

Mid Cornwall Letting & Property Management



Registered Office: 4 Par Green, Par, Cornwall, PL24 2AF
Tel 01726 815581 Fax: 01726 816686
e-Mail: enquiries@mclets.co.uk www.mclets.co.uk
Registered in England: No. 5743644. VAT Number: 883480591

Mid Cornwall Letting

Our business

We are an established property management and letting agency with many years of experience. To ensure our continuing success we offer a personal and professional service with a friendly but confident approach. We believe that for a company to flourish it needs to be dynamic and innovative. We are constantly striving to improve the service we offer to our clients by implementing new ideas.

We have recently updated all our systems with the most up to date Computer Aided Residential Letting software (CARL). This gives us strict professional guidance including serving notices and agreements, along with monitoring rent payments and inspections. Our Tenancy Agreement is generated from this software which was drafted by leading trained professionals in the letting and property management field

Our team



Peter Gough
Property Manager

Peter is the Managing Director of Mid Cornwall Letting, and has been running the business since 1997. He holds an accredited NAEA technical award in Residential Letting and Property Management.



Viv Penhaligon
Office Manager

Viv is the Office Manager. She has been working for the company since 2004. Viv is currently responsible for the accounts and office management. Incorporated in her role is the handling of rent payments.



Annette Smith
Senior Lettings Negotiator

Annette is our Senior Lettings Negotiator. She has been trained by the Association of Residential Letting Agents and has attained the ARLA Foundation Competency Test.



Tom Hewitt
Lettings Negotiator / Inventory Clerk

Tom is our Lettings Negotiator and Inventory Clerk. He carries out most of the tenant viewings and property visits.



Nick Cole
Lettings Administrator / Property Maintenance

Nick is our specialist in property maintenance and repair issues, Nick is the latest member of our team, he also deals with tenants viewing appointments

What makes us different?

Local business with in-depth knowledge of the Cornish rental market and clientele

All our staff live in the Restormel area, and are therefore in touch with the local issues regarding the property market. Our current success can be contributed to our team ethos. We have pride in working for a local independent company and every client is important and valued by us.

Clear, transparent pricing

Many of our competitors begin their charges with a basic commission figure, and then add on additional fees for advertising, administration, check in / check out fees and re-let fees when a new tenant is to be found. Our prices are clearly displayed with no hidden extras. (We do charge an extra fee for inventorying see the Tenant Deposits paragraph in the Full Management Section).

Benefits of two service levels

Let Only Service – doing the groundwork to get a tenant into your property, you are then able to manage the contract ongoing.

Full Management Service – managing the property and contract with the tenant, including rent collection, property inspection and instruction of maintenance contractors.

We also offer landlords using our full management service on a long term basis, rent and legal expenses warranty provided by LetsXL with the following special terms:

(Subject to Mid Cornwall Letting Terms and Conditions)

- 6 months cover on tenancy agreement
- Pays legal expenses for possession following default up to £15,000
- Extra 1 month cover if dispute is not resolved by end of tenancy
- Pays from first month of default
- Option to renew

Our services

We offer two levels of service to our clients:

- Our 'Let Only' Service

This includes:

➤ Marketing

We will circulate the details of your property to suitable applicants registered with us, to a number of companies and relocation agents, and advertise on our website and with local papers. We have also found that using a 'To Let' board at the property can be very effective.

➤ **Viewings**

We accompany prospective tenants to view the property.

➤ **Tenant Vetting**

We interview and if applicable obtain a comprehensive referencing report, this includes credit checks, income verification, and landlords referencing if applicable.

➤ **Tenancy Agreement, Deposit and Inventory**

We are now unable to collect a deposit off a tenant and forward it to a landlord for holding due to new legislation regarding tenancy deposits, the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS). Whoever receives the deposit from the tenant has the legal responsibility to ensure the money enters into a TDS. Therefore on receiving the deposit from the tenant on your behalf we must pay the money into the scheme. You have the opportunity to choose if you require a Professionally Drafted Inventory to be created by us or not. The new legislation makes it imperative that the periodic visits, the check out with the tenant and the deposit paperwork is dealt with in a professional manner. Please be aware of the pitfalls in not having a Professionally Drafted Inventory in regards to your deposit, as discussed in the paragraph headed Tenants Deposits in the Full Management Section.

We will arrange an appropriate tenancy agreement for the type of tenant and length of tenancy required.

➤ **Utilities**

We contact the relevant companies with the change of occupancy details and meter readings. [This does not include telephone services.]

➤ **Rent Transfer**

We will collect the first month rent and transfer the balance to you, less our fees and expenses.

- The Full Management Service

This includes all of the features above (except the rent transfer), and you will have the additional benefits of the following:

- **Rent Collection**

We collect rent on your behalf, forwarding the account balance to your nominated bank account, less our fees and expenses. A statement is sent to you on each payment.

- **Inspections**

We visit all properties at three months, and agree appropriate intervals for re-visits depending on the outcome of the initial assessment. We provide you with a report on the condition of the property.

- **Repairs**

We co-ordinate any minor repairs or maintenance on the property and settle invoices for this work from your rent monies.

