

November 2016

Rhondda Cynon Taf Landlord Forum Newsletter

Dear Landlord

It gives us great pleasure to present to you the RCT Landlord Forum newsletter. We hope to provide you with updates on local knowledge, services and initiatives to keep you informed of what is happening in the private rented sector in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Landlord Forum

Following a long absence the RCT Landlord Forum held its first meeting on the 16th of September 2016 at Llantrisant Leisure Centre. The event proved to be extremely popular and in excess of 160 landlords were able to attend and show their support for their forum. The agenda provided presentations on Rent Smart Wales, The Treforest Property Accreditation Scheme, RCTCBC Private Rented Sector services and the Step by Step Project. An election was also held for the position of chairman and we are delighted to announce that Vince Botham has accepted the position.



Meet your new Landlord Forum Chairman

Hello to all Rhondda Cynon Taf Landlords.

I was recently elected as your Chair for the landlord forums and I thought it appropriate that I introduce myself with some background.

My name is Vince Botham and I have been a landlord in Wales for the past 18 years. Like many others I was a guy who a long time ago looked at my pension plan and found that taking into account the current rates of returns I would not have a very good retirement on the amount that was forecast. At the time I was the Managing Director of 2 large US owned Aluminium Companies based in Llantrisant and Swansea. In line with many other companies in the metal industry the US parent company decided to move the manufacturing base to the Eastern bloc and I with 1500 other Welsh employees found myself unemployed. I moved with the company to Geneva for a year then Russia for 2 years until eventually I decided there was more to life than travelling the globe and set myself up with a property portfolio in Wales, England and Spain that included residential properties, HMO's and city apartments.

With my naive experience in the property rental market I faced a shock when I realised I had become, in the view of the government and maybe Local authorities' just another BTL landlord looking to make a large sum of money in the Private Rented sector. It was not enough to operate a business that I thought would benefit people wanting to rent property when they were not able to buy. I was looked upon by authorities and much of the population as an evil landlord looking to exploit a vulnerable class of society.

Clearly there was a need for some regulation in the buy to let market but I was not prepared for the new regulations that Westminster and later on Welsh Government introduced. Clearly those days have changed to a large extent where now the Private Rented Sector has become larger than the social rented sector and we can no longer be ignored. Bewildered by continuous regulation I was determined to have my say and input into proposed laws against Landlords that were in the process of being passed. Eight years ago I joined the National Landlord Association (NLA) just to keep up with landlord issues and to join what is now some 75,000 members nationwide. Today I am the representative of the NLA in Wales and am able to call on the NLA for information on any landlord issue. I believe this will help in the information that we are able to provide at the RCT Forum. I look forward to working with you in this Forum.

"I have been personally impressed with the Community Housing Services staff who are keen to have a vibrant Landlord Forum in Rhondda Cynon Taf"

Objective of RCT Landlord Forum

Today Landlords face many regulatory laws that attempt to eliminate the 'rogue' landlords of the past years. It has become almost impossible for Landlords to keep up to date with the regulations that are already in operation and the many that are in process. Local Authorities and Trade Associations have understood this and now strive to work with Landlords to ensure they are kept up to date with local issues and work within the Law.

Together we have one objective and that is to raise the standards and understanding of Landlords of what is necessary to operate in the Private Rented Sector.

The Community Housing Services of Rhondda Cynon Taf realise that the PRS is now so big that it is in the interests of the Local Authority to work in partnership with local landlords. I have been personally impressed with the Community Housing Services staff who are keen to have a vibrant Landlord Forum in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Together I believe that the Landlord Forum can evolve into a meeting that is in the interests of the Council and Landlords. I look forward to meeting with you all in the New Year.

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ACHREDU
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PROPERTY
ACCREDITATION
SCHEME

The Property Accreditation Scheme (PAS) has been introduced with the objective of raising the quality, amenity and management of the Private Rented Housing Stock in the Treforest area of Rhondda Cynon Taf. The scheme will also serve to raise the profile of good landlords and recognise the high standard of management they provide.

The PAS voluntary and is open to landlords and letting agents without charge. Properties will be assessed in accordance with agreed standards and the information will be made available to prospective tenants seeking rented accommodation in the Treforest area.

