Newsletter No 18 Summer 2013

SOUTHERN LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION

This edition's featured Corporate Member

ARE LOCAL AUTHORITIES INTRODUCING DISCRETIONARY LICENSING FOR THE PURPOSE GOVERNMENT INTENDED OR ARE MANY ACTING UNLAWFULLY?

Prior to the Labour Government leaving office, it delegated the responsibility for implementation of discretionary licensing to local authorities, without the need for them to seek permission from the Secretary of State. This did not in any way alter the requirements with which local authorities had to comply when considering introducing either selective or additional licensing in their areas. What it did, however, was allow local authorities to implement schemes with the knowledge that if challenged that challenge had to be brought within three months of the local authority making the decision and could only be proceeded with by a costly judicial review.

Since the hurdle of having to obtain Secretary of State approval was removed, the number of schemes being implemented throughout the country has significantly increased. During that time, no challenge via judicial review has been made in respect of any additional licensing scheme on the basis of its lawfulness.

There seems to be two areas stopping any challenge. The first is landlords' reluctance to contribute towards the cost, and the second is the belief that even if a successful judicial review is achieved, the local authority would simply alter its stance and implement additional/selective licensing.

In the opinion of our association, these are not good reasons for allowing local authorities to implement schemes that are clearly not complying with the purpose of additional licensing and, as a result, are unlawful. In fact, some local authorities when challenged about a scheme offer concessions. Some offer significant concessions, which of course are very acceptable to those landlords affected, but what is not acceptable is that concessions made when a scheme itself is unlawful are not a good reason for allowing any local authority to misuse its position and act unlawfully.

So why is it that local authorities that act in such a manner get away with it? The reality is that some landlords' associations wish to work with local authorities and choose not to upset them by bringing legal action, even if it is justified. We are all aware of the state of the economy and the pressure on local authorities to cut services and reduce costs. It is also a fact that in 2013 the private rented sector became the biggest provider of rented accommodation in the country. It is also recognised that the standard of accommodation provided by private landlords is generally of a very good standard indeed, so why the need for additional licensing and why does our association consider that most additional licensing schemes implemented by local authorities are unlawful?

Firstly, additional licensing is about management of properties and not about physical standards. Local authorities have a duty to inspect properties under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). It is often described as a local authority's Part 1 activity. All Part 1 activities are paid for through public funds and are not part of additional licensing, which should only be dealing with management of properties and the landlord's requirement to be a 'fit and proper person'. In order to grant a licence, there is no requirement for a local authority to inspect a property. The objective, where additional licensing has been introduced, is to require landlords to comply with a set of management standards in order to qualify for a licence, and should complaints be received in respect of that landlord not complying with the management requirements, he/she should be disciplined or have the licence revoked. The monies paid by landlords should not give any profit to local authorities but should only be used for the administration of the scheme.

What, in reality, is happening in most local authority areas is that before any licence is granted, a full inspection of the property is being undertaken, not to look at management standards but to look at amenity standards, and prior to any grant of a licence the landlord has to agree to comply with those amenity standards, and management requirements as part of the licence are either a minor addition or completely absent. In many cases this means that unless a landlord complies with the physical conditions set out as a requirement for granting the licence, he/she will not be able to continue letting the property as a house in multiple occupation.

We are receiving complaints from members who are being required to carry out significant physical alterations or additions to their properties as a condition of being granted a licence. In some cases the requirements are unreasonable, in other cases one wonders why the local authority considers professional sharers to be less responsible than a family when requiring physical alterations that would not be required if a family occupied the same property.

Every landlord who is granted a licence conditional upon carrying out physical amendments has the right to appeal to the Residential Property Tribunal against those requirements. Our association believes that any landlord who decides to appeal should also appeal against the unlawfulness of the actions of the council in using additional licensing for purposes that were not intended. In effect, local authorities are carrying out their duties under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 by charging landlords the cost of carrying out those duties, when they have no right to use additional licensing fees for such purposes.

