

Complaints procedure

Complaints procedure

We are committed to providing a professional service to all our clients and customers. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, please put it in writing, including as much detail as possible. We will then respond in line with the timeframes set out below. If you feel we have not sought to address your complaints within eight weeks, you may be able to refer your complaint to The Property Ombudsman to consider without our final viewpoint on the matter.

What will happen next?

- We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within seven working days of receiving it, by email.
- We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally be dealt with by the lettings manager, who will review your file and speak to the member of staff who dealt with you. A formal written outcome of our investigation will be sent to you within 15 working days of sending the acknowledgement letter.
- If, at this stage, you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for a separate review to take place by a senior member of staff.
- We will write to you within 15 working days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final viewpoint on the matter.

If you remain dissatisfied, you can then contact, via the below details, The Property Ombudsman to request an independent review.

The Property Ombudsman

Milford House, 43-55 Milford Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2BP

01722 333 306
www.tpos.co.uk

Please note the following:

You will need to submit your complaint to The Property Ombudsman within 12 months of receiving our final viewpoint letter, including any evidence to support your case.

The Property Ombudsman requires that all complaints are addressed through this in-house complaints procedure, before being submitted for an independent review.

Private accommodation fees to landlords

Private accommodation fees to landlords

Let-only

The FutureLets fee for this service, inclusive of VAT, is:

- £180 per single introduction **or**
 - 50% of net cost of one month's rent for joint introduction, or £300, whichever is the greater
- E.g. £900 rent collected: landlord will be charged £450 + £90 (VAT); total deductions is £540*

This service includes:

- Marketing property to students by means of internal/external media
- Arranging and conducting all viewings
- Preparing and signing all tenancy agreements (send copies to landlord)
- Processing the first month's rent payment and deposit, and transferring of funds

Rent collection

The FutureLets fee for this service, inclusive of VAT, is:

- 8% of net cost of rent collected
 - £180 per single introduction **or**
 - 50% of net cost of one month's rent for joint introduction, or £300, whichever is the greater
- E.g. £900 rent collected: landlord will be charged £450 + £90 (VAT); total deductions is £540*

This service includes:

- Marketing property to students by means of internal/external media
- Arranging and conducting all viewings
- Prepare and sign all tenancy agreements (send copies to landlord)
- Processing the first month's rent payment and deposit, and transferring of funds
- Administering the late payment processes
- Managing the collection of rents throughout the term of tenancy and the transferring of funds

Full management

The FutureLets fee for this service, inclusive of VAT, is:

- 10% of net cost of rent collected
 - £180 per single introduction **or**
 - 50% of net cost of one month's rent for joint introduction, or £300, whichever is the greater
- E.g. £900 rent collected: landlord will be charged £450 + £90 (VAT); total deductions is £540*

This service includes:

- Marketing property to students by means of internal/external media
- Arranging and conducting all viewings
- Preparing and signing all tenancy agreements (send copies to landlord)
- Checking in and checking out tenants
- Accommodation inspection at midpoint of tenancy
- Arranging and liaising with contractors for maintenance and repairs
- Administering the late payment processes
- Managing the collection of rents throughout the term of the tenancy and the transferring of funds
- Acting as first point of contact for tenants

Non-optional fees

Landlord registration fee (one-off fee): £90

Additional services

Inventory fee: £96

- Conduct detailed photographic inventory at property

Management of deposit process: £45

- Register landlord and tenant details and protect the security deposit with a Government authorised scheme
- Provide tenants with prescribed information within 30 days of the start of the tenancy
- Negotiate dilapidation and repairs with tenant and landlord

Arrangement for fee works: 10% of net cost

- Liaise with contractor, arrange access and request quotes from contractor where required
- Ensuring work has been carried out in accordance with specification of requirements
- Retaining any warranty or guarantee as a result of any works
- Obtaining more than two contractor quotes - £12.50 per quote

Tenant renewal fee: £96

- Contract negotiation, amending and updating terms and arranging further tenancy agreement

Annual Gas Safety Certificate: £74

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC): £70-£75

Preparing the property for letting

Preparing the property for letting

It is important that the tenants feel comfortable in their home and that they are receiving value for money. Our policy of offering a service of quality and care therefore extends to our tenant applicants too, and we are pleased to recommend properties to rent which conform to certain minimum standards. Quality properties attract quality tenants.

