

Getting well
prepared for the
process ahead

A guide to **renting** **your next home**

DARlows

**We're on a mission to
get you moved.**

**We want you to enjoy
renting your new home
and we always find that if
you know what to expect
we can provide a better
service for you.**

Think Darlows.

Register with us

This tenant guide has been created to answer as many questions as possible and help you be well prepared for the exciting process ahead of you.

For us to identify properties suited to you, we will ask you detailed questions. Remember, the more information you can give us, the easier it is for us to match you with a property!

To pass referencing you will need to meet at least one of these requirements:

- Have an income of 30x your rental budget
- Have a guarantor*
- Be able to pay 6 or 12 months' rent up front

Our latest properties are listed on our preferred property search websites and our own website www.darlows.co.uk

We are committed to helping you find your ideal home and have **your best interests in mind**

When choosing an agent...

Look for the SAFEAgent Kitemark; your money will be 100% protected.

Using an agent with membership of a professional body such as ARLAPropertymark, SafeAgent or The Property Ombudsman (TPO); certain standards of practice will be in place and you will have access to an independent complaints procedure.

Check that your deposit will be protected by a government-authorised Tenancy Deposit Protection scheme.

Some of our properties offer deposit-free renting through our partner *flatfair* ask your letting agent for more information.



*If your income is not 30x your monthly rental budget, you may be asked to provide a guarantor for your tenancy. A guarantor will be asked to make rental payments on your behalf if you fail to make payment of your rent. Any guarantor would need to have an income of 36x your rental budget and would be required to complete a full reference.

View with us

Want to know more about the property? We're here to answer your questions. We'll also accompany you on every viewing, including evenings and at weekends.

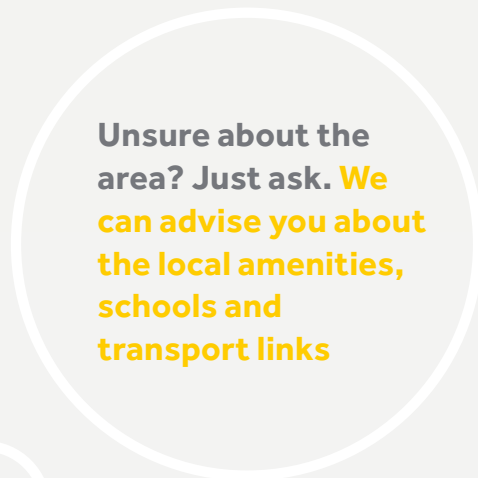
Viewings:

Unsure about the area? Just ask. **We can advise you about the local amenities, schools and transport links**

When viewing...

Try to view with everyone in your moving party. Properties will not always be available for a second viewing.

For properties newly advertised, be ready to view straight away and act quickly if you are interested. Properties new to the market are in high demand and often rent within days.



Making an offer

When you make an offer it will be put forward to the landlord.

If your offer is accepted, you will need to provide:

- A holding deposit equivalent to one weeks' rent (by debit/credit card only)
- Photographic identification for each applicant (e.g. driving license, passport)
- Proof of address for each applicant (ideally a utility bill no older than 3 months; for other accepted documents, please ask)

Be ready for referencing and have the following to hand:

- Your last 3 years address history
- Your employment details
- (If self-employed) Have accounts/ accountant details ready
- (If a company) Have two trade referees ready
- Your landlord details
- Your UK bank account details
- Encourage your referees to respond swiftly

When referencing is underway, we will send both tenant and landlord a 'Subject to Contract' document stating the details of the contract including any requirements/agreements made. If anything is missing, inform us straight away.

If all references are deemed satisfactory then we will create a tenancy agreement.

If there is any problem with the references, we'll let you know straight away and advise you of your options.

When applying...

Be prepared to pay a holding deposit.

Be prepared for the paperwork and have the required documents ready.

Be prepared to be referenced and inform your employer and most recent landlord that they will be contacted.

Make sure you clearly state any requirements as a part of your application.