The Southern Landlords Association is the only association that considers that local authorities who act in such a manner should be brought before the courts. Of course, there is no guarantee of success, but it will take only one successful judicial review to demonstrate that local authorities will act in their own interests for whatever reason if they can get away with it. Our association hopes that you, our members, will support us in our attempts to put right blatant unreasonable behaviour by local authorities who, it seems, consider landlords an easy target for extracting money. The reality is that once landlords are required to license, then come the requirements from the local authority, often to carry out expensive measures, some completely unjustified and all nothing to do with additional licensing requirements. That is when landlords realise that they are going to be put not only to the cost of a licence but also, often, to significant additional costs in complying with the physical requirements as part of the licensing process. This is when landlords realise that they are being expected to carry out works that have nothing to do with additional licensing and that their fees are being used for purposes which were not intended in the licensing regulations, and that is when they come to the association asking what we can do to assist them. By this time, of course, the three-month window of bringing a judicial review has passed and the only option left is for those landlords to apply to the Residential Property Tribunal, setting out their objections to the requirements conditional on being granted a licence.

For the benefit of our members, we are exhibiting on our website details of 'how to appeal against licensing requirements', and for the information of members the national helpline for appeals is Tel: 0845 600 3178 and the Residential Property Tribunal website itself can be found at
www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/residential-property.

Those members who are being required to license properties under additional licensing should ensure that when being required to carry out works, those works come within the requirement for additional licensing.

Mike Stimpson comments: In summary, our association believes that it is not good enough for landlords to simply sit back and expect others to provide evidence of unlawfulness and then pay for the cost of a judicial review. We should all act together and understand that in this day and age court action costs significant amounts of money and can only be brought if landlords are prepared to contribute towards it.

CAN LANDLORDS CONTINUE TO ACCEPT RENT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF A SECTION 21 NOTICE?

A number of members have queried whether they are entitled to accept rental payments following the expiration of a Section 21 notice seeking possession.

The position, according to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), is that landlords are perfectly entitled to continue to accept rental payments following the expiration of a Section 21 notice until the tenant vacates the property. The old way of taking rents as 'mesne profits' is not applicable to assured shorthold tenancies.

UNIVERSAL CREDITS - DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS ANNOUNCES DIRECT PAYMENTS TO LANDLORDS

Our association has learned that since the implementation of the first Universal Credit pilot scheme, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has agreed that direct payments to landlords will now be allowed in the pathfinder areas. The circular issued by DWP states that landlords can refer rent arrears cases to Universal Credit, and those which are under two months in arrears will trigger Universal Credit to contact the claimant to discuss their non-payment as part of the personal budgeting support process, and those with over two months arrears will be switched to direct rent payment automatically and relevant budgeting support actively arranged.

This is very good news indeed for our members and will encourage those who accept benefit claimants to continue to do so when Universal Credit is introduced in their local authority areas. Having said the above, that direct payments in the manner described will apply to the pilots, the Government has not yet extended it to the national rollout but it is hoped that this will be the position and we await further announcements from DWP.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? SOCIAL RENTS ARE INCREASING MORE THAN PRIVATE SECTOR RENTS

According to figures published by the English Housing Survey for 2011 to 2012, between 2008 and 2009, and 2011 and 2012 average rents in the private rented sector increased by 16.9% compared with a 17.18% increase in the social rented sector over the same period.

The same survey has also confirmed that the private rented sector is now at its largest since the early 1990s, equalling that of the social rented sector, with the last year showing no significant change in private sector rents.

The same report notes that tenants who have remained in their property for ten years or more enjoy much lower rents - on average £123.00 per week compared with the average £173.00 paid by those resident for less than three years. This amounts to an average 28% discount.

In reality, these figures suggest that, for most tenants, private sector rents are not rising at all, and official statistics show that nationally they are not exceeding inflation. It also demonstrates that there is no need to interfere with the current assured shorthold tenancy arrangements, as landlords retain tenants for long periods when they pay the rent and act in a decent tenant-like manner.

