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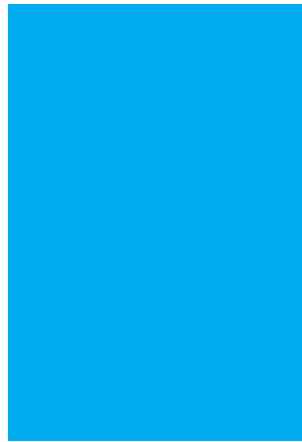
A landlord's guide to

LETTING YOUR HOME

A comprehensive guide to choosing an estate agent, preparing your property for the market, and the lettings process.

Commercial

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RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Letting your property

Letting your property with andrew scott robertson

andrew scott robertson is an independently owned estate agency offering a breadth of property solutions, including Residential and Commercial Sales, Lettings and Management, and Chartered Surveying.

We offer expert advice backed by over 40 years' experience across all types of freehold and leasehold property; from houses and flats to land/sites, residential investments and commercial. We also offer specialist advice on lease enfranchisement.



The lettings process

It can be daunting trying to find good tenants and navigate the legislation needed to keep up with the law. At andrew scott robertson we work hard to take the stress out of letting your property.

Here's a useful reminder of the lettings process...

Preparing your property

- Your property needs to appeal to the broadest range of potential tenants. A clean, fresh and neutrally decorated home will let more easily (and possibly at a higher price).
- We will give you clear and proven advice on how to present your property in the best possible light – also known as 'home staging'.

Valuing your home and choosing your agent

- A lettings agent is best placed to take your property to market. It is likely that the agent will have potential tenants already lined up and available to attend viewings.
- The agent's valuation should be supported by details of other properties recently let in the same area. A helpful insight is to view online a selection of similar properties, currently available to let, that are in competition with yours.
- Ask about the agent's marketing activity. Does the agent subscribe to the numerous property portals available? How does the agent keep clients up to date with progress?
- What about service standards? What will the agent be doing in return for their fee?
- Pick the estate agent in whom you have the most confidence. Personalities are very important and we tend to gravitate towards individuals we feel we can trust.

At andrew scott robertson, we combine traditional high standards of customer care with the latest technology and extensive marketing.



What makes andrew scott robertson different?

We work hard to do everything we can to find you the best tenants and the highest possible rent. Some of the key reasons why our clients choose us time and again to rent their properties are:

- Personal service and attention to detail that is tailored to meet your specific needs.
- Extensive database of applicants actively seeking to rent across all price ranges.
- Strong links with relocation agents and global employers ranging from banks and energy companies, to law firms and embassies, with a diverse range of requirements, including both long and short term lets. Corporate tenants are often prepared to pay a premium for the right property.
- Comprehensive and tailored marketing including internet marketing through our own website and the UK's leading property portals, as well as advertising in property papers and magazines, mailshots and leafleting.
- Intimate local knowledge of property prices in your area and accurate valuations which take all local benefits into account, whether your property is surrounded by the best parks, restaurants, schools or transport links.



Our Property Management Service

Our experienced Property Management team look after properties on behalf of our clients, relieving them of the responsibility of being a landlord. In fact, many of our corporate tenants prefer managed properties.

Rent Collection Service

Whether you are an experienced landlord or renting your property out for the first time, andrew scott robertson provides a complete professional service, which starts with a free market appraisal and assessment of the rental value.

How it works

Once a rent has been agreed and we have been instructed, the service continues with marketing from our two prominent high street offices in Wimbledon Town and Wimbledon Village.

We also market via our website and via internet portals including Rightmove, Prime Location and Zoopla, as well as carrying out local newspaper and magazine advertising. All viewings are accompanied by an andrew scott robertson Lettings Consultant, and once a tenant has been identified the service features the following:

Features

- Full referencing and credit checks on prospective tenants.
- Drawing up the tenancy agreement, including managing the inventory.
- Organising gas and electrical checks and Energy Performance Certificates.
- Holding the tenant's deposit in an approved Tenancy Deposit Scheme.
- Collecting rent on a monthly basis and paying this into your bank account by BACS within 10 working days, on an agreed date.
- Negotiating tenancy renewals on your behalf.
- Managing checkout procedures and inspections when tenants leave.

