

INVENTORY INSIGHT



October 2014

Hi, welcome to the October edition of Inventory Insight, newsletter of the Association of Independent Inventory Clerks.

Brief Guide to 2014 Blind Safety Regulations

New regulations now in force require that all operating cords that form a loop must be made child safe. According to Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (www.rosipa.com) 29 children have been strangled by blind cords in recent years. Blinds in all properties should now be child safe.

New blinds will be either safe by design, have in built safety systems or be supplied with separate safety systems. Limitations are now placed on cord lengths and safety devices will prevent cords/chains from forming a hazardous loop. Blinds already fitted must also comply.

Blind cords should be secured at least 1.5 meters from the floor. The cord should be fixed in a taut position. There are a number of safety devices available that are cheap and easy to fix.

- Something simple such as a cleat hook, fixed to the wall, can enable cord to be secured out of reach.
- Chain break connector – many blinds already have these as part of the pulley controls. These break apart when pressure is applied but can be snapped back together each time. These can easily be fitted in a couple of minutes.
- Cord/chain tidy - these can be fixed to the wall so that the cord is taut, high enough to be out of a child's reach.

For more information on blind cord safety and pictures/video of various safety devices go to the British Blind and Shutter Association website: www.bbsa.org.uk.

Landlords Can Have Unrealistic Expectations at Check-Ins

Landlords are still pushing for 'betterment', or 'new for old' at the end of tenancies and many have unrealistic expectations of what they can claim against tenant deposits.

Whilst the tenant has a duty of care to return the property in the same condition at the end of the tenancy as found at the start (allowing for wear & tear) as listed on the inventory report, the law does not allow landlords to claim 'betterment' or 'new for old' from the tenant's deposit.

Many agents and landlords are seemingly unaware of the 'betterment principle' which means that if an item was old or worn at check-in, and after a two year tenancy there is some additional damage, the law will not allow a landlord to simply replace this item with a new one. Instead, some sort of compensation is allowable.

The betterment principle applies to cleaning issues as well. If a carpet was badly stained at the time of check-in a landlord can't expect the tenant to pay for cleaning at the check-out, no matter how long the tenancy has been.

Often landlords will not bother to read the check in inventory which will properly detail the condition. Normal wear and tear is a fact of life with rental properties, just as it would be at home. The best way landlords can ensure that the property's condition is fully recorded is by having a comprehensive inventory in place at the start of any new tenancy, and that a thorough check-in and check-out report is completed.

Members of the AIIC are experts in assessing fair wear and tear and have the knowledge and experience to take into account all factors before making their recommendations.

Find your nearest AICC Member on our A-Z directory, www.theaiic.co.uk.

Blind Safety and Your Inventory Clerk?

All AICC members have a duty of care to report any safety issues in a property. You can expect your inventory clerk to make statements on all inventories and check-out reports regarding any potential hazards concerning dangerous blind cords, or any other health and safety issue observed.

More information on this subject will be available shortly on our website together with suggested disclaimers for AICC members.

Situations Vacant

Inventory clerk (Freelance) North London

Freelance AICC regulated clerk required which could lead to a full time position for the right person.

We cover all of London, the majority of our jobs are in North and East London. Our reports are produced using audio dictation and digital photos so clerks are required to have their own dictaphone, camera, utility keys and use of a tablet will be beneficial.

Please email your CV & details to Niven Chinasamy (niven@excaliburinventories.co.uk) at Excalibur Inventories.

Inventory clerk (Freelance) Epsom, Surrey

Paid on per job basis that will vary depending on size of property.

Ideal applicant will have experience in compiling inventories for residential lettings, however candidates with less experience will be considered. Excellent eye for detail with ability to write concise, accurate descriptions.

Need access to computer/email from home, access to own car, clean driving license, have a methodical approach, hardworking, reliable and honest and have impeccable time keeping.

Please email your CV & details to info@estateinventories.co.uk at Estate Inventories.

Training Courses in 2014

The AICC are pleased to offer the following courses:

Guidelines for Inventory Professionals – Saturday 15th to Sunday 16th November - **FULLY BOOKED**. 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.

(The next Guidelines for Inventory Professionals will be held during February 2015. This can be booked on our website when the dates are known. Please email centraloffice@theaiic.co.uk if you wish to be kept updated.)

Courses can be booked directly on our website: <http://www.theaiic.co.uk/product-category/training/>

Keeping in Contact

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The Association of Independent Inventory Clerks (AIIC) is the UK's largest and longest established membership organisation, with over 650 members nationwide. The AIIC is a self-regulatory body with an ongoing monitoring process, Code of Practice, Guidelines and full complaints procedure.

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

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