Mike Stimpson comments: What Government needs to look more closely into is the reason why landlords serve Section 21 notices as compared with Section 8 notices. In many cases, landlords choose the Section 21 route for possession, as it appears more certain than the Section 8 route but often is not simply because possession is required, as the property will not be re-let. It is more likely that the tenants are either in rent arrears or causing antisocial behaviour, etc. Few landlords give notice to good tenants unless there is a need to dispose of the property.

A BIT OF GOOD NEWS FOR LANDLORDS: RENT IN ADVANCE

Members will wish to know that a landmark ruling has been made in the Court of Appeal that clarifies that 'rent in advance' is not a deposit and that landlords or letting agents should not have to place such monies into protection through the deposit schemes.

Mike Stimpson comments: It is most important, however, that if you take rent in advance you specifically set out in your agreement that it is rent in advance and the period that it covers.

LANDLORD SECURITY

It is noted that with the introduction from 1st April 2013 of two more suppliers of insured deposits, namely Capita and the Deposit Protection Service, the providers are now at last reducing their fees, to the benefit of landlords. In the opinion of our association, the lowering of fees still does not outweigh the requirement to meet Government's onerous prescribed information regulations, and the scheme about to be launched by SLA/Boswells will, we hope, encourage landlords to use it and be freed from Government's unreasonable and unnecessary legal requirements.

MIKE STIMPSON'S COLUMN

In the last Newsletter, my final comment was that I hoped the weather would improve, and whoever is responsible must have reacted to my wishes, as we have at last had a reasonable period of dry and warmer weather and hopefully our tenants will now stop complaining about condensation issues which they have caused and which normally have nothing whatsoever to do with failure to maintain properties, etc by landlords.

It is pleasing to note that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is beginning to understand the reality, under Universal Credits, that some tenants will not pay their rent and that often they are families who will be required to be housed whether rent is paid or not. As social housing providers will be treated, at last, in the same way as private landlords and the rental part of Universal Credit for social housing providers will be paid to their tenants, we have, together, a much stronger voice in getting the Government to understand that direct payments are a very necessary part of Universal Credits, to ensure that those tenants who simply will not pay the rent have it deducted and paid direct to landlords.

As mentioned in this Newsletter, it appears that in the pilot areas the Government has conceded and is taking reasonable steps to protect landlords and ensure rent is paid to them. Through the British Property Federation (BPF) we will ensure that this pressure is continued and that landlords who accept tenants in receipt of Universal Credits will have the same opportunities for direct payment as is allowed under the Local Housing Allowance provisions.

There are over 1.2 million landlords in the United Kingdom and one would therefore think that there would be a strong body representing those landlords and that the majority would belong to an association supporting their interests. I have been a landlord for over 55 years and throughout that time have found that the only time many landlords join an association is when they have a particular problem themselves. Few join for the benefit of landlords in general. In saying that, many consider that a subscription of around £75 per year is all that they are prepared to contribute, yet they expect a voice far beyond the capability of any association at that sort of level of subscription.

The Federation of Small Businesses has an income of over £27 million per year. Most landlords' associations have under £100,000, and possibly only two have an income of over £1 million from subscriptions. Bearing this sort of level of both interest and financial support in mind, there is little wonder that landlords find it difficult to produce effective representation to ensure they have a proper word in regulations. I consider the SLA fights well above its weight.

What is even more disconcerting is that in this era, landlords can charge market rents and obtain what is, in reality, a good return on their investment, yet on the other side of the coin most are not prepared to financially contribute to those organisations that support their interests.

This brings me to a subject very close to my heart, namely discretionary licensing. When the Labour Government delegated powers to local authorities to implement discretionary licensing without the need for permission from the Secretary of State, many saw it as an opportunity to carry out functions that were not a part of such licensing schemes and, at the same time, charge landlords for carrying out those functions contrary to the law. In fact, what many local authorities did, particularly when implementing additional licensing, was to insist on a physical inspection of the property prior to issuing a licence and then insisting that the landlord comply to a set of physical standards which have nothing whatsoever to do with additional licensing.