Fully Managed Service

In addition to the features of our Rent Collection Service, our Fully Managed Service includes periodic property inspection visits and the handling of any maintenance issues on your behalf.

Additional Features

The Fully Managed Service is designed to offer complete peace of mind to both you and your tenant. In addition to the features of the Rent Collection Service, the Fully Managed Service offers:

- Tenancy renewals department.
- Managing quality repairs using approved local contractors.
- Periodic property inspections.
- Accounts department to manage costs of repairs.
- Informing utility companies of tenancy changes.
- Advising over dilapidations at the end of tenancy.



Your obligations

- You have a legal obligation to your tenants to ensure their safety. A Gas Safety Certificate will be required and the property's furnishings need to comply with current furniture & furnishings fire safety regulations. You will also need to provide an Energy Performance Certificate before we can start marketing your property. Andrew Scott Robertson can arrange these for you.
- Check the terms of your lease to ensure you have permission to let your property. If you have a mortgage you'll need to make sure that consent is granted for you to let.
- It is essential that you have a valid, assured short hold tenancy agreement drawn up. If you are using Andrew Scott Robertson, we will arrange for this to be prepared.

We are up to date with all the latest legislation and we are members of ARLA and The Property Ombudsman Scheme.



Receiving offers

- All landlords are given feedback on a weekly basis. At this time the negotiator dealing with your property may tell you about any interested parties or second viewings booked.
- At Andrew Scott Robertson, our agents regularly monitor the online performance of your property on the key property portals such as Rightmove and can provide you with analytics on the number of views of your property via this channel.
- You should normally expect to receive an offer within 4 weeks of your property coming onto the market. We will use our solid experience to advise you on what is realistically the best offer.

Accepting an offer

- References will need to be provided and a credit check carried out. Our reference procedure takes approximately 7 working days (if prospective tenants have their documentation to hand). We use an accredited credit reference agency and they cover credit checks, employment history and previous landlord's references. Your tenants may need a Guarantor and this will be discussed with you before we start any additional referencing.
- At this time we will also arrange what other services you require (for example if you require an inventory or gas safety certificate to be organised). We will then contact the applicants and take a holding deposit to take the property off the market. At this point you must instruct any other agents to stop marketing.
- It is worth considering taking out rental guarantee insurance to give you peace of mind. Your agent should be able to arrange this for you.

Signing and exchanging contracts

- Once the two parties have agreed the terms of the tenancy and are ready to sign the tenancy agreement, it is at this point that any outstanding monies are paid.

Tenant move in

- On the day of the move in, the tenant will meet an inventory clerk at the property and take note of its condition. Within a few days a copy of this report will be sent to both parties and all utility metres are read.
- We ask that the agent is supplied with enough keys for all tenants and an additional set when we are instructed to manage the property on your behalf.

Renewing the tenancy agreement

- Approximately three months before the end of the tenancy we will contact you and the tenant asking for their intentions. At this time if you wish to extend we will assess current market trends. On your instruction we will also contact the tenant. Once the renewal has been agreed contracts will be drawn up and sent out to all parties for signature and return.

Serving notice

- If you wish to serve notice on your tenants to leave, you must confirm this to the office in writing. Please note that notice cannot be served on verbal instructions.



Our other services

Whether you are buying, selling, renting or building, or if you just need someone to manage your investment, Andrew Scott Robertson can offer you the service you are looking for.

Residential Sales

We are aware that every buyer will one day be a seller and treat potential buyers as clients for life. We offer a range of services to individuals or companies looking to purchase property in South London and the surrounding areas. Whether you are looking for a mansion in Wimbledon Village or a family home in Raynes Park, our aim is to do everything we can to assist you in finding the perfect property.



Before



After

Home Staging Service

Whether you are selling or renting your home or are a property developer, our professional property presentation and home staging service will help you present your property in its best light, in order to attract a wider audience and sell or rent faster for the highest value possible.

