samuel estates
Lettings & Sales

End of Tenancy Guide



We have designed this guide with the aim to ensure that the end of your tenancy is as smooth and hassle free as possible. We suggest that you print out this document and keep it close by until you have completed your move and settled into your new home.

Now that you have served notice to end your tenancy, there are probably several questions you may have in relation to the vacating procedures and the return of your deposit.

Firstly, we will need to arrange a final inspection of the property. In most cases, this will be conducted by an Independent Inventory Company. If the Landlord conducted an inventory at the start of your tenancy, he or she may wish to carry out the final inspection themselves.

Our Property Management Team will liaise with the relevant Independent Inventory Company and will book an appointment for your Check Out. We will contact you shortly via email to confirm the time and date of the Check Out appointment.

Please be advised that once your Check Out time has been confirmed, it cannot be re scheduled.

Q.1 What do I need to do before my Check Out appointment?

Firstly, we would ask for you to reply to the email that our Property Management Team have sent you, confirming that you have received confirmation of the Inventory Check Out appointment and advise if you will be attending the Check Out appointment or not.

You should refer to your Tenancy Agreement and Inventory Check In Report, so you are aware of the standard of the property when you moved in, as this is how we will expect to receive it back from you, subject to fair wear and tear. Please note, that the Inventory Check Out Report will be used as evidence should the Landlord want to make deductions from the deposit for damages, delapidations and any costs for reinstating the property back to the condition in which you received it.

If you do not have a copy of the Check In Report, please feel free to ask a member of the Property Management Team to email you a copy.

Please remember that all fixtures, fittings and furniture should be returned to their original positions as they were when you moved in.

Q.2 Do I need to be present at the Check Out appointment?

There is no requirement that you should attend the Check Out, however we feel that it is important for you to be there, so that you can discuss any issues you may have with the Inventory Clerk and that you are able to agree final meter readings for the utilities and hand back the keys to property.

If you are not able to attend the Check Out appointment, you will need to make alternative arrangements with the Property Management Team to return the keys for the property. Keys must be returned to Samuel Estates before the Check Out.

Q.3 What happens at the Check Out appointment?

In most cases, an Independent Inventory Clerk will attend the property at the time given to you by our Property Management Team and the Clerk will carry out an inspection of the property. They will use the original Inventory Check In Report that was compiled at the start of your tenancy. They will also carry out meter readings and collect the keys to the property.

Q.4 Domestically clean or professionally cleaned?

Cleaning is the most commonly disputed item on the Check Out Report. If your Check In Report states that the property was professionally cleaned when you moved in, the Landlord will expect it to be professionally cleaned when you leave and hand back the property.

If you clean the property yourself and the Inventory Clerk feels that it has not been cleaned to a professional standard, the Landlord will have to send in professional cleaners and the cost of this will be deducted from your deposit.

Hiring a domestic cleaner at rate of e.g. £10 per hour does not constitute a professional clean. This would be considered a domestic clean and could result in the Landlord sending in a professional firm to clean the property after you have vacated.

We can recommend a cleaning company that will be able to carry out a professional clean on your behalf and we are happy to provide you with a copy of their price list.

The benefits of using our recommended cleaners as opposed to other cleaning companies, is that if the Inventory Clerk deems that the cleaning is not up to inventory standard, the cleaners will go back and clean free of charge.

Please remember that cleaning to a good domestic standard is NOT the same as a professional clean.

Q.5 When do I hand back my keys?

Once the Check Out has been completed you will be required to hand over all the keys to the Inventory Clerk and to vacate the property. You will not be allowed to re-enter the property after the Check Out. If you are not able to attend the Check Out appointment, you will need to make alternative arrangements with the Property Management Team to return the keys for the property ahead of the Check Out. Sadly if there are any keys missing, we will have to replace the relevant locks before the new tenants move in due to security reasons. The cost of this will be deducted from your deposit before it is returned.

Q.6 Council tax & utilities

Samuel Estates have partnered with a property concierge service called 'Just Move In', who will help us notify the various utility providers that you are vacating the property. They can also help you with you onward move, by providing help and assistance in selecting the right energy tariff, tenant insurance policies and broadband providers. They can also help with removal companies and storage should you require these services.

A 'Just Move In' concierge manager will contact you within a couple of days to give you an overview of their service. You can also contact them directly on 01202 022 448 or email them at move@justmovein.co. This is a complimentary service for all properties managed by Samuel Estates, and we hope that it makes your move, a pleasant one!

For Non-Managed properties, please can you ensure that you liaise directly with the utility providers to close down your accounts and have them transferred back into your landlords name.

Q.7 Does Samuel Estates automatically stop collecting rent?

No. It is therefore important that you cancel your Standing Order once your final rental payment has been made. Samuel Estates cannot be held responsible for any delay in recovering your money if you forget.

Q.8 Do I get to see the Check Out report?

Yes you do. The Inventory Clerk will make notes on the condition of the property and once they have produced it, we will receive a copy of the report within 3 working days after your Check Out.
The report will list any discrepancies to that of the original inventory Check In Report.

We will email a copy of this report to both yourself and the Landlord. If there are any damages, cleaning or compensation issues, we will list the relevant deductions that the Landlord will be seeking in order to restore the property back to the condition when you moved in subject to fair wear and tear.

Once the Check Out has been completed you will be required to hand over all the keys to the Inventory Clerk and to vacate the property. You will not be allowed to re-enter the property after the Check Out. If you are not able to attend the Check Out appointment, you will need to make alternative arrangements with the Property Management Team to return the keys for the property before the Check Out takes place. If there are any keys missing, we will have to replace the relevant locks before the new tenants move in due to security reasons. The cost of this will be deducted from your deposit before it is returned.

Q.9 How soon will I get my deposit back?