Local authorities are required to inspect properties under their Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) duties under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. It is part of their normal local authority duties and is paid for through taxation / council tax. Additional licensing is about management of properties that can be demonstrated not to be managed properly. There is no requirement for a local authority to inspect a property prior to granting a licence but many ignore the requirements appertaining to discretionary licensing.

Challenges can only be made through a judicial review, which is time sensitive and expensive. No challenge has yet been made in respect of additional licensing, and local authorities in many instances are well aware that they can introduce any conditions they wish with impunity, as it is unlikely that any association will challenge them.

As I have just mentioned, landlords are not well organised. Individually, many are not prepared to contribute towards such challenges and are quite happy to accept benefits in the form of lower fees, etc rather than confrontation, even if the council has acted unlawfully. I am therefore pleased to report that landlords in Southampton are seeking permission to bring a judicial review against Southampton City Council for unlawful implementation of a licensing scheme to be introduced in that city. May I personally wish them luck and I will give them support in their objectives. It is said that even if we are successful, a different scheme could be implemented by the same local authority. That is true, but hopefully it would be lawful and comply with the regulations, and if that was the case, Southampton City Council might find it difficult to produce evidence that a scheme of any type is justified.

Finally, on a different matter, I am pleased that at last it seems that there is to be regulation, in some form, of letting agents. For far too long, letting agents have been able to collect tenants' deposits and landlords' rent without money protection, and hopefully regulations will be introduced to ensure that no agent can operate without the normal monetary protection that we would all expect. In the meantime, of course, it is important that no member uses any agent that doesn't have such protection.

May I wish you all continued success in your letting businesses.

Mike Stimpson

LANDLORDS TO CHECK IMMIGRATION STATUS OF THEIR PROSPECTIVE TENANTS

It was announced in the Queen's Speech on Wednesday May 8th that private and social landlords will have by law to check the immigration status of any prospective tenants.

At this stage no other details for this check are known. Additionally, illegal immigrants will not be able to obtain driving licences; and use of the NHS by immigrants will be curtailed.

The Queen said:- "My government will bring forward a Bill that further reforms Britain's immigration system. The Bill will ensure that this country attracts people who will contribute and deters those who will not".

Don't forget you can use the Boswells tenant referencing scheme, using the SLA discount. See the web site for details.

TWO ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE TO BRING LEGAL REGULATION OF LETTING AGENTS

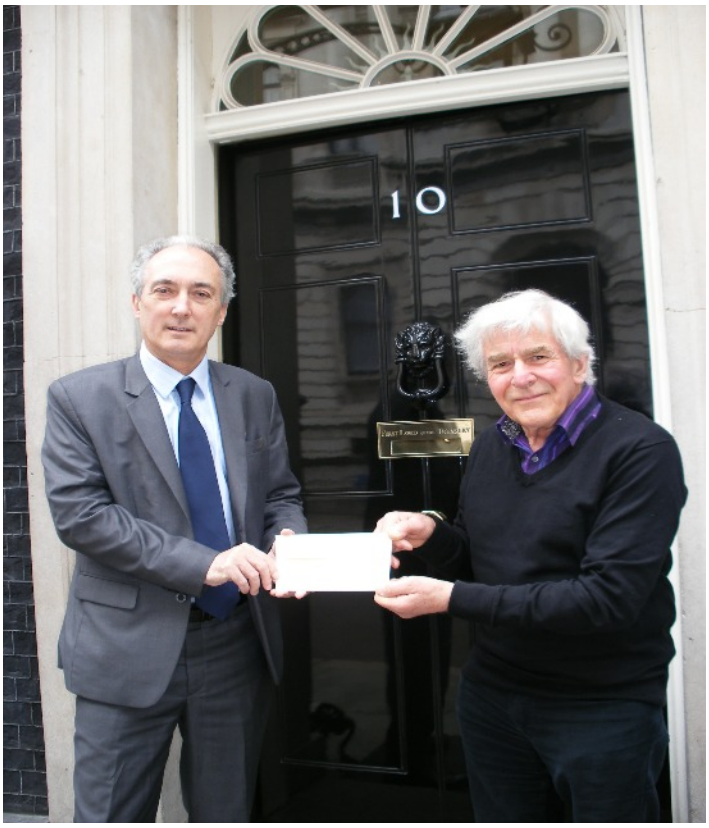
Baroness Hayter recently tried to introduce a private members bill in the Lords to amend the enterprise and regulatory reform bill. This would have given renters and landlords greater protection by requiring letting agents to sign up to an ombudsman scheme while handing the Office of Fair Trading the power to ban those who act improperly.
However, this attempt was timed out.

