included bills and safety-certificate details.

The service sends a link for each property. The agent sets a password and can use that access for updates.

Agree who completes, checks and updates the record. You receive notifications of the agent's submissions.

Completion and updates

Supply outstanding required tenancy or safety information within 28 days of registration.

Missing information can make a property entry inactive.

Update information within 28 days of a change or expiry, and renew registration annually.

Published guidance confirms reminders for missing information. Keep your own completion checks as well.

Fees and renewals

The annual fee is £65 per property, with no VAT.

Your first property sets the annual renewal date for all properties. Later additions align to it.

The first-year registration fee may be less than £65 per property because, during the rollout, you pay only for the days from 15 November 2027 until your first annual renewal.

Check the service's calculation for your portfolio. The first payment may be less than the full annual fee. Gov has worked examples.

Initial rollout and later requirements

Initial rollout: landlords register properties let under tenancies in scope, rather than every empty property.

Later advertising rules: registration will be required before marketing unoccupied properties. Adverts will need landlord and property registration numbers.

Later public access: tenants will be able to check specified landlord and property information. Government will confirm the fields they can see.

Compliance and enforcement

Penalties depend on the requirement breached and the circumstances. Councils have stronger investigation powers.

Database guidance identifies penalties up to £7,000 for failure to register, and up to £40,000 for specified serious or repeated breaches.

Certain offences can lead to a rent repayment order (RRO), potentially covering up to two years' rent.

Keep compliance records and act promptly on problems. Correcting an error does not automatically remove liability.

Your next steps

Tenancies: check written terms, information given to tenants and procedures for applicants, pets and payments.

Rents: keep comparable evidence and confirm section 13 dates before proposing an increase.

Students: check eligibility, signing dates and both stages of Ground 4A paperwork for 2027/28.

Database registration: gather documents, identify joint landlords and agree agent tasks before the North West window opens.

DASH: free Renters' Rights Act courses

A Guide for Student Landlords
Student possession, rent, pets, written terms and discrimination. Free enrolment code: RRA123.

Part 1: Tenancy Reforms
Possession grounds, periodic tenancies and everyday letting rules. Free enrolment code: RRB123.

Part 2: Standards, Enforcement and Redress
The database, Ombudsman, standards and enforcement. Free enrolment code: RRB123.

Choose your course at dashtraining.org.uk

DASH: landlord development and accreditation

Landlord Development Course
Foundation training follows a tenancy from preparation to ending. Included for accredited members, or £60 for non-members.

Advanced DASH Landlord Course
Further learning on energy efficiency, licensing, fire safety and Right to Rent.

DASH Landlord Accreditation
Training, a property health check and a commitment to management standards. Membership includes resources and updates.

Explore the options at dashservices.org.uk