General condition

Electrical, gas, plumbing, waste, central heating and hot water systems must be safe, sound and in good working order. Repairs and maintenance are at the landlord's expense unless misuse can be established.

Appliances

Similarly, appliances such as washing machines, fridge freezers, cookers, dishwashers, etc. should be in a usable condition. Repairs and maintenance are at the landlord's expense unless misuse can be established.

Decorations

Interior decorations should be in good condition, preferably plain, light and neutral.

Furnishings

It is recommended that you leave only minimum furnishings, and these should be of reasonable quality. It is preferable that items to be left are in the property during viewings. If you are letting your property unfurnished, we recommend that the property contains carpet, curtains and a cooker.

Personal items, ornaments, etc.

Personal possessions, ornaments, pictures, books, etc. should be removed from the premises, especially those of real or sentimental value. Some items may be boxed, sealed and stored in the loft at the owner's risk. All cupboards and shelf space should be clear for the tenant's own use.

Gardens

Gardens should be left neat, tidy and rubbish free, with any lawns cut. Tenants are required to maintain the gardens to a reasonable standard, provided they are left the necessary tools.

Cleaning

At the commencement of a tenancy, the property must be in a thoroughly clean condition and at the end of each tenancy, it is the tenant's responsibility to leave the property in a similar condition. Where they fail to do so, we can arrange cleaning at their expense.

Mail forwarding

We recommend that you make use of the Royal Mail redirection service. Application forms are available at their counters and the cost is minimal. It is not the tenant's responsibility to forward mail.

Information for the tenant

It is helpful if you leave information for the tenant on operating the central heating and hot water system, washing machine and alarm system, and the day on which refuse is collected.

Keys

You should provide one set of keys for each tenant and, if we are managing the property, a full set of keys for ourselves.

FutureLets private accommodation property criteria

FutureLets private accommodation property criteria

Health and safety

- Thumb-turn locks on entrance and exit doors
- Interlinked hardwired smoke alarms
- Heat sensor in kitchen
- Fire extinguisher
- Carbon monoxide alarm
- Current Gas Safety Certificate
- Electrical certificate
- Energy Performance Certificate

Bedroom furnishings

- Clean bed and mattress
- Study desk and chair
- Wardrobe and chest of drawers
- Curtains or blinds

Communal areas

- Adequate seating arrangements appropriate to number of tenants

Kitchens

- Oven with hob
- Large fridge freezer is usually adequate for five tenants
- Washing machine
- Ample food storage cupboards
- Sink and work surfaces

Bathroom

- Fully-equipped with bath/shower curtain or screen
- WC
- Sink

Please note:

The property must be thoroughly cleaned prior to the tenancy commencing.

All accommodation should have natural light and ventilation, central heating, doubleglazing, working appliances, and be of a good decorative order. Gardens must be neat and tidy, and cleared of any rubbish.

Home troubleshooting guide

Home troubleshooting guide

Please see this guide to troubleshoot common maintenance issues that can occur in your house.

Before contacting FutureLets with your repair request, please have a look at the tips below to avoid an unnecessary call out. If a contractor attends to a problem at your home and it is found that it was due to tenant neglect, you will be charged for the call out and subsequent repair. These tips will not resolve all issues but are worth trying before you contact your agency.

Lock outs

We understand people can mislay keys or close doors behind themselves with keys still in the room. If this occurs out of hours, the first thing to check is that there is somewhere in the house that you can stay for the evening (for example, a sofa in the living room). If you are locked out of the house, your first call should be to a housemate who can let you into the house. If it is essential to get into the bedroom, you may have to call a locksmith. However, during office hours, if FutureLets have an office set, we can open your door, but there will be a £25 call out charge. Alternatively, you can collect a key from the office and leave a £25 deposit. You will need to return the key the same day. Please refer to your tenancy agreement for replacement key charges.