Now the mantle has been picked up by the MP John Healey, who has been granted a 10 minute bill in the Commons on July 2nd, where the same subject will be debated. This is backed by RICS, and ARLA, and the SLA have participated in all parts.

CRIMINALISING SQUATTING IN COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

Members will be aware that through the hard work of Mike Weatherley, MP for Hove, squatting in residential properties became a criminal offence in September 2012. Since that time there has been a significant increase in the number of commercial properties being squatted in, not only, on some occasions, by people in need of accommodation but often by people who are not homeless, come from good families but are simply doing it as a protest against Government.

On 7th May, Mike Stimpson, acting for our association, in company with Mike Weatherley, handed in at 10 Downing Street a petition pressing David Cameron to support the law to be extended to criminalise squatting in commercial buildings.



In order for this matter to go forward, the Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling MP, requires evidence of squatting in commercial buildings, and if any member has experienced squatting or knows of any other landlord who has, they should write to their MP describing their experience and urging that MP to support criminalisation of squatting in commercial buildings.

At the same time, it would be most helpful if a copy of that letter could be sent either to Mike Weatherley MP at the House of Commons (London, SW1A 0AA) or to the SLA (The Business Centre, 17a Priory Road, Tonbridge, TN9 2AQ) and we will ensure that it is forwarded to Mike Weatherley.

This is your opportunity of assisting, once and for all, to have all squatting in buildings made a criminal offence. Please assist if you can, and do it now. SLA looks forward to hearing from you.

PROPERTY INVESTOR SHOW

The SLA recently participated in a new landlord show in Croydon, the Property Investor Show, hosted by Tenant History (www.tenantshistory.co.uk). We took a stand; and Peter Littlewood gave a talk.

I am pleased to tell you that the show is now coming to Brighton on Thursday June 20th, at the Thistle Hotel, from 10am to 5pm. We will again be taking a stand; and Peter Littlewood will be talking about the perils of taking deposits. See also our web site, or the advert on page 9.

FLOODING IN THE HOUSE

One of the worries for a landlord is that something goes wrong with the water; resulting in a flood, and worse still, it is not seen for some time leading to substantial damage.

We are pleased that Floodcheck have very recently become corporate members, offering landlords a clever gizmo that fits onto the incoming water pipe, as near to the stopcock as possible turning the water off in exceptional circumstances.

We were not able to get an article from them in time for this newsletter, but to quote from their website (www.floodcheck.co.uk):-

The Floodcheck Auto kit will turn your water off if:-

- TIME OUT - there is a burst pipe or a tap is letting water run continuously, for a longer time period than average. The time can be set between 10 and 40 minutes
- FREEZE PROTECTION - If the air temperature where the Floodcheck is installed goes below 3 deg Celsius
- EXCESS FLOW - If there is a sudden unusual or abnormal demand on the water supply
- NON-USE - If no water is used after 24 hours, the Floodcheck will turn off your water safely until you return
- WATER DETECTION - If a leak is detected the Floodcheck shut off the water supply until it is reset

Ensure you tell them you are an SLA member if you contact them.

Note that you need to check with your insurers before leaving the property vacant for any period of time.

PLANNING LAWS

The Dept of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have been consulting on potential changes to the planning laws; especially where decisions are challenged. The BPF are heavily involved in this.
There are many applications for a Judicial Review (JR) to reverse a decision. Many don't make it as far as an actual review; and even fewer are allowed.
DCLG are concerned that JR's are often used to merely delay an application, and that developers sometimes use it against another developer to merely cause problems.
It will be interesting to see if any changes can be applied to the Licensing reviews.

