

Key Notes

East Lothian Council's Newsletter
for Private Sector Landlords

Issue 18
May
2025



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Scottish Budget – 2% increase in Additional Dwelling Supplement (ADS)

The Scottish Government announced (in December 2024) that the ADS will increase from 6% to 8% with immediate effect.

The ADS is an additional charge which is added to any Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) which may be due on the purchase of a property. It is charged if you buy an additional residential property (dwelling) in Scotland. Examples of an additional residential property can include a second home, a rental property, a holiday home or properties used by family and friends (even if you don't charge rent).

The government did commit in the budget to conduct a review of LBTT, stating:

“ The review will commence in Spring 2025 and consider various aspects of the residential and non-residential arrangements for LBTT to ensure their policy intent continues to be met. As part of this, we will further explore the impact of the ADS where exceptional circumstances or events occur. We will engage extensively with stakeholders throughout this process. The review will support decisions in the next Scottish Parliament on whether any legislative changes should be brought forward. ”

Housing (Scotland) Bill

Stage 1 of the Bill ended 28 November 2024 and on 19 February 2025, Parliament agreed that Stage 2 will be completed by 29 May 2025. The Bill (as amended) will be published following Stage 2 proceedings. A panel of landlords contributed to Stage 1 deliberations and agreed a series of recommendations to make to the Committee:

- Housing Strategy
- Rents and Affordability
- Enforcement
- Eviction and Tenancy issues
- Personalisation
- Improving data
- Incentivising landlord to remain in the sector

You can find more information [HERE](#) 

Green heating plans for new homes

The Scottish Government is to scrap plans to make homeowners switch to greener heating soon after buying a new home (Heat in Buildings Bill).

The legislation would have meant anyone buying a home would have had to change to a green heating system – like a heat pump, within a set period of time.

The Acting New-Zero Secretary Gillian Martin has announced that the draft bill would no longer be put forward in its current form. She further added that a Bill would only be introduced when satisfied that it would both decarbonise houses and decrease fuel poverty.



Energy Advice :: Changeworks

Changeworks East Lothian Energy Advice Service offers free and impartial energy advice and support with fuel bill and debt issues.

The service is open to East Lothian Council tenants, homeowners and those in private rented accommodation. Advice is available over the phone, online or face-to-face during a home visit. Support can be delivered in a way most appropriate to the client and acts as an early intervention approach to tackle fuel poverty.

Changeworks' advisors can assist householders to reduce their energy use through low carbon behaviours and tackling high energy costs. Advice is available to ensure householders are getting the full benefit from their existing heating system as well as energy advice tips and tricks, meaning households should see a reduction in energy costs.

The Changeworks team can also provide support with accessing funding where appropriate and helping bill payers manage debts and set up payment plans with their energy supplier.

It's very straightforward to refer someone for support from Changeworks. If you have the person's consent you can do this on their behalf or they can request a callback themselves at

www.changeworks.org.uk/referral .

Those who are not online can contact Changeworks by telephone on **0800 870 8800**; their phonenumber is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

CHANGEWORKS.



Rent Increase Restrictions

Temporary restrictions on rent increases in the private rented sector were withdrawn at the end of March 2025. These measures were introduced in 2022 to assist tenants during the cost-of-living crisis.

Housing Minister Paul McLennan said:

“ Supporting tenants is a priority for the Scottish Government and we will continue to engage and work with stakeholders, including tenants’ groups.

The temporary changes to rent adjudication were in place to support the transition away from the short-term rent cap that was in place under the Cost of Living Act. They were in place for a year to manage the risk of very steep increases in rents for tenants if there was a return to market rent in a single step and will come to an end on March 31, 2025. We intend to lay regulations to ensure any application for a review of a rent increase received before April 1 is decided in line with the temporary changes.

Most private tenants continue to have a right under existing legislation to seek a review of a rent increase if they consider it is too high and I would encourage any tenant who is concerned about a rent increase to apply for a review. Raising awareness of the strong existing rights tenants have is critical and we will be launching a Renters Rights Campaign later this month that will support tenants to understand their rights, how to use them and where to seek further advice and support.

