## **Latest Operating Policy – Update: 04 January 2021**

#### 04 January 2021

## Agents CAN continue working through national lockdown

Agents and the housing market in England are still in business even during the third national lockdown which has just started and will last until mid-February at least.

The government's official guidance for England says that agents, as with all other workers, are advised to work from home wherever possible. But specifically it adds:

You can still move home. People outside your household or <u>support</u> bubble should not help with moving house unless absolutely necessary.

#### **19 December 2020**

The housing market is to stay open across the UK, including in the new Tier 4 areas of England.

An announcement from Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick, on Twitter, says:

"Housing market update: the sales and rental markets remain open in all tiers. All associated activities can continue as before." But he continues: "Please follow the Covid-secure guidance. And use your judgment as to whether it's necessary right now."

Thomas & Partners will continue to play a role in our community by, wherever possible, providing the services and support our clients need.

We will continue to observe the latest measures, put in place, by the Government (including Public Health England and the Chief Medical Officer).

#### **Offices & Staff**

Our offices are now **open for business**, although many of our staff continue to work from home and we are operating on a strictly 'appointment only' basis.

Prior to any visits to our offices, we will ask whether any party is showing symptoms or has been asked to self-isolate.

We have taken the following steps within our offices:

- Hard surfaces, including doors, handles, desks, computers Etc. have been cleaned with disinfectant
- Offices have been re-arranged and we have set-up one-way flows, floor tape and signage
- Hand sanitiser and PPE, where appropriate, is available at each office
- Staff are up to speed with the latest Government guidelines including social distance measures
- A programme of additional cleaning is in operation

## **Viewings, Valuations & Visits**

- Prior to going ahead with any viewing/valuation/visit we will ask:
  - o Are you/anyone in your household symptomatic?
  - o Are you/anyone in your household self Isolating?
  - o Have you/anyone in your household tested positive?
  - Are you/anyone in your household in the at 'risk' category (as outlined by Government)?
  - Have you/anyone in your household travelled outside of the UK within the last 14 days?
  - Have you got access to masks, gloves, sanitising gels, Etc.
- We will only arrange viewings with serious buyers
- Wherever possible, we will conduct initial viewings and valuations remotely, either by video or 360 photography
- In-person viewings/valuations/visits will be conducted within the latest social distancing guidelines
- We aim to complete viewings in no more than 15 minutes
- Your hands should be washed regularly and wherever possible, you should avoid touching surfaces
- Viewings are limited to two members of the same household
- Where social distancing is not possible, for example in an enclosed space, you should consider wearing gloves and a face covering in line with government guidance
- Open house viewings will not take place
- Please make sure you maintain safe social distancing (2 metres) at all times.
- If it is **your property** that is being viewed, please ensure that:
  - All internal doors are open and the house has been well ventilated
  - All hard surfaces, including doors, handles and worktops are cleaned with disinfectant; both before and after the visit
  - For agent accompanied viewings, we recommend you leave your property while viewings are taking place.

 For non-agent accompanied viewings, we ask that that you do not engage in lengthy conversations (we will deal with any questions afterwards by phone and email) and that refreshments are not offered to anyone

# Further Information: 'How COVID-19 is transmitted and how to reduce risks' COVID-19 is transmitted in three ways:

- 1. Direct person-to-person contact if an infectious person breathes droplets on you or you pick them up through physical contact with an infectious person.
- 2. Contact with a contaminated surface if you touch a surface contaminated with the virus and then touch your nose, eyes or mouth, you may be infected.
- 3. Aerosol transmission fine droplets of liquid containing virus are breathed out, form an aerosol and are carried through the air. You may become infected if you breathe these in.

If you are further away from someone there's less risk of catching the virus from droplets or aerosol transmission. However, distance isn't the only thing that matters.

- Duration the longer you are close to an infectious person, the higher the risk.
- Fresh air the risk is lower if you are outdoors, or in a well ventilated area,
- Direction the risk is lower if you are not face-on with the infectious person The risk of transmission is small at 2m and where possible, you should maintain 2m distance.

If it is not possible to keep 2m distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others at 1m by taking suitable precautions:

- Limit the number of people or households that you come into contact with,
   e.g. avoid peak travel
- Sit / stand side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them
- Meet people outdoors, rather than indoors
- Keep interactions brief
- Wear a face covering on public transport, in shops or crowded indoor environments
- Increase ventilation
- Avoid loud talking or singing with others

To minimise the risk of transmission via surface contact, you should:

- Regularly wash your hands using soap and water or use hand sanitiser
- Avoid touching surfaces and do not touch your face
- Dispose of waste safely, including items such as paper face masks or gloves

In all cases, you must not go to work or attend other public spaces if you are symptomatic, or a member of your household is symptomatic.

#### **Latest Guidance**

Government advice on home moving during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak

## Advice to the public

More detail on the steps of buying, selling, or renting a home and how this applies to different groups is set out in the next section.

What does this mean for my property move or purchase which is scheduled whilst measures to fight COVID-19 apply?

You are free to move home. However, you may find the process of searching for and moving into a new home is different, as property agents, conveyancers and other professionals have modified how they work to reduce the risk from COVID-19.