TAX INSPECTIONS

We need to remind you all about the piece in the last newsletter about the likelihood of landlords being involved in a tax inspection.
Members are covered for this, but they must contact Boswells at the outset to ensure they follow the correct procedure, else a claim for recompense might not be covered.

HOUSING MINISTER DEFENDS IMMIGRATION CHECKS - BUT PROPOSES EXTENDING LICENSING.

The housing minister Mark Prisk has said that immigration status of tenants will only have to be checked under a 'light touch' regime. Landlords are threatened with heavy fines if they fail to check; although it is not yet clear what agents will have to do.
Prisk was speaking to MPs who were asking questions about proposals unveiled in the Queen's Speech - he said: "What we're asking for is all landlords undertake that basic check to see people are who they are and they are entitled to be here.

He also dismissed suggestions that a national registration scheme for landlords would be set up, but said that selective licensing schemes could be more widely used. He said: "If there's a good argument demonstrated that a significant proportion of local authorities would welcome an extension, I would certainly be happy to look at the evidence."
Naturally the SLA are alarmed at this prospect.

THANET SOCIAL

Following the success of the monthly London social meetings (first Wednesday of each month; from 6pm at The Constitution, 42 Churton Street, London, SW1V 2LP) we are pleased to tell you a Thanet social is to be started.

Based at The Fayreness Hotel, Marine Drive, Kingsgate, Broadstairs, CT10 3LG the first Tuesday of every month from 6.00 pm. Because of the summer holidays, this will start Tuesday September 3rd.

There will be more details in the September newsletter

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NEW PROPERTY DISPUTE SERVICE LAUNCHED

The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb) has recently launched a new service allowing Landlords and tenants, of both residential and commercial property to settle their property disputes.

The CIArb hope that this new service will provide a more cost effective alternative to traditional litigation. They will deal with a variety of different issues including property and ownership interference; boundary or nuisance by noise; professional disputes claims against professionals for negligence; and general issues regarding easements and rights of way.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Alarmingly, we have had a couple of cases of a landlord being accused of sexual harassment whilst in some type of dispute with their tenant.
We would make two points about this:-

1. If you are wrongly accused ensure you involve the police as soon as possible. This is a criminal matter, and is not to be taken lightly;
2. where possible, ensure you avoid getting into a situation where it might prove difficult to disprove any accusations made.

We even heard of a landlord being scratched by a tenant with the purpose of making later accusations..

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust www.suzylamplugh.org can help with personal safety.

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? REPLACEMENT OF WHITE GOODS IS NOW CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

You may recall that information was passed to the SLA by a member who had been advised by his accountant that as from April 2013 he would not be able to claim replacement of white goods, i.e. stand-alone cookers, refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers, etc, as revenue items (i.e. normal expenses), and that they would in future be classified as capital expenditure, only claimable when the property is sold.
As a result of this information, your association representatives contacted the relevant department in Treasury, via the British Property Federation (BPF), and ascertained that the rule covering the claiming of these items as revenue had inadvertently been removed from legislation. SLA was assured that this would be put right by adding it to existing legislation. However, when the new guidance was produced, it did not repeat what had been set out in the previous regulations.

Members will be most disappointed to know that at this time they cannot claim as revenue items stand-alone white goods which are replacements or, for that matter, new additions. Such items can now only be claimed as capital. This does not mean that the replacement of fitted goods, such as fitted kitchens, boilers, bathrooms, etc, is included. Those items can still be claimed as revenue items, provided that by replacement the item itself is not enhanced. In other words, the quality of something that is being replaced must be to the same standard as the previously existing one.

Mike Stimpson comments: Having read the draft produced by the Treasury parliamentary draftsmen, I am absolutely astounded at the detachment from reality. The wording of the regulations is so pernickety that it defies belief that any educated person would produce such rubbish as has been set out in this amended regulation.
We have virtually a recession in this country. Landlords are encouraged to provide equipment of the highest standard, yet the Government is making it impracticable for landlords to provide replacement equipment as part of their normal expenses. In fact, what Government has agreed to by these regulations is that landlords should have their white goods repaired and keep them as long as possible, rather than benefit the economy by replacing worn out goods with new - to the benefit of the tenant, the landlord and, more importantly, the manufacturing base of this country.