We know that there is a need for longer term action on rents, which is why we are taking forward measures in the Bill to support introduction of longer term rent control where this is needed.


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Rent increase notices

Rent Service Scotland (RSS) – the body which adjudicates on rent increase disputes – is advising that they are receiving a large number of invalid notices.

Examples include notices not on the prescribed form, missing data, unsigned or issued via text/Whatsapp.

If issued incorrectly, the increase is not enforceable meaning the landlord would have to start again with the notification.


You can find the template for issuing rent increases for a private residential tenancy [HERE](#) 



The Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) switch-off: What you need to know – Energy UK

The RTS uses a radio signal to tell some older electricity meters when to switch between peak and off-peak rates. It was introduced in the 1980s and is now reaching the end of its operational life in June 2025.


Electricity suppliers will be able to offer a smart meter upgrade before the service ends on 30 June 2025. You are most likely to be affected by this if your property is heated using electricity or storage heaters.

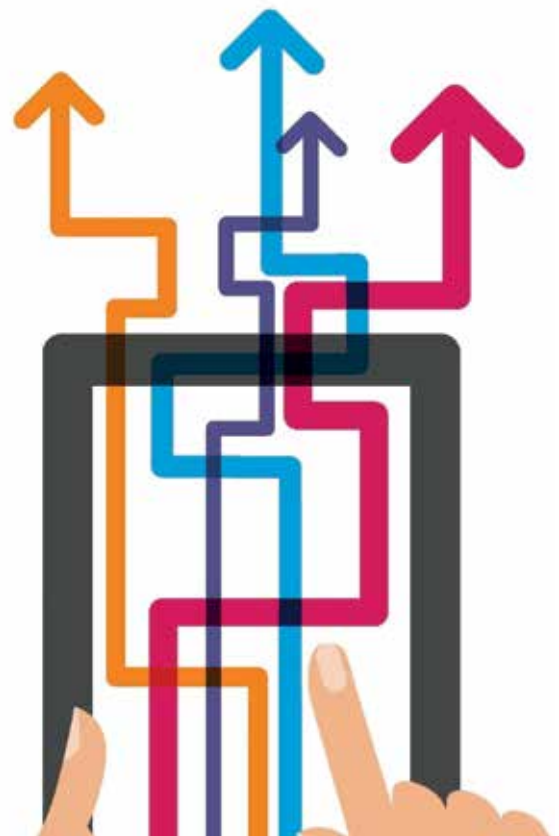
To find out if you will be affected please visit The Radio Teleswitch Service switch-off: What you need to know [Energy UK](#) 

Making Tax Digital (MTD)

Some landlords will soon be required to keep digital tax records and submit tax returns quarterly rather than annually.

This will be introduced in April 2026 with businesses, self-employed individuals and landlords with an income of over £50,000 required to comply first. Those with an income over £30,000 will be required to comply from April 2027 and the threshold for MTD would be reduced to £20,000 from April 2028.

The Government has introduced an [interactive tool](#)  to find out if/when you will need to use Making Tax Digital for Income Tax.



As well as the Core Information Programme (below), LAS run a Best Practice Programme covering:

- Creating Inventories
- Dealing with abandonment
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour – the requirement for evidence
- Chasing the debt
- Dealing with difficult tenants

- Dealing with rent arrears

CORE INFORMATION PROGRAMME

Managing common repairs

12 June 2025, 2.00pm to 3.00pm

This webinar provides landlords with a guide to the regulations involved in joint repairing responsibilities that come with the ownership of property with communal obligations. It relays the latest information about recent changes to the Repairing Standard.

Topics include:

- Rights and obligation of tenement flat owners
- Managing common repairs
- Working with property factors
- Managing payment for common repairs

Ending a tenancy, the legislation: understanding notice grounds and getting the paperwork right

11 June 2025, 2.00pm – 3.15pm

This is an essential webinar for all those involved in serving notices for both Private Residential Tenancies (PRT) and Short Assured Tenancies (SAT), to ensure that landlords have the knowledge needed to successfully complete and serve the correct notice.