Home Finder Service

In addition to our Residential Sales services, we also offer a Home Finder service for buyers. Known as the Premium Buyers Club, this service includes allocating a member of staff to actively source suitable properties; providing information and advice about the locality and its amenities; accompanying clients around the area to help identify specific locations or properties; identifying possible properties not yet on the market that might become available through hand delivering enquiries, canvassing up to 1,000 flyers and placing adverts in the local press and property magazines; negotiating the purchase price on the client's behalf.

This unique service is free, and as soon as you have registered your interest we will get working for you straight away.



A 10% discount on both the Floorplan Proposal and the Extension Visualisation packages is available to clients of Andrew Scott Robertson.



Home Design Service

Before marketing your property, we can arrange for our partner firm, Potential etc. to draw up a set of design schemes in the form of artistic perspective sketches and proposed floor plans to showcase your home's potential to prospective buyers. These plans can then be used as a marketing tool to enable buyers to invest in the vision for your home, rather than just the property as it stands. By doing this, the property is opened up to a much wider audience and this will help you achieve the best possible price.

Chartered Surveyors

The only way to truly know the value of your next home and the quality and condition of its structure is to have it assessed by a professional. We work within the strict guidelines set down by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and have a team of qualified surveyors operating in London and the South of England. Commercial Agency & Management: We provide commercial sales and lettings services for investors, occupiers and landlords, as well as property management services.

Professional Advisory

As members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) we are well placed to assist with any issue, whether straightforward or more complex. Our RICS registered Valuers prepare Regulated (Red Book) valuations of commercial premises for bank lending, taxation, company accounting and pension fund purposes.

We can also advise you on:

- Rent reviews
- Lease renewals
- Dilapidation claims
- Dispute resolution
- Expert Witness
- Residential Lease extensions and enfranchisement
- Valuations for disposals by Charities in accordance with the Charities Act

Commercial Agency and Management

Andrew Scott Robertson provide commercial sales and lettings services for investors, occupiers and landlords, as well as commercial property management services.

Glossary

Explaining the Jargon...

However hard we try to avoid it, jargon runs through the property business. Our glossary will serve as a helpful guide, just in case you're not familiar with any terms...

A

Arrears: Money unpaid by a tenant in whole or in part after the date specified in the tenancy agreement.

Assured Short Hold Tenancy: Offers the landlord a guaranteed right to repossess his/her property at the end of the term stated in the tenancy agreement.

B

Block Management: Refers to agents acting on behalf of freeholders and leaseholds for blocks of apartments and flats. Normally this involves organising internal cleaning, garden maintenance, insurance and redecoration.

Break Clause: Sometimes inserted in a fixed term tenancy, typically if the initial fixed term is for a year or more. A break clause will usually allow either landlord or tenant to give two months written notice at any stage after a particular date or period of the tenancy, thus terminating the tenancy earlier than the end of the original fixed term. If the initial tenancy is renewed a break clause may be requested if either party do not know if they can continue the contract or not. May also be referred to as a Release Clause.

C

Commission: The estate agent's fee for letting the property.

Common areas: Areas of land or buildings, such as gardens, hallways, recreational facilities and parking areas, where more than one resident shares access.

Contents insurance: Insurance that covers the contents of a home, including electrical goods, carpets, furniture and curtains.

Corporate Let: Let to a bona fide company.

Covenants: Rules and regulations governing the property, contained in its Title Deeds or Lease.

Credit Search References: Are requested for a tenant applying for accommodation. Many agents and individual landlords use companies who contact the applicant's employer and landlord and also check out the tenant's credit history, providing a report on the prospective tenant's financial suitability to rent.

D

Deposit: A monetary amount held by the landlord or agent for security against damage to a property. In Britain, approximately the equivalent to six weeks rental is held. In April 2007 a new system was introduced in England and Wales for Assured Short Hold Tenancies. The new Tenancy Deposit Scheme mixes custodial and insurance backed deposit holding mechanisms. The landlord or agent must register the tenancy details within 14 days of the tenancy start. At the end of the tenancy the tenant has to be notified of any deductions within a given time.

Dilapidation: Damage to a property or contents that exceeds acceptable wear and tear.