[If you wish to use contractors you have had previous dealings with, or to undertake the repairs yourself, this can be arranged if you notify us before the tenancy begins. We will then take your advice before instructing tradesmen, unless in an emergency.]

- **Rent Guarantee and Legal protection**

As a special offer, we provide FREE rent guarantee and legal protection for the initial 6 month period, subject to terms and conditions.

- **Tenants Deposits**

The Tenancy Deposit Scheme, which constitutes Part 6, Chapter 4 of the Housing Act 2004 is a complete shake up of the way that deposits are held and dealt with by all landlords and letting agents. All deposits that are taken in respect of Assured Shorthold Tenancies after 6th April 2007 must comply with the new regulations.

Deposits received for tenancies will be paid into a custodial scheme named The Deposit Protection Service (DPS) within 14 days of receiving the money. The scheme will hold the deposit money for the duration of the tenancy.

When a tenancy ends we visit the property and review the property's condition. If any work needs to be carried out on the property, quotes will be sought and given to the tenant for agreement. Forms will then need to

be completed and signed by both the tenant and ourselves, (on your behalf), for the agreed proportion of the deposit to be distributed. The monies will be returned by the scheme provider within 10 days.

However, if there is a disagreement between the landlord and tenant about the work needing doing on the property, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Scheme (ADR) will take effect and make the final decision. Evidence will need to be provided to the ADR to enable them to make an informed decision. If poor evidence is provided, the decision will always be in the favour of the tenants. We offer a service for making a Professionally Drafted Inventory which covers the condition of the property in great detail at the 'check in' (at the beginning of the tenancy), and documents the difference on the 'check out' (at the end of the tenancy). This will provide a level of evidence like a forensic report that hopefully shows the scheme administrator how and why a proportion of the deposit money is needed by the landlord to restore the property back to an acceptable condition.

As the landlord, you do have the choice to let your property without us carrying out a Professionally Drafted Inventory, if you prefer to make other arrangements for an inventory to be carried out. In this instance we will need you to sign within our Terms of Business Contract that you do not require this service, and you will have no extra charges in addition to your management fees.

Our prices

The pricing for a Professionally Drafted Inventory on an unfurnished property, (including check-out and dealing with DPS under the full management service), is 22% of the first months rent plus VAT. For furnished properties the cost will be assessed on an individual basis.

Tenant Finding Service (not payable if you instruct us to fully manage)	70% of first month's rent + VAT [minimum charge of £350 + VAT]
Full Management Service	10% of the monthly rent + VAT [minimum charge of £50/month + VAT]

There are other costs you may incur as a landlord, which we have outlined in the Frequently Asked Questions at the end of this brochure.

If you reside outside of the UK:

If you live overseas for more than six months in any tax year, you will be regarded as a Non-Resident Landlord. Current legislation requires us to deduct and pay tax at the basic rate from your rent, unless we are in receipt of an exemption certificate supplied by the Inland Revenue. We are able to provide you with this form, and thankfully it is very basic. In nearly all cases we receive authority to pay you as normal usually within a few weeks.

If in the very rare circumstance you are not eligible for exemption we charge an additional fee of 2% of the monthly rent for the costs we will incur in meeting the Inland Revenue's requirements. If your circumstances change and you become exempt, once the Revenue notifies us, this fee will be cancelled and the tax will no longer be deducted.

Please contact us if you need further advice on this subject.

Our guarantees

We currently hold professional indemnity insurance, and are agents of LETsure and LetsXL. We are also members of the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA), and participate in their Client Money Protection Scheme.

5 steps to successfully letting your property

Step 1: The Rent Appraisal

We arrange to meet you at the property you wish to rent, to decide on a suitable rental value. We will also ensure the property meets legislative requirements and is ready for letting. We can discuss any initial questions you may have.

If we are unable to meet face to face, we can still provide a rent appraisal on the property if you send the keys to us.

Step 2: Finding the Right Tenant

We market the property in a comprehensive range of media to ensure we attract the best tenant for your property. Once a prospective tenant has been found, we

apply strict criteria to ensure that they are suitable. We reference tenants via LetsXL Ltd, who are a specialist referencing agency and who arrange our Rent and Legal Protection.

The referencing includes:

- A current employer's reference stating their annual income, length of service and any reasons why the referee feels they would not make a conscientious tenant.
- A current or previous landlord's reference stating whether they have been financially sound throughout the tenancy, and have treated the internal decoration and furnishings well.
- The full reference will also include checks on credit history, county court judgments, bankruptcy, and includes an assessment in regards to income to rent ratio.

Step 3: Preparing and Signing Contracts

Providing all references are satisfactory, and all parties, (tenant, landlord and agent) are agreed, we will prepare the Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement and all other documents in accordance with the Housing Act 1988.

We agree on a date for the start of the tenancy which, as a general guideline, usually becomes the date for the tenant's monthly rental payment. The balance of this is forwarded to your account about six days after the set rent date.

Finally we inform the relevant utility companies of meter readings, and of the change of details, which will include gas, water, electricity, and the local council for taxation purposes. The setting up of telephone services is the sole responsibility of the tenant.