Working with you and your Landlord we will do everything reasonably possible to return your deposit quickly. Once agreement has been reached we can usually arrange for payment to your nominated bank account within a few days.

As a general guide you will be advised within approximately ten working days of the end of the

tenancy, by way of a schedule of damages, whether or not your Landlord proposes to make any deductions from your deposit. This figure is arrived at using the Check In and Check Out Reports. Whilst we advise your Landlord on what in our opinion is an appropriate figure, the ultimate decision as to how much is claimed rests with your Landlord and not Samuel Estates.

Provided you and the Landlord agree, we will repay the deposit, less any deductions, according to conditions of the Tenancy Agreement. In accordance with Tenancy deposit Act 2007. The repayment of the deposit or any balance of it must be made within ten working days of the Landlord and the Tenant agreeing the allocation of the deposit. We will however aim to return it as soon as an agreement has been reached.

Q.10 What if we cannot agree on release of the deposit?

Under normal circumstances the amount not in dispute can be refunded in accordance with your joint instructions, leaving us holding only the amount in dispute. Whilst you should make reference to your Tenancy Agreement, in the majority of cases your deposit will be protected under the Tenancy Deposit Scheme. There are currently three national schemes which can be used to protect your deposit. In most cases Samuel Estates will have registered your deposit with by the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS).

The Tenancy Agreement will confirm how and when you should advise us that you are disputing your Landlords claim for damages, after which we will use our reasonable endeavors to broker an agreement between the parties.

If an agreement cannot be reached within ten days then either you or your Landlord are free to refer the matter to the TDS. Once referred to the TDS they will ask us to transfer the disputed amount to them for the duration of the arbitration process. Once the TDS has concluded its investigations it will apportion the deposit accordingly.

Both yours and your Landlords' statutory obligations to take legal action through the County Court is unaffected, but you should be aware that judges often take a dim view of a Landlord or tenant who chooses to breach the terms of the agreement by not using the independent arbitration provided by the TDS.

Please note that disputes must be raised with the TDS within three months of the end of the tenancy.

Q11. How much does the TDS charge me?

If your tenancy comes under the Housing Act, which most will as long as your rent is under £100,000 per annum and you are an individual and not a company, then generally speaking there is no charge. For tenancies outside of the Housing Act, please make reference to the Agreement to see on what basis, if any, the TDS might adjudicate. For Assured Shorthold Tenancies there is generally speaking no charge for arbitration.

Q.12 Can Samuel Estates refer the matter to the TDS on my behalf?

No, our client in this matter is your Landlord, and to avoid any conflict of interest we are unable to refer the matter to the TDS on your behalf or to offer you anything other than general advice. Samuel Estates is not a party to the agreement and does not financially gain from any deductions from your deposit. Whilst we offer your Landlord advice we are not responsible for his decision in terms of the amount of damages claimed or release of your deposit.

Q.13 Why do I need to provide a forwarding address?

We require you to provide us with a physical address where we can contact you after you have vacated the property. This is in case there are any issues regarding the refunding of your deposit. We will also pass your address to the relevant utility companies, so that they will be able to contact you in the case of any enquiries relating to your tenancy and we will return your deposit to this address.

We hope that we have covered all of the questions you may have regarding the end of your tenancy and what happens with your deposit. If you have any questions that we have not covered, please do contact your Property Manager. Finally we have included a check list for your move, which we hope will help you cover all the bases.

Moving Checklist

1. Property Conditions



The property should be as clean and clear as possible by the time you come to move out - this is where disputes occur most often. You may wish to hire an end-of-tenancy cleaning service to make extra sure, though you're under no obligation to do so.

The main tasks are listed here:

- Are the kitchen appliances (including oven, hob and microwave) spotless?
- Have you defrosted the freezer?
- Have you wiped out all cupboards to get rid of dust?
- Have you covered up any scuff or dirt marks on the walls or doors by repainting or cleaning?
- Have you cleaned the windows
- Is the garden tidy (depending on the time of year)?

2. Keys



- Have you labelled all the keys for easy identification?
- If there are any missing, have you notified the property manager?

3. Address Change



Have you notified everyone who needs to be notified of your change of address? Possible people and organisations include:

- Your bank
- Your insurance provider(s)
- Your GP, dentist and other relevant medical practitioners
- The DVLA (for motor insurance and driving license)
- Your mobile phone provider
- Service providers who need your address (i.e. magazines, Amazon, etc)
- Royal Mail (when setting up a redirect service to cover your first few months in your new home)
- HMRC

4. The Week Before the Move



Have you bought or borrowed enough boxes, newspaper, masking tape, pens and bubble wrap for everything you need to take with you?

- Have you hired a moving van?
- Have you enlisted help to pack?
- Have you put aside the belongings you'll need throughout moving day and on the first night in your new home?
- Have you checked out the parking situation outside your new property and saved a space for the van if possible to ensure it doesn't have to park round the corner?

5. Council Tax & Utilities



As far as utilities are concerned, most providers should allow you to switch addresses relatively easily, though there may be short delays if phone lines or other hardware needs to be installed at your new property. After you've moved out, you can provide final meter readings if necessary.

- Have you contacted your local council tax authority to inform them of your change of address?
- Have you contacted your water supplier to let them know you're leaving?
- Have you contacted your telephone and broadband supplier to let them know you're leaving?
- Have you contacted your gas supplier to let them know you're leaving?
- Have you contacted your electricity supplier to let them know you're leaving?
- Have you notified your TV license provider to let them know you're moving?

6. On Moving Day



- Have a good breakfast
- Have you made a final sweep of the property and made sure it's as clean as possible?
- Have you locked all windows and doors?
- Have you taken photographs where necessary if you think you may require proof of conditions?
- Have you sorted out childcare and petcare for the day?

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