



# The Questions All Tenants Ask - Answer Them!

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# THE QUESTIONS ALL TENANTS ASK - ANSWER THEM!

While landlords need to assess and vet tenants, tenants are also likely to vet landlords to ensure they feel confident and comfortable about living in your property. Given the competitive nature of the rental market, it is vital landlords create the best impression when engaging with prospective tenants.

As a landlord, you should be prepared to hear lots of questions from tenants. If you are meeting with a range of prospective tenants, you will likely hear the same questions time and time again. Knowing these questions, and having prepared answers will ensure you make the best possible impression on your prospective tenants.

At Stones Residential, we are pleased to say we have helped many landlords and tenants, and we know the questions all tenants ask. If you want to answer them confidently, follow the tips in this guide.

# HOW MUCH ARE THE BILLS AND DO I NEED TO PAY THEM?

These two questions are vital, and they indicate the importance of vetting a tenant's affordability and in clear communication.

The monthly rental fee should be detailed for tenants, as this is their most crucial bill each month. However, it is far from their only bill. Landlords should be able to offer guidance on the average cost in utility bills for each month, and they should discuss other bills tenants need to consider.

Landlords are required to provide an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) to new tenants, and this document is useful in predicting energy bills. A landlord should go through this document with the tenant, highlighting prospective costs.

On the issue of whether the tenant pays the bills, this means whether they pay them directly or via yourself. Some landlords will include utility bills or broadband bills in their monthly rental fee; some do not.

You must make clear what is included in the monthly rental fee, and what tenants need to take responsibility for. Outlining this before a rental agreement is signed, and making sure the tenant is aware of their responsibilities, is essential in creating a positive relationship between landlord and tenant.



# HOW MUCH IS THE COUNCIL TAX?

Another critical bill for tenants to pay is the council tax. Savvy and proactive tenants will have already determined what their council tax bill for the property will be, but many will not. As a landlord, you should be proactive in looking up the council tax for your property, and share this information with the tenant.

You can find out about the cost of council tax by visiting the Government website at this address: [www.gov.uk/council-tax](http://www.gov.uk/council-tax).

Bear in mind that some people are eligible for a reduction in the council tax they pay. Anyone who lives and rents by their own is entitled to a discount. Council tax deductions are also available for people on a low income or no income at all and have savings below £16,000.



# WHAT LOCAL AMENITIES ARE CLOSE TO THE PROPERTY?

This is an essential question for tenants, and again, some savvy tenants will have undertaken their research. However, this is an opportunity for landlords to showcase the features and amenities on offer in the local area.

Make sure you inform tenants about transport links, shops, parks, gyms, schools and anything else which might be of interest.

There is a lot to be said for landlords staying in touch with what is happening in the local area, and what community groups are in place.

If you can help a tenant to settle into the local area, they will be happier, and this means they are more likely to remain in the rental property for longer.



# WHAT ARE THE NEIGHBOURS LIKE?

It is natural for people to enquire about their neighbours and the people in the local area. If you don't know much about the neighbours or there has never been an issue, this is vital information to offer.

As a landlord, you should try to find out about the neighbours, because they impact on how happy tenants are in your rental property.

A small gift or pleasant introduction from the landlord to the neighbours can make things run more smoothly, helping the landlord and tenant in the longer-term.



# HOW LONG IS THE RENTAL TERM?

While many tenancies have a 12-month lease agreement, this isn't always the case. Therefore, tenants are likely to enquire as to the length of the contract, and landlords should be prepared to answer this quickly.

You should also arrange an official start date, as this helps the tenant to plan when they move in.



# WHEN IS THE RENT DUE AND WHEN SHOULD IT BE PAID?

This seems like an obvious question, but with so much to consider, it might be something that tenants and landlords overlook. It is vital all parties know the date rent is due, how much money needs to be paid, and how the rent should be paid.

If there is any doubt or ambiguity in this matter, there might be problems.

As a landlord, you need to clarify this information, provide it in writing and enquire as to whether the tenant has any concerns or issues with the agreed details.





# HOW MUCH IS THE DEPOSIT AND IS THERE A HOLDING DEPOSIT?

Deposits have been a hot topic for landlords in recent years. Landlords are required to place the tenant's deposit into one of the Government registrations schemes, and then inform the tenant of the scheme that is in use.

With the Tenant Fees Act, there is a cap on the deposit required, standing at five weeks of rent for properties where the annual rent is up to £50,000 and a cap of six weeks of rent when the yearly rent is more than £50,000.

There is also a cap on the holding deposit. This cap stands at a maximum of one weeks' rent. Landlords must ensure the deposit they request doesn't breach the cap.



# **CONTACT US**

**We offer a comprehensive range of property services tailored to vendors in Stanmore. If you would like to arrange an appointment to help you negotiate the local housing market, please contact Stones Residential today by calling us on 020 8954 0045 or emailing [stanmore@stonesresidential.co.uk](mailto:stanmore@stonesresidential.co.uk).**

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