



AIIC PO Box 1288 West End Surrey GU24 9WE Tel / Fax 01276 855 388 Email centraloffice@theaiic.co.uk

Guidelines to Professional Practice

Introduction

The aim of the AIIC is to make sure that every landlord, tenant and agent in the UK understands how inventory services can help them protect themselves and their clients and also to provide a range of valuable services to members.

It is important that inventory clerks adhere to the same principles so clients know what to expect. The guidelines set out in this document have been prepared using well established principles which have been in place since inventory work was first recognised by letting agents around 30 years ago.

It is accepted that the contractual terms under which an individual inventory clerk operates in relation to his / her clients may cause adjustments to these guidelines. However, they are considered to be the basis of good practice.

An inventory report forms part of the contract between a landlord and tenant. It should provide an accurate written record of the condition and contents of a property at the start of a tenancy and be checked again for differences at the end.

Inventory clerks should be fully aware of the legal implications of their work.

In recent years rented property has been made safer for tenants by the introduction of legislation. The result is inventory clerks can now be held accountable if certain items are not checked fully.

By following these guidelines an inventory clerk can be assured of the full support of the AIIC in the event of a dispute.

The AIIC welcomes any suggestions as to improvements and constantly monitors changes in legislation and working practice. These guidelines will be updated when necessary and re-issued to all members.

Inventory Compilation

The inventory should be laid out in a logical manner.

Three copies of the inventory should normally be supplied. (Owner, tenant, managing agent)

The inventory should allow sufficient space in the right hand margin for comments relating to the condition of each item to be made at check out or check in.

It is suggested items listed within an inventory be numbered for easy reference.

The inventory should describe the contents of a property for easy identification. It is suggested it be noted whether or not the relevant items have safety labels. Approximate measurements should be given where felt appropriate.

In addition to a full listing of the contents of the property, the inventory should also include a description of the following: ceilings, walls, woodwork, flooring, doors (individually and both sides) windows (individually) light switches, light fittings, power points, telephone sockets, aerial sockets etc etc

The inventory should include a full key list if possible, this list being checked and updated at the check-in.

The inventory, where practicable, should include a list of the appliance user manuals as found in the property.

Cellars, lofts, attics, eaves and similar areas are not in the inventory clerks jurisdiction unless a specific request is made.

Light bulbs should be checked. Other appliances, gas or electrical etc will not normally be tested by the clerk unless requested, and then only if deemed possible.

Agents / landlords / tenants should be made aware that it is not possible to properly check items such as cookers, washing machines and dishwashers etc.

The inventory should be dated to show when it was compiled, re-typed or amended.



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Check-in

Each item on the inventory should be checked, and legible notes should be made on the inventory of any changes seen. It should be made obvious as to when notes were made so the inventory reflects the condition of the property and contents at a fixed time.

Readings for utilities should be taken and the telephone should be noted as connected or not. Where no reading is taken a reason should be provided.

A declaration sheet summarising the condition at the commencement of the tenancy should be prepared.

A list of keys handed over should be included on the inventory or declaration sheet.

Check-out

The check out should only be conducted against the inventory which was agreed at the start of the tenancy together with any information supplied as to any work carried out or items added or removed during the tenancy.

Each item on the inventory should be checked and legible notes made of any changes seen.

A check-out report listing significant variations which have occurred during the course of the tenancy should be compiled and supplied with the working inventory to the instructing principal as soon as possible.

A check-out report should not be made on items which have not been listed on the inventory or shown as added later. If requested to comment on such items it should be stated that the item was not seen at the beginning of the tenancy.

If practical, appliances and utilities may be tested but this should not be taken to mean the item is serviceable or safe.

Readings for utilities should be taken and the telephone should be noted as connected or not.

The keys returned should be checked against the list as provided at check-in.

The inventory clerk should take all possible steps to ensure the property is left secure.

General Notes

Records of appointments made, inventories compiled, reports and commissions undertaken should be kept for reference for a reasonable period.

It is recommended that some form of disclaimer be used. The exact form and content is discretionary, however the AIIC recommend the following:

This inventory provides a fair and accurate record of the contents and condition of the contents of the property as well as the property's internal condition. It is the responsibility of the landlord and tenant or the respective agents to agree between themselves the accuracy of this report. The person preparing the inventory is not an expert in fabrics, woods, materials or antiques etc. Nor is the inventory clerk a qualified surveyor. The inventory should not be used as an accurate description of each and every piece of furniture and equipment nor as a structural survey report. Property left in lofts, cellars and locked rooms which have not been inventoried are the sole responsibility of the landlord.

The Fire & Safety Regulation regarding furnishing, gas, electrical and similar services are ultimately the responsibility of the instructing principal. Where the inventory notes "FFR label seen", this should not be interpreted to mean the item complies with the "Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) (Amendments) 1993". It is a record that the item had a label as described or similar to that detailed in the "Guide" published by the department of Trade and Industry January 1997 (or subsequent date), attached at the time the inventory was compiled. It is not a statement that the item can be considered to comply with the regulations.