



**Ethical Lettings
Charter...**

**From the houses we have...
...to the homes we need.**

Let's Take a Step Forward.

We - the Private Rental Sector –are now the 2nd most common form of housing tenure and an increasingly complex and diverse community. We represent a young but increasingly vital service industry going through growing pains, and will certainly need to change as we develop. But how?

The Ethical Lettings Charter is a statement of intent, a declaration of decency and one part of the answer.

More than 10,000 renters have signed their support for the Charter, and it was initially created in consultation with more than 200. Not only that; several landlords, letting agents, charities and local authority representatives also helped shape the Charter – a truly collective creation which is now supported by Bristol City Council.

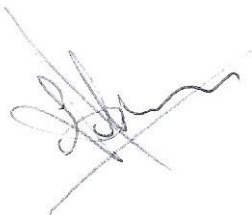
The Charter lays out Bronze, Silver and Gold commitments (for landlord and letting agents respectively) on key issues of concern including “Quality”, “Security of Tenure” and “Access & Affordability”.

While ensuring real choice is a key challenge for the PRS, the more than 10,000 renters who are supporting the Charter represent an increasingly organised customer community – and they’re searching for property professionals who meet their needs.

By signing up to the Charter, landlords and agents will not only be able to secure a clear market advantage by serving that community, but will be actively joining forces with that community to collectively shift the market in favour of quality, affordable, stable housing. Progress!

If this could be you – let’s start the conversation! Reach out now at www.ethical-lettings.org.uk.

Please read on for the full set of commitments (supporting notes, information and terms & conditions will shortly be available on our website). I look forward to speaking to you!



Stuart Melvin,
National Organiser
ACORN

The Ethical Landlord Charter

BRONZE COMMITMENTS

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

- I will comply with all statutory requirements related to the letting of properties in the private rental sector as set nationally and by the Local Authority, including but not limited to any property licensing scheme in effect.

SECURITY OF TENURE

- I will supply a written tenancy agreement in all cases.
- I will use recurring Assured Shortland Tenancies of not less than 6 months as default in place of periodic tenancies.
- I will apply the sections of the Deregulation Act 2015 relating to retaliatory evictions retroactively i.e. to all tenancies and not only those beginning on or after October 2015.

ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

- I will not ask for a deposit of more than 6 weeks or 1.5 months rent (whichever the greater). I will not undertake any rental increases within the fixed-term of any tenancy.
- I will undertake an inventory at the commencement of each tenancy and supply the tenant with a copy of this without charge.

QUALITY

- I will ensure that all repairs are completed or scheduled promptly and without delay (see notes for specific required timescales).
- I will ensure a minimum EPC rating of E in all my properties.
- In addition to statutory requirements, I will meet the recommendations of the Electrical Safety Council and Gas Safe Register

OTHER

- For the avoidance of confusion, where I engage a Letting Agent to manage a property, I will communicate this to my tenants, ensuring clarity and awareness of our respective responsibilities.
- I will welcome tenants with children or other dependents.

SILVER COMMITMENTS

I will meet all Bronze Standards plus the following:

SECURITY OF TENURE

- I will commit to increasing notice periods for repossessions by one month for each year the tenant has lived in the property up to a maximum of 6 months.

ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

- In the interests of transparency, I will make clear in the tenancy agreement the maximum percentage rental increase that may be requested upon the renewal of a fixed-term AST.
- I will not charge tenants fees other than rent and deposit.

QUALITY

- I will carry out all improvements recommended by the Local Authority.

OTHER

- I will welcome tenants in receipt of housing or other state benefits.
- Where I engage the services of a Letting Agent, I commit to using a Letting Agent that is a signatory to the Ethical Lettings Charter where possible.

GOLD COMMITMENTS

I will meet all Bronze and Silver Standards plus the following:

SECURITY OF TENURE

- I commit to using Assured Shorthold Tenancies of 48 months or longer as default.

ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

- I commit to provide tenants with not less than 6 months notice of any proposed rent increase I commit to charge only a fair rent relative to market rates
- I commit not to use any letting agent that charge tenants any fees related to the letting or re-letting of any property.

QUALITY

- I will ensure a minimum Energy Performance Certificate rating of D in all my properties.



The Ethical Lettings Agent Charter

BRONZE COMMITMENTS

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

- We will comply with all statutory requirements related to the running of our business (specifically the letting and management of properties in the private rental sector) as set nationally and by the Local Authority, including but not limited to any property licensing scheme in effect.
- We will advise client landlords of their statutory obligations in all aspects of letting and - in the case of managed properties - will ensure that such obligations are met. Further, we will advise client landlords of independent support and advice to aid them meeting these obligations.

SECURITY OF TENURE

- We will promote the use of recurring Assured Shorthold Tenancies of not less than 6 months to our clients as default in place of periodic contracts.
- We will apply the sections of the Deregulation Act 2015 relating to retaliatory evictions retroactively i.e. to all tenancies and not only those beginning on or after October 2015. We will refuse to facilitate the eviction of tenants in managed properties in line with the above.

ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

- We will promote that clients do not ask for deposits of not more than 6 weeks or 1.5 months rent (whichever the greater)
- We will encourage client landlords to undertake a professional photographic inventory at the commencement of each tenancy and supply the tenant with a copy of this without charge. In the case of managed properties we shall undertake or arrange this ourselves.

QUALITY

- In any managed property, we will ensure that all repairs are completed or scheduled promptly and without delay (see notes for specific required timescales)
- We will neither manage nor let properties with an EPC rating lower than E.
- We will neither manage nor let properties that do not meet the recommendations of the Electrical Safety Council and Gas Safe Register

OTHER

- Where we manage a property on behalf of a landlord, we will communicate this to the tenants, ensuring clarity and awareness of our respective responsibilities.
- We will encourage landlords to welcome tenants with children or other dependents.

SILVER COMMITMENTS

We will meet all Bronze standards plus the following:

SECURITY OF TENURE

- We will encourage landlord clients to provide tenants with Assured Shorthold Tenancies of no less than 12 months.
- We will encourage landlord clients to increase notice periods by one month for each year the tenant has lived in the property, up to a maximum of 6 months.

ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

- We will provide recurring Assured Shorthold Tenancies at no extra cost to landlords or tenants.

QUALITY

- We will encourage all landlord clients to carry out all improvements recommended by the Local Authority.

OTHER

- We will encourage landlord clients to welcome tenants in receipt of housing or other state benefits.

GOLD COMMITMENTS

We will meet all Bronze and Silver standards plus the following:

SECURITY OF TENURE

- We will encourage landlord clients to provide tenants with Assured Shorthold Tenancies of no less than 48 months.

ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

- We will commit to a 6 month trial period during which tenants shall not be charged any fees related to the letting or re-letting of any property.
- We will neither manage nor let properties where we believe a landlord is seeking to charge an unreasonably high rent comparative to market rate.

QUALITY

- We will not let or manage properties without a minimum Energy Performance Certificate rating of D.



ACORN is a mass-membership organisation representing more than 13,000 tenants and residents dedicated to championing social and economic justice.

Originally founded in Bristol 2014, ACORN now has offices and membership in every region of the country, campaigning for housing justice.

The Ethical Lettings Charter is an initiative of ACORN, created in consultation with our membership, landlords, letting agents, politicians and other key stakeholders.



**ACORN,
CWU, 20 Church Road, Lawrence Hill,
Bristol, BS5 9JA
www.ethical-lettings.org.uk**