Duty of Care: An obligation owed to others, specifically Landlords and Tenants, to provide the correct advice regarding lettings and ensure the well-being and safety of those who may visit the property.

E

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC): This assesses your property's energy efficiency and environmental impact. Graded from A for most efficient to G for least efficient.

Execute a Tenancy: The procedure to finalise a legally valid tenancy by dating the Original (signed by the landlord) and the Counterpart (signed by the tenant) and exchanging them. The date is legally considered to be the date on which the agreement was made.

F

Fixtures and Fittings: Items usually provided in a letting that may include curtains, carpets, blinds, light fittings, kitchen units and appliances. In some cases it may also include furniture.

G

Gas Safety Regulations: The Landlord must ensure that a gas safety check is carried out prior to a let and then annually after that. An authorised Gas Safe registered engineer must carry out the check and a copy of the record must also be given to the tenant.

Guarantor: A person who is prepared to guarantee rental payments and other obligations of a tenancy to a Landlord. The guarantor is liable for payment if a tenant is unable to pay, so the guarantor will need to have a regular income or savings. References or credit searches will usually be taken up on a guarantor.



H

Handover: The time when tenants are allowed occupation of a property.

Holding Deposit: This is usually a nominal amount that will be requested when a tenant applies for a tenancy of a property and their offer is accepted. If the tenancy does not proceed because the tenant pulls out or the references are unacceptable, this deposit is often retained by the agent. Assuming the tenancy proceeds, then the amount is normally deducted from the first month's rental or deposit.

HMO: House in multiple occupation, refers to bedsits or flats which normally offer a self-contained room with either cooking facilities in the room, a shared kitchen or shared bathroom and toilet facilities. Under the Housing Act 2004 it will cover any property occupied by more than one household that is a converted building even if the flats are not self-contained.

I

Initial Term: This describes the first period of the tenancy.

Inventory: An inventory details the contents of a property and includes the state and condition of a property including the fixtures, fittings and the garden. This should be checked with the tenant at the start of the tenancy and then checked out with the tenant at the end. Often a professional inventory clerk is employed to carry out this service.

J

Joint & Several Liability: Where there is more than one adult living in the property, the tenancy will say they are "jointly and severally" responsible. This means that, jointly, the tenants are liable for the payment of all rents and all liabilities falling upon the tenants during the tenancy, as well as any breach of the Agreement. Individually each tenant is responsible for payment of all rent and all liabilities falling upon the tenant, as well as any breach of the Agreement until all payments have been made in full.

L

Landlord: A person, persons, company or body that has the right to let the property.

Lease: Often confused with tenancy agreement this is normally a long lease on an apartment. The actual document governing a rental is normally known as a Tenancy Agreement.

Lessor: Refers to the person responsible for granting a lease, usually the landlord.

M

Maintenance/service charge: Costs incurred by the freeholder and charged to the leaseholder for repairing and maintaining common parts of a building, occupied by leaseholders. These costs are not payable by the tenant.

Managing Agent: A professional or company responsible under an agency agreement for the maintenance and management of the property.

N

Notice Period: The amount of notice that the Landlord must give the Tenant to end the tenancy and vice versa.

O

Occupancy Rights: Are contained within the tenancy agreement and give the tenant right of occupancy of the property.

P

PCM: Refers to a Rental figure and stands for 'per calendar month'.

T

Tenant: A person, persons, company or organisation who is entitled to occupy a property under the terms and conditions of a tenancy agreement.

Tenancy agreement: A legal binding document containing details about rental terms that is sometimes referred to as a rental agreement. It will state the parties, i.e. the landlord and tenant(s), the rental price and the property address along with the Covenants/obligations of the let.

Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS): Run by The Dispute Service Limited for the protection of tenancy deposits and the resolution of disputes between landlords, agents and tenants concerning the return of deposits at the end of a tenancy. The TDS is a mandatory scheme that has been set up in accordance with the Housing Act 2004.

Term of Tenancy: This refers to the length of a tenancy. Most initial agreements are for a minimum of six months, although they may be shorter and longer.

Termination: Refers to the ending of a tenancy.

Y

Yield: Refers to income from a property calculated as a percentage of its value.