This matter will not rest at this point and landlords should write to their MPs, pointing out what Government is doing and that it is to the detriment of all concerned in the landlord business.

FEATURED CORPORATE MEMBER

GETTING THE BEST OUT OF PRIVATE MEDICAL HEALTH

The majority of SLA members will be aware of private health plans, and will more often than not question if they really need it when they receive their annual renewal every year. In most cases, the answer will be no, but the knowledge that it provides you with peace of mind when faced with a medical problem will encourage you to keep it. The next question you ask yourself is can you get it cheaper, and then you start to hunt out other providers on comparison sites and trawling through adverts, which in all probability will make you wish you had not started.

The truth is that trying to compare medical plans is nigh on impossible because of the various clauses, jargon and rules that apply to different providers and plans. Do you want in-hospital and overnight stays, or in-hospital outpatient cover and choice of hospital. You will be inundated with moratoriums, excess, and so the list goes on. You want simplicity and a full understanding of what you are buying. In order to try and simplify the process for you, the first step towards getting a plan is to make a list of what YOU want from your plan and one that best suits you, your state of health, lifestyle and cost.

If you spend a lot of time abroad or have sporting hobbies, you may want to consider a plan that covers you for travel and interests. What if you want to change from your current plan, does your potential provider offer you a free Transfer facility which has no breaks in your cover. Once you have made your list, you can start to research and compare the various providers and plans. A good tip is to balance what you need with the amount you want to pay.

One of the key factors of taking out a private medical health plan is to give you peace of mind when faced with the prospect of surgery or medical condition. We interpret peace of mind as being able to talk to your provider about any concerns you have and being treated in a personal, sympathetic and professional manner. The last thing you want is to be connected to an automated service and pushing buttons to get through to someone.

Ok, so you have done your research and now deciding who to choose. Quite simply, pick up the phone and call each provider. Speak to their Claims Department and assess their handling of your enquiry. Having to claim on your health plan is the reason for joining. You need to know how their system works, including how approachable the staff are, what is the claims procedure and how quickly will your claim be settled.

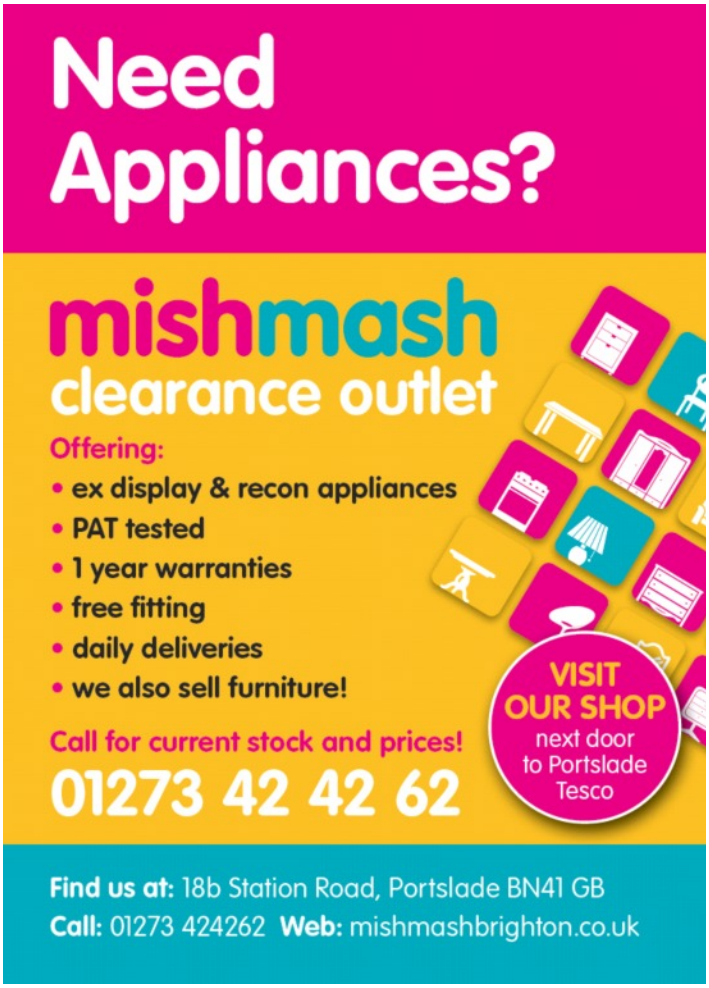
These few simple steps can help ease the stress of taking out a private medical health plan, and bring you the peace of mind that prompted you to provide it for yourself in the first case. You can call HMCA on 01423 866985 for further advice and information or visit us at www.hmca.co.uk.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The dates for meetings are:

