



February 2014

Why Mid-Term Inspections are Vital

Rising rents and a shortage of affordable property have created an army of 'ghosts' who live in sub-let rooms in rented homes and are unknown to the agent or the landlord. Recent research* shows that an estimated 3.3 million people are living as unofficial tenants – that is as many as 1 in every 10 rental homes. Almost half of residential lettings agencies have found multiple occupants living in a home unofficially, according to research done by the insurer Direct Line.

Patricia Barber, Chairman of the [Association of Independent Inventory Clerks](#), was quoted in an article on [Residential Landlord](#), "The sheer cost of renting in some parts of the UK has driven some tenants to kip on a mates' spare room, or in more sinister circumstances, multiple sub-tenants inhabit a property over time."

With many people living in the property wear and tear naturally increases, with great expense incurred. In one instance sub-letting incurred more than £10,000 worth of damage, a cost that had to be covered by the landlord.

The story was also covered by [Letting Agent Today](#).

Average Age of Tenants of the Increase

Due to the difficulties in raising a substantial deposit and obtaining a mortgage, more and more of those that would normally have bought a house are still tenants. In 2013 the number of over 30's living in rented accommodation increased by also 6%, and represents 60% of all tenants in the UK, showing that many young professionals have not been able to make the leap onto the housing ladder.

This was probed further in at [article that appeared in The Independent](#) newspaper earlier this month, and can still be read on there website.

Again, demonstrating our voice in the industry Patricia Barber was also quoted, and again the subject of sub-letting - and the associated pitfalls - was again a topic for discussion.

Tenants Forced to Take On Household Repairs Themselves

The advertisement is enclosed in a red border. At the top, it says 'Property Inventories you can trust' in white text on a red background. Below this, it states 'Letting Agents, Landlords & Tenants know they are in safe hands when using an AIIIC INDEPENDENT INVENTORY CLERK'. It then mentions 'The UK's largest membership organisation for Independent Inventory Clerks. (500 members)'. A list of three bullet points follows: 'AIIIC - Respected throughout the industry', 'AIIIC - Leading the way in training & support', and 'AIIIC - Excellence through independence'. At the bottom, it says 'Also - wide range of training courses & aids for anyone entering the inventory business.' and provides the website 'www.theaiic.co.uk'.

More and more tenants are taking matters into their own hands when it comes to property repairs. Recent research has shown about one in three tenants have had a home emergency in the past 12 months, and of those only a third of those were dealt with by the agent or landlord on the same day, with also a quarter having to wait over a week.

Patricia Barber was quoted in an [article on RLA News Hub](#), "Landlords have a duty of care with their tenants and should be responding to emergencies in hours, not days."

Problems include leakings showers that have brought down kitchen ceilings, through to taps that don't even work and result in the tenant drawing water from the bathroom taps only for the whole of their tenancy

period.

The article on the RLA site also gives guidelines for response times for landlords and agents, with gas, electric and water faults requiring a response within 24 hours, cookers within 48 hours and other white goods fixed or replaced with 72 hours.

Remember, that while letting a tenant make repairs themselves may seem financially lucrative in the short-term, any repairs may invalidate your insurance, especially if it causes injury or damage in the future. Also bear in mind that a tenant is likely to do an emergency fix, rather than repair the fault suitably.

Training Courses in 2014

The AIC run industry leading training courses on all aspects of inventory work. Two more course dates have been released, and they are open to ALL interested parties. Our courses are always popular and places are filled quickly so if you are interested please contact us immediately.

Guidelines for Inventory Professionals – Saturday 5th to Sunday 6th April. This course is aimed at new and inexperienced clerks and also persons thinking of becoming an inventory clerk. It would also be ideal for any new Associate Members, or indeed any other colleagues or interested parties.

Check Out Workshop – Wednesday 16th April. This is a one-day workshop covering the whole check-out process. End of tenancy check-out inspections can be contentious if not handled correctly, causing wasted time, energy and money for all parties.

Inventory Refresher Workshop – Spring (date to be confirmed). This is a classroom based one-day Inventory Refresher workshop and is aimed at both new and experienced clerks wishing to hone their descriptive skills.

Details for all our courses and booking information can be found on our web site, www.theaic.co.uk/training.php, or pre-register your interest for the workshops by emailing centraloffice@theaic.co.uk.

New Training Course Coming Soon

Fair Wear & Tear Workshop - The AIC is pleased to announce we will soon be holding a half day workshop in Bracknell, Berkshire, dedicated to fair wear & tear in respect to tenant check outs. This workshop will cover life expectancies on a variety of items found within a rented home from ceilings to carpets and worktops to wardrobes.

Full details of this course will be coming soon to our website, in the meantime, if you would be interested in attending this course, please email centraloffice@theaic.co.uk so that we can email you directly once the date for this course has been confirmed

To find out more information about the Association Of Independent Inventory Clerks and the find a member in your area to inspect your properties please see www.theaic.co.uk.

Patricia Barber, Chairman