When you've found a property that you like, it's time to make an offer. **Darlows will be there to walk you through the process**

Helping you in your new home

Security deposits – an alternative.

We know that sourcing a large amount of money for a security deposit can be a worry. Our partners at *flatfair* offer a simple solution, the *flatfair* membership. The *flatbond* is the simple, affordable and secure alternative to tenancy deposits. Instead of paying a large tenancy deposit you can now choose our *flatbond* instead and pay a non-refundable one-off charge of 1 week's rent + VAT.

How does *flatfair* work?

It's very simple! You sign-up for your *flatfair* membership online, pay a one-off charge of one week's rent and that's it. Under the *flatfair* membership you remain liable to pay for any damages at the property just like with a regular deposit. However, unlike a regular deposit, you don't need to pay upfront, you simply pay for any damages caused at the end of your tenancy.

Please note, *flatfair* membership can only be offered if your landlord agrees, for more information please speak to one of our associates or check out www.flatfair.co.uk

What are the advantages of becoming a *flatfair* member?



No expensive deposit

Pay an affordable membership charge instead of an expensive deposit - split evenly between the household



Healthier finances

Avoid having two lots of money locked away in deposits between tenancies and put your money to better use



Control on-the-go

Manage your membership through our simple platform from any device, 24/7



Pay when you leave

Damages happen. In case of a lawful claim, simply pay at the end of your tenancy



Keeping it fair

Stay safe from bogus claims through independent dispute resolution - as with the deposit schemes



Build your cred

flatfair rewards tenants who pay their rent on time and care for their rented home



Your utility bills

Our partners at the TenantShop offer a free comparison service to help you find the best deals on the key products you need for your home.

This includes the best deals on:

- Phone/Broadband/TV Packages
- Energy Suppliers

Referring you to TenantShop

When your offer has been agreed we can refer your details to TenantShop*. A TenantShop advisor will contact you to discuss all of your requirements for media and energy packages. They will compare different options with you to ensure you are set-up on the best possible deal.

Some of the key providers the TenantShop work with are below:



TenantShop work with the UK's biggest suppliers and are able to offer you unique deals for tenants, some of which are not available online or direct with the suppliers. **Each package can be adapted to suit your needs**

*If you would like us to refer your details to TenantShop, please tick 'Yes' on the Utilities option on your Offer Form.



Move with us

What you need and what we can offer.

Before you can move in, you must have:

- **Signed the tenancy agreement** (signed by all tenants and witnessed)
- **A deed of guarantee signed by the guarantor** (if applicable)

- **Paid the initial monies**

Your initial monies will be detailed on your offer form, but will include:

- Your first month's rent
- A security deposit (or flatfair membership charge if you take out that option)
- A meet and greet service charge, if you take out our meet and greet service

We can also offer you:

- **Tenant's liability insurance**

We can introduce you to Homelet who can offer a tailored insurance policy that protects you against any accidental damage that you may cause to your landlord's fixtures and fittings up to £10,000. They can also provide cover to you to protect your own contents as well. Please speak to any member of staff and they can arrange for Homelet to contact you.

- **Meet and greet service**

We will meet you at your new property on your move-in date and provide you with the keys. We'll walk you through the property and show you how to use the key appliances and features, including the heating and hot water systems. Please speak to any member of staff and they can arrange for a quote for a meet and greet service.

Once we have all of the above in place, you'll be ready to collect your keys, either from your local office or at the meet and greet service.

Meet and greet service cost

£120 including VAT for a studio property + £10 per additional bedroom. Once everything is ready we will hand you the keys, either at the branch or during your meet and greet appointment.

When moving...

Ask to see a valid Gas Safety Certificate and ask to see a copy of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC); this shows the energy performance of the property.