Step 4: Preparing the Property

If there are any repairs or additions that need to be made before the tenancy begins, this is the time to act! The condition of the property is essential to how successful the tenancy will be. If the property is in a good condition to begin with, the tenant will be more likely to look after the property to that same standard.

Step 5: After the Tenant Moves In

As long as the tenancy is going according to plan, the next point at which we will contact you will be after the three-month property visit. This is an important indicator to decide whether the tenancy should be extended after the initial six-month period.

What next?

If you wish to use one of our services, please telephone our office to verbally instruct us and then fill in the appropriate agreement form and questionnaire that accompany this booklet. Our address can be found on the front cover.

We hope this information has been helpful to you in understanding our services and practices. If you have any additional questions, do not hesitate to contact our team on 01726 815581.

Frequently Asked Questions

If the tenant stops paying rent or will not leave the property, what happens?

While we endeavor to ensure that the tenants are financially secure, unfortunately on the very rare occasion a tenant falls into arrears with their rent payment. We monitor the payment of rent vigilantly so that if there is a problem it can be addressed quickly. A letter or a telephone call will often resolve the issue, but if there is no likely outcome of payment being made, then contacting a solicitor is the next step. Please note that should it be necessary to take legal action, the cost of doing so is borne by the landlord. This using of a solicitor can be a costly affair so we currently recommend 'Rent Guarantee and Legal Protection Insurance' by LetsXL.

How long does it take to find a tenant?

Finding a tenant can vary in time due to a variety of factors, including what time of year the property is being advertised, the area the property is in, and the level of rent. We aim to find you an appropriate tenant in the shortest possible time we can, usually between one and three weeks. On the odd occasion, we have found tenants on the same day as our market appraisal of the property! If you are currently living in the property you wish to rent, it is a good idea for us to start the marketing of your property 4-6 weeks before you move out. This will help us to maximise your income.

What other expenses will I have to incur in letting my property?

There are a few other expenses apart from our managing agent's fees that you will have to incur in letting your property. These are:

- Landlords Insurance. We have enclosed a leaflet on LetsXL Buildings Insurance. This is more relevant than straight forward buildings insurance for the unexpected problems that can happen to rented properties.

- Mortgage payments, if you have any.
- The Gas Safety Certificate is needed on all rented properties with gas appliances. This needs to be updated every year by current legislation. We can arrange this on your behalf to be carried out by a contractor we regularly use.
- Repairs to the property and contents unless caused by the tenants.
- You will be liable to pay tax to the Inland Revenue on any profit generated from letting your property. This amount will depend upon your circumstances.
- When the property is empty, on some occasions, (especially when the property is let furnished), utilities and services may be payable.

Do I have to provide furniture and furnishings?

No. In most cases there is no difference in the rental value that can be attained between furnished and unfurnished lets. Unfurnished is more sought after and therefore is advisable by us, but if you want to let your property furnished, we will have to ensure that the furniture complies with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (As Amended). If they do not comply with these laws, they must be removed before the tenancy begins. We do not advise giving or selling these items to the tenants.

Are smoke alarms required?

Although there are no laws that states that rented properties have to be installed with smoke detectors, we strongly recommend that there is at least one per property.

What am I responsible for repairing?

As a landlord you have a legal obligation to address any problem concerning the structure of the building and the sanitation and supply of services. In addition, if an item you have supplied in the property requires replacing or repairing through fair wear and tear, then you would be expected to deal with this.

Who looks after the garden?

The responsibility of the upkeep of the garden is usually down to the tenant. Unfortunately this can sometimes be a problem area when letting a property. If you have a particularly large garden, or any precious plants then you may want to consider arranging a gardener to maintain it. In some circumstances the cost of this can be incorporated into the rental value. We also advise that you provide a basic amount of materials for maintaining your garden.

Regulations

There are a few regulations that all rented properties must comply with. These are:

- 1) The low voltage Electrical Equipment Safety Regulation 1989;
- 2) The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulation 1994;
- 3) The Fire and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulation 1988 & 1993 Amendment.

IT IS NOW A LEGAL REQUIREMENT THAT LANDLORDS AND LETTING AGENTS SATISFY ALL THESE REGULATIONS AND PROVIDE ANNUAL SAFETY CERTIFICATES FOR INSPECTION BY THE REGULATORS AND THE TENANT. FAILURE TO COMPLY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE AND COULD LEAD TO IMPRISONMENT AND / OR A FINE OF UP TO £5,000.

Energy Performance Certificates

As a result of new government legislation, from 1st October 2008, landlords of residential rental properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) to show prospective tenants. Legislation also dictates that the EPC must be obtained before the marketing of a rented property.

There is no requirement for landlords to obtain EPCs for any existing tenancies.

Once obtained, a certificate remains valid for up to 10 years. If a valid EPC still exists when changing tenants no new certificate is required. After instructing us to let your property you will receive a call from our EPC contractor to attain a certificate for your property. If you already have an EPC, for example as part of a Home Information Pack (HIPS), please provide us with a copy.