Boiler faults

The most common fault with a boiler is the pressure dropping to 0. When looking at your boiler, you will see an analogue clock which will have a reading between 0-5 (in most cases). The gauge should be around the 1.5 mark to give the optimum pressure for a boiler. If it is any lower than 1, then the pressure needs to be increased. We would not expect a tenant to increase the pressure themselves, but this information will help to determine whether we can reset your boiler or whether we need a gas engineer to attend. Engineers will usually attend during office hours, or within 24 hours if there is no hot water or heating.

Smoke alarm

When smoke alarms start beeping, it usually means the batteries need changing. A constant alarm will indicate smoke and possibly a fire. Check for smoke first and if there are signs of smoke or a fire, then call the emergency services immediately. If it is simply the battery, please change it. If you are unable to do this, please advise FutureLets.

Kitchen/bathroom sinks are blocked

- This is usually caused by food waste being put down the sink and collecting, causing a blockage.
- Clean any food stuffs from the sink and pour a kettle of water down the sink.
- Try using sink/drain unblocker to try and free the blockage.
- You may need to clean the U-bend. Ensure the taps are turned off, put a bucket under the pipe, unscrew the pipe under the sink (where possible) remove the blockage and re-screw the pipe back together. Pour a kettle of water down the drain.

No power

- Have you contacted your electricity supplier? There may be a fault in the street.
- Check with your neighbour if they have any power.
- Check your fuse box. A faulty appliance such as straighteners, toaster, etc. may have overloaded the supply and the safety switch has been activated and needs re-setting. You will notice if this has happened as there will be one switch down and all the others up.
- Check that one of your appliances is not faulty by unplugging all your appliances in the house then re-set the switch to the up position and plug the appliances back in one at a time. The electricity will cut out when the faulty appliance is plugged back in. This tip also can be used if your power is tripping lights or power points in your house.

No hot water

- If you have pre-payment meters, check there is credit on them.
- Is it gas or electric?
- If it is a gas hot water system, is the gas turned on to flow through the gas hot water system?
- Have you checked to see if your pilot light has gone out? Some gas hot water systems can be easily relit, whereas others may require a tradesperson.
- If it is electricity, then please ensure that the hot water cylinder is switched on at the power point and that the plug is plugged in properly.
- Check the fuse box and ensure the hot water fuse is switched on.

Home troubleshooting guide

No lights and power points

- Check your fuse box. If there has been an overload, the safety switch may need re-setting.
- Does a light bulb need replacing?

Light bulbs

Tenants are responsible for replacing their own light bulbs. We will always try to ensure that all bulbs are working at the start of your tenancy. Please just take care when you are replacing any bulbs. If the bulb is out of reach, please contact us by email and we will advise.

Bath/shower leaks and water leaks

Please advise FutureLets of any watermarks or drips that suddenly appear on ceilings or walls. Water bubbling out of the ground could be a serious problem, so please phone our office immediately. The most common problem in properties is leaking from wet areas e.g. bathrooms, laundries, kitchens into adjoining rooms. A regular check for water leaks is advisable.

Faulty switches or fans

Do not attempt to fix these yourself. Do not use switches which you suspect might be faulty. Contact our office as soon as possible.

Blocked shower, sink or drain outlets

- Showers - a common problem with blocked showers, in most cases, is the build-up of hair and soap residue. The shower trap outlet can be unscrewed or lifted and hair and soap residue can be removed; the trap cleaned and replaced.
- If needed, pour drain/sink unblocker into the shower/drain as directed.

Condensation/mould

Condensation will build up during colder months and can be further affected by lack of ventilation within the property. Drying clothes in the house and not having the heating on regularly is the biggest culprit. If condensation starts to appear, wash it down with diluted bleach water. Check the below to avoid condensation.

- Do not dry clothes on radiators
- Use the heating regularly
- Always use extractor fans when cooking
- Keep furniture off the walls

The air in a property can only hold a certain amount of water vapour - the warmer it is, the more it can hold. If this is cooled by contact with a cold surface, such as mirror, a window or even a wall, the water vapour will turn into droplets of water, which creates condensation. Mould will only appear if it isn't prevented in the first place. Condensation is often mistaken as mould/damp.

Reporting maintenance issues

If you are unable to resolve any issues in the property by using the tips above, please email enquiries@futurelets.co.uk. If the request is urgent, please call the office on **024 7615 8158** in the first instance and follow up with an email.