Topics include:

- Understanding the grounds for repossession of a PRT and SAT
- Getting the timing right
- Completing and serving notices for both PRT and SAT

Data protection for lettings

6 May 2025 and 4 June 2025

2.00pm – 3.00pm / 2.30 pm – 4.00pm

When letting property you are effected by data protection laws and a solid understanding of these laws is vital.

This webinar deals with the legislation in place that makes dealing with GDPR part of letting private property.

Topics include:

- The requirement to register
- Managing data during a tenancy
- Retaining data following a tenancy
- Sharing data
- Privacy policies
- Breaches and consequences of non-compliance

Safety compliance and certification for private rented property

3 June 2025, 2.00pm – 3.00pm

This webinar brings landlords up to date with all the health and safety requirements when letting property, including ongoing compliance and all necessary certifications.

Topics include:

- Health and safety legislation
- Safety requirements and certification
- Maintenance and safety compliance

All courses and webinars run by LAS can be found listed on their website landlordaccreditationscotland.com and can be booked online.



Preparation for possession actions

17 June 2025, 10.00am – 11.00am

This webinar deals with the process involved if a tenant does not leave a property on the stated end date despite all the appropriate notices having been served correctly. It will guide you through the steps necessary to bring a possession action through the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber).

Topics include:

- Grounds for repossession under the Private Residential Tenancy
- What happens when your tenant refuses to leave after the notices have expired
- Preparation for making an application to the First-tier Tribunal
- The eviction order

Managing the end of a tenancy

19 June 2025

2.00pm – 3.00pm

This webinar deals with the communication and associated tasks when the tenancy is coming to an end, considering the reason for the tenancy ending.

Topics include:

- Landlord ending the tenancy including dealing with antisocial behaviour
- Tenant ending the tenancy
- Communication with tenant about end of tenancy requirements
- The checkout inspection and follow up

Creating the Private Residential Tenancy (PRT)

5 June 2025, 2.00pm – 3.00pm

Creating a PRT is an area of knowledge you can't neglect as a Scottish landlord. This webinar provides detailed information about the creation of a PRT using the Scottish Government model tenancy agreement and covers the documentation and associated processes that a landlord needs to be aware of when putting a PRT in place.

Topics include:

- Creating a PRT
- Mandatory and discretionary terms
- Joint tenancies
- Rent increases
- Using the Easy Read notes

Understanding landlord repairing and maintenance obligations

28 May 2025, 10.00am – 11.00am

This deals with landlord repairing obligations and how these need to be managed at all time. It looks at the general principles regarding repairs and maintenance.

Topics include:

- Tolerable and Repairing Standards – what are they and what are landlord obligations
- Responsibility for repairs and maintenance
- Tenant responsibilities
- Introduction to the role of the Housing & Property Chamber – First-tier Tribunal for Scotland

Contact Information

Landlord registration

01620 820623

landlordregistration@eastlothian.gov.uk

Short-term Lets Licencing

01620 827664

stl@eastlothian.gov.uk

HMO Licensing

01620 827664

hmo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Housing Benefit and Council Tax

01620 827730/7729 (Benefits)

01875 824314 (Council Tax)

www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Useful websites (click text to link to website)

Private Residential Tenancy

Tenancy Deposit Scheme

My Deposits Scotland

Letting Protection Service

Safe Deposits Scotland

Landlord Registration

Housing and Property Chamber,
First Tier Tribunal

Landlord Accreditation Scotland

The Repairing Standard

Scottish Association of Landlords

Health & Safety Executive

Electrical Safety Council

Gas Safe

Energy Saving Trust

East Lothian Council

To make a comment, suggestion or complaint about a council service,
visit our website at www.eastlothian.gov.uk



Versions of this leaflet can be supplied in Braille, large print, audiotape or in your own language. Please phone customer services if you require assistance on 01620 827 199