

24th October 2016

Dear

The Property Ombudsman Scheme (TPO) is contacting agents in Swansea in response to recent reports that suggest a number of lettings agents in this area are breaking the law by not displaying their fees.

TPO has launched a new national campaign to ensure every lettings agent is compliant with the law by clearly displaying their fees to consumers.

**This letter hereby requires you to provide the following evidence:**

- **An image of your fees on display in the branch**
- **A web link and image to demonstrate where your fees are displayed on your website**

#### **What does the law require?**

The Consumer Rights Act 2015 applies to all letting and managing agents in England and Wales. The legislation requires agents to display a complete list of fees, charges or penalties (however expressed) payable by landlords and tenants for any letting agency or property management service at the earliest stage in the transaction. This information must be displayed on your website and prominently at all premises where you deal face-to-face with tenants and landlords.

TPO's membership terms require that all agents are compliant with the law and the scheme's Code of Practice, which clearly states in Section 1m that all agents must display their fees.

#### **Enforcement action**

The campaign is being run jointly with the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), which represents trading standards officers across the UK who have the powers to impose fines of up to £5,000 on any letting agent that fails to display its fees.

Any agent that fails to provide the evidence requested above will be referred by TPO to Trading Standards for further investigation. The campaign will highlight the growing number of cases where agents have been forced to pay the maximum fine following random spot checks on high street firms across the country.

Our joint aim with this campaign is to improve compliance within the industry and raise awareness among consumers so more landlords and tenants ask about fees before they choose their letting agent.

#### **How do I submit my evidence?**

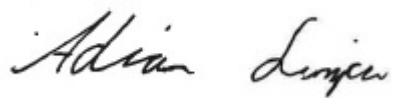
1. All evidence must be emailed to [membershipcompliance@tpos.co.uk](mailto:membershipcompliance@tpos.co.uk) within 4 weeks of the date of this letter (21st November 2016)
2. In the email subject bar please type "LETTINGS FEES CAMPAIGN"
3. Evidence required: i) photograph of lettings fees as displayed in your office, ii) website link to lettings fees displayed on your website
4. In the body of the email please type i) your business Trading Name, ii) any reason why you have not included both items of evidence required eg "I do not have a website."
5. Your email will be acknowledged – please keep a copy on file for your records.

We hope you'll support TPO and CTSI with this campaign, which will be publicised in printed media and through our social media channels to improve standards in the industry and protect consumers from unfair practices.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Fitzjohn', with a horizontal line underneath.

Gerry Fitzjohn  
Board Chairman  
TPO Ltd.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Simpson', written in a cursive style.

Adrian Simpson  
Service Director (Commercial Services)  
Chartered Trading Standards Institute