

# guide to changing letting agent

When choosing a letting agent there is a multitude of packages available both on the high street and online, this can make it an overwhelming decision to choose which agent to go with and how involved in the process to be.

Many agents have impactful marketing, and a vast knowledge of the industry needed to let your property, and some have a dedicated and experienced property management team to manage your property to a high standard during the tenancy. However, we hear more and more that finding the right letting agent can be a tiresome game of trial and error, with Landlords feeling that they need to compromise the service they are receiving or are having to get more involved than desired in the tenancy management themselves due to problems they have encountered. Then they are then faced with the daunting prospect of changing letting agents.

Is your agent too expensive? Is the service poor? Are you struggling to speak to the same person more than once? Are they failing to find a tenant? It is a common misconception that you can only change agents when a tenant gives notice to vacate, when in reality you can make the change during the tenancy. In most cases it is beneficial to do so with the tenant in situ, and in most cases, is relatively straightforward.

If you are contemplating changing agent, you might be worried that the process is time consuming and stressful or that there will be a lot of administration and awkward conversations with your current agent. This guide is here to give you all the information you need to navigate the process and to show you how SAB can assist you in making the change over hassle-free and easy to navigate.

At SAB we are here to give you professional advice with a personal touch. Our dedicated experienced teams can take all the stress out of changing letting agent and provide you with a bespoke service throughout the whole process of letting and managing your property.

# what to do next?

The first step is to check your terms of business with your current agent as there is a chance you might be tied into an initial fixed term period. Generally speaking, you cannot switch agents within the fixed period unless there is a break clause, a mutual surrender of contract, if the agent has breached the terms of business or extenuating circumstances. Your contract with the agent should clearly outline the details of your arrangement and how to terminate the contract.

If there are terms to tie you to the contract for longer than you would wish or potential exit fees it is worth discussing with your agent to see if a mutual surrender of contract can be reached, as it is not beneficial for any party in the long term to be held to a contract they do not want to be in. It may also result in the service both you and your tenants receive being affected by any breakdown in relationship with your agent.

Before severing ties with your agent, we will be able to advise you on the legalities of your terms of business should you need it and we will then arrange for you to sign a new terms of business to instruct us as your new agent. This will make the transfer as efficient as possible and to allow us to work with your outgoing agent to make the process a whole lot easier for you.

We are happy to take over management at any stage in a tenancy life cycle as long as your pre-existing contract permits. Once notice is served and the handover date confirmed, we will then work with the outgoing agent to make sure all property records are transferred over to our system including transfer of the tenant's deposit if applicable. We will also set up your account and PropertyFile portal.

If the change is happening mid tenancy, we arrange to contact your tenants to introduce ourselves and to let them know where to pay their rent, how to report maintenance, their PropertyFile portal information and our office opening hours, including out of hours support. Once we have taken over, we will then arrange to inspect the property to check that all is in order and will advise of any outstanding maintenance or tenancy concerns.

If the change is happening at the end of a tenancy your Property Manager will attend the property to provide you with a market appraisal and any recommendations for improvements that might be needed. We can arrange for any quotes and turnover works needed, new marketing details and images and relisting for a new tenant.

# Making the move to SAB

You will need to provide us with:

- **Signed terms of business**
- **A copy of your proof of ownership Land Registry title**
- **A copy of your ID(s)**
- **Name and contact details for your outgoing Property Manager / Agent**

If you have copies of the following, if not we can request these from the current agent during the handover process.

- **Your tenants' names and contact information**
- **The current tenancy agreement**
- **Deposit registration information**
- **The inventory**
- **All safety certificates**

Once we have all the information on the list, we will then contact your outgoing agent to confirm the handover date at the end of the notice period which is the day that we will arrange to collect the keys and any relevant paperwork from their office. We will also work with them to obtain copies of all relevant property and tenancy information and follow up with them regarding any compliance, arrears or outstanding maintenance queries.

We will work with you during this process to keep you informed of progress and to make sure that we have a clear understanding of your expectations and the next steps for the property once we have taken over management.

As a family business, SAB understands the importance of nurturing our relationships and the importance of professionalism. We aim to have a positive transparent relationship with all our landlords and tenants, striving to make sure that our communication and customer service is second to none. We hope that we can resolve any negative experiences you might have had in the past, working with you moving forward to have a successful tenancy and to maximise the return on investment of your property.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss SAB services or changing your letting agent, please contact your local office.