- Wednesday - June 5th - London social - From 6pm at The Constitution, 42 Churton Street, London, SW1V 2LP;
- Tuesday June 11th - Hillingdon Landlords Forum - Civic centre, Uxbridge, UB8 3UA;
- Thursday - June 20th - Property Investor Show, Thistle Hotel, Kings Road, Brighton, BN1 2GS;
- Monday - July 1st - Sutton Landlords Forum;
- Wednesday - July 3rd - London social;
- Wednesday - July 10th - Margate Landlords Forum;
- Monday - July 22nd - Brighton and Hove Branch meeting;
- Wednesday - August 7th - London social;
- Tuesday - September 3rd - Thanet social - The Fayreness Hotel, Marine Drive, Kingsgate, Broadstairs, CT10 3LG, from 6.00 onwards;
- Wednesday - September 4th - London social;
- Monday - September 16th - Southampton branch meeting;
- Tuesday - September 17th - Swale Landlords Forum;
- Tuesday - October 1st - Thanet social;
- Wednesday - October 2nd - London social;
- Monday - October 14th - Brighton and Hove Branch meeting;
- Tuesday - October 15th - Property Investor Show, London, Grand Connaught Rooms

Watch the web site for more details – www.southernlandlords.org.
Note that we are to put a resume of the meeting on the web after the meetings.



DEPOSITS

Information landlords must give tenants

From the Government web site:

Within 30 days of getting your deposit, your landlord must tell you:

- the address of the rented property
- how much deposit you've paid
- how the deposit is protected
- the name and contact details of the TDP scheme and its dispute resolution service
- their (or the letting agency's) name and contact details
- the name and contact details of any third party that's paid the deposit
- why they would keep some or all of the deposit
- how to apply to get the deposit back
- what to do if you can't get hold of the landlord at the end of the tenancy
- what to do if there's a dispute over the deposit

THE GOVERNMENT WEB SITE:

www.gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection

It is essential that you fully and exactly meet the above requirements as the penalties for failure are severe!

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

	Bronze – Free (on-line application only):-	Silver - £35 pa:-	Gold - £75 pa:-	Corporate - £195 pa:-
email notification of meetings, etc, in your area;	SLA	SLA	SLA	SLA
all member trade discounts;	SLA	SLA	SLA	SLA
on-line newsletter;		SLA	SLA	SLA
all documents (AST's/notices, etc);		SLA	SLA	SLA
insurance cover for HMRC investigation		SLA	SLA	
fact-sheets;		SLA	SLA	
posted newsletter;			SLA	
unlimited use of advice line;			SLA	
Classified advert and company details and information on our web site				SLA
1/8 page advert in each newsletter				SLA

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Help-line	**0845 475 2483**
Accounts	**0845 475 5583**
Insurance	**0845 475 1383**

Copy Deadline for Autumn 2013 edition strictly 6th Sept.

Disclaimer All comments and opinions expressed here are strictly those of the individual contributors, and the Southern Landlords Association cannot accept any responsibility or liability whatsoever.

MEMBERS' ADVERTS

If you would like to place an advert in our next edition please email by 6th September 2013 to: editor@southernlandlords.org