



FocalPointEstates^{LLP}

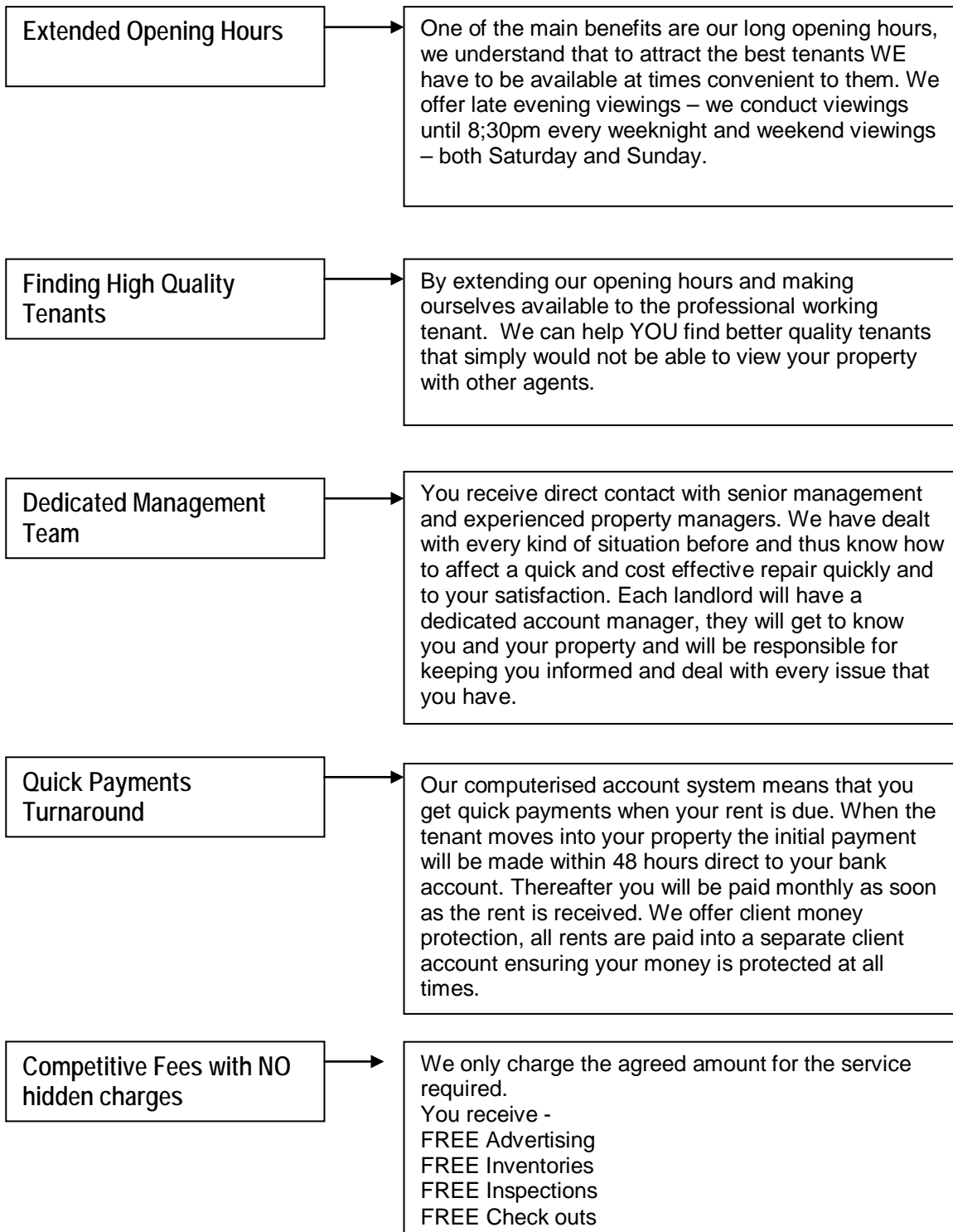
Landlord HMO Information Pack

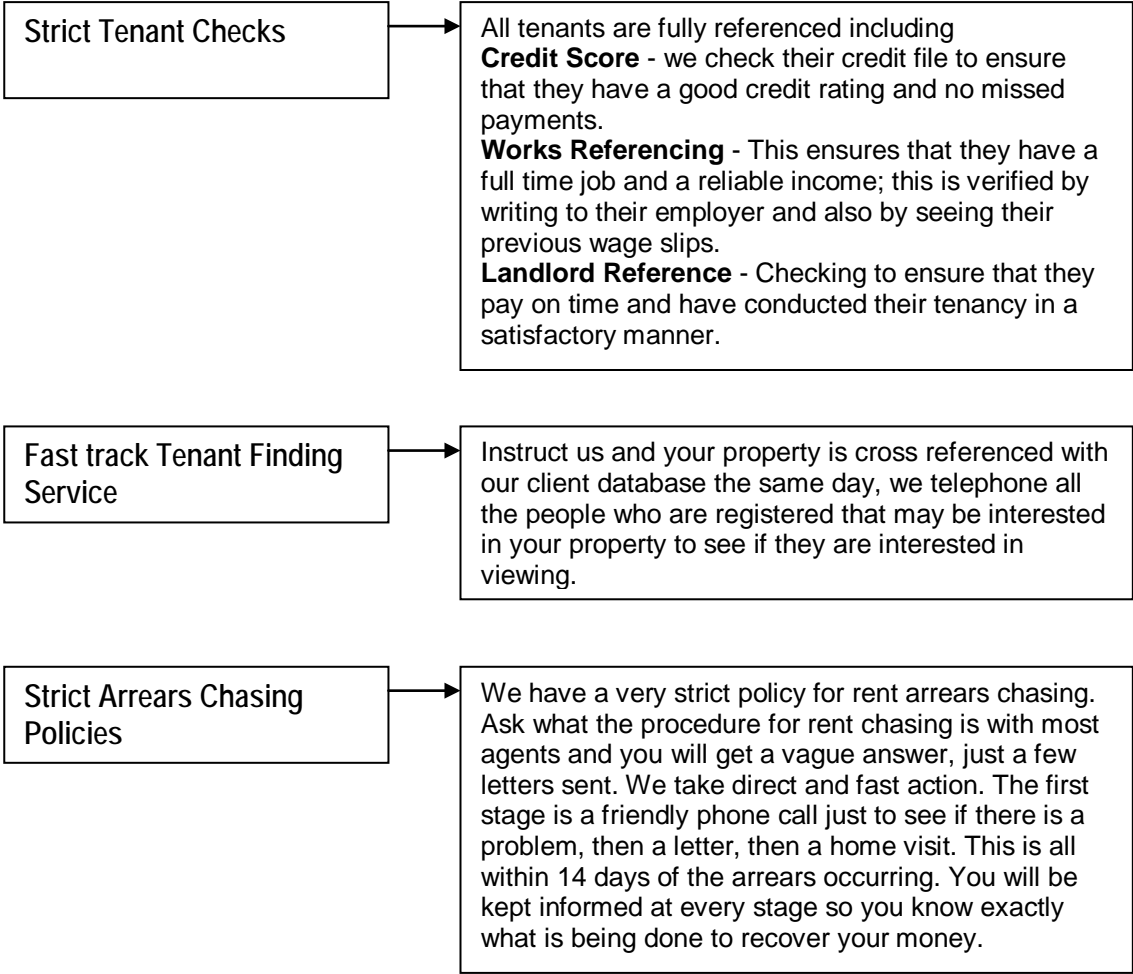


Introduction to Our Rental Services

There are many benefits to using Focal Point Estates, we have outlined some below. Please read through this information pack as it provides information about the services we offer and the requirements for renting your property. Please look below at our 8 reasons chart.

8 Reasons





Preparing the Property for Letting

We have found from experience that a good relationship with tenants is the key to a smooth-running tenancy. As Property Managers the relationship part is our job, but it is important that the tenants should feel comfortable in their home and that they are receiving value for their money. This is the landlord's job. Our policy of offering a service of quality and care therefore extends to our tenant applicants too and we are pleased to recommend properties to rent which conform to certain minimum standards. Quality properties attract quality tenants. We can assist you in all aspects of renovation and building work if there are any improvements you want to make.

General condition

Electrical, gas, plumbing, waste, central heating and hot water systems must be safe, sound and in good working order. Repairs and maintenance are at the landlord's expense unless misuse can be established.

Appliances

Similarly, appliances such as washing machine, fridge freezer, cooker, dishwasher etc. should be in usable condition. Repairs and maintenance are at the landlord's expense unless misuse can be established.

Decorations

Interior decorations should be in good condition, preferably plain, light and neutral.

Furnishings

It is recommended that you leave only minimum furnishings, and these should be of reasonable quality. It is preferable that items to be left are in the property during viewings. If you are letting unfurnished, we recommend that the property contains carpets, curtains and a cooker.

Personal items, ornaments etc

Personal possessions, ornaments, pictures, books etc. should be removed from the premises, especially those of real or sentimental value. Some items may be boxed, sealed and stored in the loft at the owner's risk. All cupboards and shelf space should be left clear for the tenant's own use.