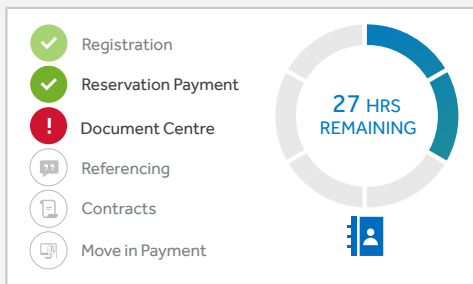
Our meet and greet service reduces stress as we will show you how everything works

Making your move simple

Our tenant portal, LetTrak, is designed to help make the process of moving as smooth and simple as possible, meaning you can focus on the excitement of your new home.

Once your offer has been accepted, you'll be sent a link so you can create an account on LetTrak.

LetTrak will allow you to complete all of your referencing, sign your tenancy agreement and make payment of your deposit/flatfair membership and rent before the date of your move so that on your move-in day, you can simply collect the keys.



You'll be notified by email when you need to take any action and it is available 24/7 to fit in with your busy schedule.

LetTrak makes it easy to keep a track of your application **showing you exactly what is happening at every stage of the process**

After you've moved in

Once you've moved into your property, you can use LetTrak to:

- View all of your tenancy documents
- Make your rental payments online
- Purchase additional products such as Contents cover for your possessions
- Check the key dates for your tenancy, including when your property visits are due and when your contract is up for renewal

LetTrakTM

Rent with us

Shortly after you move in, we will send you a welcome pack and tenancy handbook containing everything you need to know.

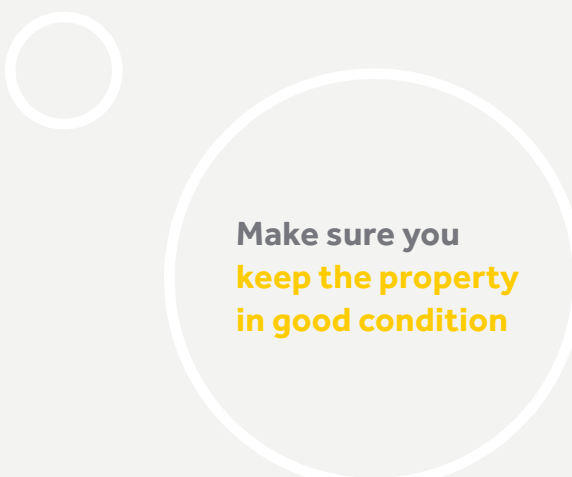
The documents we send to you will include details and advice about the following:

- Who to contact during your tenancy
- Setting up utility bills
- Setting up rental payments
- Tenant responsibilities
- Making changes to the property
- Property repairs
- Maintenance issues
- Gas safety
- Tenant's insurance
- Information for sharers
- What to do when your tenancy is ending
- Your security deposit or *flatfair*, the deposit-free renting alternative
- Customer care

When renting...

Look after the property and keep it in a good condition; with a deposit, damages and dilapidation costs may be deducted from your security deposit at the end of the tenancy; with *flatfair*, you may be charged for damages and dilapidations at the end of your tenancy.

Pay your rent on time; your landlord may seek possession of the property if you fail to pay your rent.



Make sure you
keep the property
in good condition

Customer care

We aim to provide a first class service and to that end have a monthly customer care award which is awarded to the member of our team that has provided the best service, based on customer feedback.

We receive very few complaints, however we understand that sometimes things don't go exactly to plan and can occasionally go wrong. If this becomes the case, we would prefer that you try to resolve the situation with the member of our team you have been dealing with or the lettings manager, but if they are unable to resolve the situation, or you would prefer to, you may write to our customer care team at: customercare.lettings@darlows.co.uk

On moving in you will need to:

- **Contact your local council**
(with dates and names of who has moved in and when, for tax purposes)
- **Set up your utility bills**
(it is your responsibility to contact water, gas and electricity companies)
- **Check your rental payments have been set up**
(check with your bank that regular payments have been set up)

Settle in and enjoy your new home!

If you have been given great service and would like to tell us about it we'd be keen to hear from you, please **leave us a review on TrustPilot, Facebook or Google**