Standards

Properties will be assessed as providing agreed standards of quality and housing management practice according and dependent on the quality and amenity they provide. There will be 4 levels of accreditation to reflect the quality of the property and its compliance with legislative requirements, together with the application of housing management and administrative processes. Landlords will be supported in the assessment process and provided with access to relevant information such as the Housing Health & Safety 2004 and good practice in the Private Rented Sector in Wales.

Benefits

The PAS is supported by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, the University of South Wales and representative bodies of the Private Rented Sector, South Wales Police and Fire Services. The main benefit to landlords will be the recognition of the quality of their property and the housing management they provide and attracting tenants in a highly competitive rental market.



The Property Accreditation Scheme is open to landlords and letting agents who are able to engage voluntarily and without charge.

2 to 5 star accreditation

- Raise your profile
- Recognition of the quality of property and the housing management
- Attract tenants

MAE'R EIDDO YMA WEDI CYFLAWNI:
THIS PROPERTY HAS ACHIEVED:



Endorsed by:

NLA (National Landlord Association)
RLA (Residential Landlord Association)
University of South Wales
South Wales Police
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/propertyaccreditation
Tel: 01443 425638



Visit our web page at

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/propertyaccreditation

FOR WALES. NOT FOR PROFIT.

In January 2015, new laws were introduced which means all landlords of properties supplied by Welsh Water must let them know details of tenants who are resident at their properties.

If this is not done within 21 days of any change in tenancies, landlords can themselves become liable for the charges for water and sewerage charges from the point of the change.

As a result Landlords must supply the full name of any tenant over 18, together with their date of birth (when possible), the full address and the tenancy start date to Welsh Water within 21 days of any change.

Landlords must also tell their tenants they are legally bound to give Welsh Water this information. If there has been no change since January 2015, the landlord must be confident that Welsh Water already has the correct details – so it's recommended that landlords pass the details to them, just in case.

Information can be supplied via the Dŵr Cymru website or by email, letter, telephone, or the preferred option of the Landlord TAP website (www.landlordtap.com).

Welsh Water is very keen to work with landlords to increase awareness of these regulations and their obligations, so as to make it as easy as possible to keep them up-to-date when tenants change. The approach is very much to work with landlords so they shouldn't find themselves being billed directly.

The aim for Welsh Water is to engage with tenants as soon as they become customers and to provide timely and accurate bills. This will help ensure any customer who meets the criteria for any affordability schemes or tariffs that support customers who genuinely struggle to pay their bills, is aware of these options and given the chance to apply at the earliest opportunity.

Rent Smart Wales

Rhaid i bobl sy'n gosod eiddo eu cofrestru a chael trwydded i'w rheoli, neu ddefnyddio asiant trwyddedig erbyn **23 Tachwedd 2016**. I gael gwybod mwy am y gyfraith newydd, ewch i www.rhentudoeth.llyw.cymru

People who rent out properties now have to register themselves and obtain a licence or use a licensed agent by **23 November 2016**. To find out more about the new law, visit www.rentsmart.gov.wales



Wedi cofrestru neu'ch trwyddedu eto?
Are you registered or licensed yet?



COMPETITION

Does your property suffer with the effects of condensation?
Be in with the chance of winning a free PIV unit to wipe out mould and condensation for good!

Nuaire are offering members of the RCT Landlords forum the opportunity to win their reliable and award winning Drimaster-Eco, worth £500! The unit offers very low maintenance solutions to combating condensation in domestic properties. Visit [Nuaire's website](#) to find out more.

The winning landlord will be provided with the Drimaster-Eco, fitted free of charge by Hitchings Electrical (Cowbridge) Ltd who are specialists in the installation of domestic ventilation systems to both the private and social rented sectors. Visit [Hitchings Electricals website](#) for further information.



How to enter the competition!

In no more than 100 words, please state how you think Nuaire's Positive Input Ventilation unit would benefit you and your tenant and why you would like to have a unit installed in one of your properties.

Send entries to stephanie.davies@nuaire.co.uk by 20th of December 2016.

Nuaire. For the complete ventilation solution.

Important Dates for your Diary!

Rent Smart Wales – Registration	23rd November 2016
Landlord Forum	14th March 2017
Treforest Property Accreditation Scheme	16th November 2016 'Official Launch'

To keep up to date with all the information you need then please visit our web pages at: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/propertyaccreditation and www.rctcbc.gov.uk/landlordforum

You can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)



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