Gardens

Gardens should be left neat, tidy and rubbish-free, with any lawns cut. Tenants are required to maintain the gardens to a reasonable standard, provided they are left the necessary tools.

Cleaning

At the commencement of a tenancy the property must be in a thoroughly clean condition, and at the end of each tenancy it is the tenant's responsibility to leave the property in similar condition. Where they fail to do so, we can arrange cleaning at their expense.

Mail forwarding

We recommend that you make use of the Post Office redirection service. Application forms are available at their counters, and the cost is minimal. It is not the tenant's responsibility to forward mail.

Information for the tenant

It is helpful if you leave information for the tenant on operating the central heating and hot water system, washing machine and alarm system, and the day on which refuse is collected etc.

Keys

You should provide one set of keys for each tenant and, if we are managing the property, a set of keys for ourselves.

Important Safety Regulations

The following safety requirements are the responsibility of the owner (the landlord), and where we are to Manage the property, they are also ours as agents. Therefore to protect all interests we have a duty to ensure full compliance with the appropriate regulations, at the owner's expense.

Gas Appliances & Equipment

Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994 (amended 1996) and some other regulations, all gas appliances in tenanted premises must be checked for safety at intervals of not more than 12 months, by a CORGI registered gas engineer, and a safety certificate issued. Records must be kept of the dates of inspections, of defects identified, and of any remedial action taken.

Electrical Appliances & Equipment

Under the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994, the Plugs & Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1994 and some other regulations, electrical installations and equipment in tenanted premises must be safe. Although (unlike gas) no safety certificate is legally required, and therefore it may be adequate to perform a visual check of electrical equipment, fittings and leads, it is recommended that a qualified electrician be engaged for this purpose. In January 2005, new regulations were introduced - "Part P" - making it a legal requirement for landlords to be able to prove that all fixed electrical installations and alteration work has been carried out and certified by a competent electrician. (A fixed installation comprises the wiring and appliances that are fixed to the building fabric such as sockets, switches, consumer units and ceiling fittings.) This is in addition to existing legislation, and also the common law duty of care, which require that electrical appliances in tenanted property are safe.

Furniture & Furnishings

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (amended 1989, 1993 & 1996) provide that specified items supplied in the course of letting property must meet minimum fire resistant standards. The regulations apply to all upholstered furniture, and beds, headboards and mattresses, sofa-beds, futons and other convertibles, nursery furniture, garden furniture suitable for use in a dwelling, scatter cushions, pillows, and non-original covers for furniture. They do not apply to antique furniture or furniture made before 1950, bed clothes including duvets, loose covers for mattresses, pillowcases, curtains, carpets or sleeping bags. Therefore all relevant items as above must be checked for compliance, and non-compliant items removed from the premises. In practice, most (but not all) items which comply must have a suitable permanent label attached. Items purchased since 1 March 1990 from a reputable supplier are also likely to comply.

Smoke Alarms

Although there is no legislation requiring smoke alarms to be fitted in other ordinary tenanted properties, it is generally considered that the common law 'duty of care' means that Landlords and their Agents could be liable should a fire cause injury or damage in a tenanted property where smoke alarms are not fitted. We therefore strongly recommend that the Landlord fit at least one alarm on each floor of the property (for example, in the hall and landing areas).

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

With effect from the 1st October 2008 it will be a legal requirement for all rented properties to have an **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)**. Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) was introduced to help improve the energy efficiency of buildings. If you are buying or selling a home you now need a certificate by law. From October 2008 EPCs will be required whenever a building is built, sold or rented out. The certificate provides 'A' to 'G' ratings for the building, with 'A' being the most energy efficient and 'G' being the least, with the average up to now being 'D'. Accredited energy assessors produce EPCs alongside an associated report which suggests improvements to make a building more energy efficient.

A Quick guide on HMO's

A House of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) can be far more profitable to run than other types of residential lettings with rental incomes often two to three times those of single households. They require far more in terms of management time and effort.

They require more in terms of initial investment to meet stringent health & safety regulations. Some types of HMO require the landlord to be licensed by the council.

What is an HMO?

An HMO is a property that is shared by three or more tenants who are not members of the same family. Depending on the exact type of HMO some landlords must have a licence from the council.

All HMOs, whether the landlord needs a license or not, are subject to Management Regulations and Inspections under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

This ensures that the property is managed properly and meets certain safety standards. The licence will be valid for up to three years, and will then have to be renewed.

What types of properties are classed as HMOs?

The following types of accommodation are all likely to be HMOs:

- shared flats and houses
- bedsits
- hostels
- halls of residence for students or nurses
- boarding houses
- hotels or bed and breakfasts with permanent residents
- some supported accommodation, such as foyers or 'move on' accommodation for homeless people

What must I do to start an HMO business?

If you are operating or intend to operate residential lettings in this category you would be well advised to consult with your own local authority. Local Environmental Health and Fire Officers will advise on the requirements

If you are contemplating conversions then local planning approval will be required and the building inspectors will specify standards and requirements.

A landlord operating HMO type property will be under all the usual obligations of a landlord to maintain the property, its structure and internal services, in a fit and safe condition for his tenants.

In addition though, landlords need to arrange the management of their HMOs and in particular the common areas ensuring that:

Layouts and facilities meet minimum standards (consult your local authority) you need to maintain the property in a safe and habitable condition. You maintain occupancy at an acceptable level
You register with your local authority and provide details of residents and changes in occupancy.
You identify a responsible person to manage the property and display contact details prominently on the premises, Stairways, passageways, and fire escapes are cleaned and free from obstructions. Fire extinguishers and fire alarms are tested and maintained regularly.

Tenants of HMOs have a responsibility to cooperate with their landlords to ensure that the regulations are complied with. This may mean allowing access to rooms at reasonable times.

Tenants who don't pay their rent on time, cause damage to the property or nuisance to other occupants and neighbours will be in breach of their tenancy agreement and could face eviction proceedings.

The following points are important for landlords of HMOs:

Landlords operating certain types of HMOs will need a license from their local council. The landlord is liable for the occupiers' Council Tax and therefore an amount to cover this should be included in the rental.

Landlords converting properties into HMOs need to be aware planning, building regulations, environmental health and fire regulations must be complied with.

A special insurance policy will be required.

Nuisance claims brought by neighbours are likely due to increases in noise and rubbish. If not managed correctly the landlord could be held partly responsible for this.

The landlord or house manager must by law be in control of the occupancy situation at all times. Tenants must not be allowed to come and go as they please without proper documentation – this in any case is in the landlord's interest for rent collection and eventual possession

You should contact you own local authority (where the property is located) for confirmation of specific rules and regulations regarding HMOs.

The Property Services we offer

Full Management Service

- Provide a rental valuation and any other advice which you may require about letting your property.
- Locating suitable tenants.
- Accompanying tenant applicants to view the property.
- Obtaining and evaluating references and employment checks.
- Preparing a suitable tenancy agreement and arranging signature by the tenant.
- Collecting and holding as stakeholders a deposit (bond) from the tenant.
- Preparing an inventory/schedule of condition and checking the tenant in to the property
- Receiving rental payments monthly/weekly in advance
- Paying you promptly, together with a detailed statement from our computerised management systems.
- Inspecting the property periodically and reporting any problems to you.
- Arranging any necessary repairs or maintenance with your consent.
- Renewing the tenancy agreement
- Checking tenants out as required
- Re-letting and continuing the process with the minimum of vacant periods to ensure that you receive the optimum return from your property.
- Assistance with a HMO license application
- An online landlord login area detailing - tenancy durations, payment statements, work orders, inspection, invoices, documents etc..

Our ongoing management commission is 10-12% (depending on the size of the property) and the initial set up fee is just £30 per room. A full break down is provided upon valuation and the fees may be negotiable depending on the size of your portfolio.

Let Only Service

- Providing a rental valuation and any other advice which you may require about letting your property.
- Locating suitable tenants.
- Accompanying tenant applicants to view the property.
- Obtaining and evaluating references and employment checks.
- Preparing a suitable tenancy agreement and arranging signature by the tenant.
- Collecting and holding as stakeholders a deposit (bond) from the tenant.
- Arranging a standing order between you and the tenants for the collection of rent.

Our fee for a Let Only Service is only £149 per room! So please call to book your FREE rental valuation.

Rent Assurance Service

- A predetermined rental amount is paid each month throughout the term our contract
- A full management service as detailed above
- Maintenance costs are covered (inc Gas Certificates)
- Void/Untenanted periods are covered
- A full repair and insurance lease is provided

The rental amount provided is dependent on the property, so please call to book your FREE rental valuation.



Summary

We at Focal Point Estates believe the reason for our success is down to the excellent customer service we offer. We maintain regular contact with all our tenants and landlords. As a result we are able to eliminate timewasters and our landlords are more likely to get their property an early let with suitable tenants.

Contact Details



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