- Initial viewings should be done virtually wherever possible. Property agents should be able to help you with this.
- Members of the public who are visiting an agent's office or viewing a
  property should wear a suitable face covering as described in government
  guidance unless they are exempt from this requirement. This should be
  confirmed with the agent before arrival. Anyone with concerns should
  contact the agent in advance of their visit to discuss appropriate measures.
  The agent may require you to arrange an appointment before visiting the
  premises.
- Viewings should be arranged by appointment only and 'open house'
  viewings should not take place. When viewing properties in person, you
  should avoid touching surfaces wherever possible, wash your hands
  regularly and/or use hand sanitiser. If you need to be accompanied by small
  children, you should try to keep them from touching surfaces and ensure
  they wash their hands regularly.
- Hotels, hostels and other such public accommodation can be used by people to move home in all three Tiers. There is no guarantee a particular hotel will be open to provide this service, so do check in advance. You should still ensure you stay within your household and/or support bubble if this is

- required in the relevant tiers. Identify which tiers you are in and moving to and see the guidance on support bubbles.
- Second homes and other private accommodation can be used to facilitate
  physical viewings of properties, preparing a property for sale and moving
  your belongings. You should still ensure you stay within your household
  and/or support bubble if this is required in the relevant tiers. Identify which
  tiers you are in and moving to and see the guidance on support bubbles.
- If people are being shown around your home, you should open all internal doors and ensure surfaces, such as door handles, are <u>cleaned after each</u> viewing with standard household cleaning products.
- We recommend that you vacate your property while viewings are taking place in order to minimise unnecessary contact.
- Anyone involved in any aspect of the home-moving process should practice social distancing in line with public health advice.
- When moving between properties, you and those in your household should try to do as much of the packing yourself as you can. Where this is not possible, you should speak to removal firms in advance. There is further advice about this below.
- If you are particularly worried about the risk of infection, then speak to your landlord, estate agent or removers as they may be able to put extra precautionary measures in place.

Everyone involved in the moving process must follow <u>social distancing</u> to minimise the spread of COVID-19.

## **Self-isolating**

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, or you have received a positive COVID-19 test result, you should immediately self-isolate at home for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You may also be required to self-isolate if you are <a href="mailto:entering or returning to the UK from abroad">entering or returning to the UK from abroad</a> or have been contacted by <a href="MISTEST and Trace">NHS Test and Trace</a>. Everyone should follow the <a href="mailto:latest">latest</a> requirements to quarantine upon return to the UK.

You should follow the <u>latest guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection</u>. If you are contractually committed to move home, you should seek to delay your move until all members of your household have come to the end of their self-isolation period. All parties involved in home buying and selling should prioritise agreeing amicable arrangements to change completion dates where someone in a chain or their family member is self-isolating or has tested positive for coronavirus.

## Clinically extremely vulnerable people

Those who identify as clinically extremely vulnerable are able to move home. However, they should consider their personal situation and the circumstances of their own move and may wish to seek medical advice before deciding whether to commit to or go ahead with a move. Some moves are likely to be lower risk - for instance if the home is empty, all travel can take place in their own transport and they can avoid contact with others.

Where people decide to move they should pay particular attention to maintaining hygiene and social distancing measures to protect themselves and reduce the risk presented by the virus. People in this category should:

- Only take part in property viewings if they are not showing symptoms of coronavirus.
- Where possible, vacate their property when it is being shown to prospective buyers. Ensure all rooms are well ventilated, and clean surfaces before and after viewings, following the general principles of cleaning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Let the agent and other parties involved in the move know that they are clinically vulnerable.
- Carefully consider what physical contact they have with any party assisting
  with the home move and consider how they can either reduce this contact
  or appropriately protect themselves.
- Seek advice from their GP should they have any immediate concerns around the time of any home move.
- Follow general guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people.

## 1. Preparing to buy, sell or move home

You can put your home on the market and look for properties to buy or rent. However, if you or any member of your household is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is self-isolating, then estate agents and potential buyers should not visit your property in person. Everyone should follow the <u>latest guidance</u> for households with confirmed or possible coronavirus infection.

- You can market your home and estate agents can visit in order to take photos/videos of your property. As usual, you can also start to bring together the documentation necessary to sell your property (more information on these documents is available in the government's <u>guidance</u> <u>on how to sell homes</u>).
- To help prevent the spread of infection, we recommend that you carry out initial property searches online; and only visit a property in person when you are seriously considering making an offer on it.

• If you wish to buy a new-build property, you should contact the developer. You should be able to make an appointment to view the show home or visit the particular plot you are interested in purchasing.

#### 2. Viewings

Where possible, you should use virtual viewings before visiting properties in person in order to minimise public health risks. If any member of either the household being viewed, or the household undertaking a viewing is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is self-isolating, then an in-person viewing should be delayed.

- We encourage buyers and renters to do their initial property searches online wherever possible. Initial viewings should also be done virtually, and inperson viewings should only take place when buyers are seriously considering a property.
- To support this, agents may ask home occupiers to conduct virtual viewings.
   This will help reduce the number of properties people need to visit before finding their future home.
- All viewings should be by appointment only and no open house viewings should take place.
- There are unlikely to be physical protection measures in place in homes. In this case we would advise estate and letting agents to wear a face covering.
- Members of the public who are viewing a property should wear a suitable
  face covering as <u>described in government guidance</u> unless they are exempt
  from this requirement. This should be confirmed with the agent before
  arrival. Anyone with concerns should contact the agent in advance of their
  visit to discuss appropriate measures.
- If your property is being viewed, you should open all the internal doors prior to the viewing and allow access to handwashing facilities and ideally separate towels/paper towels.
- We would recommend that you vacate your property whilst viewings are taking place in order to minimise unnecessary contact.
- When viewing a property, everyone should wash their hands and avoid touching surfaces where possible.
- We expect property agents to accompany clients on a viewing and follow <u>social distancing guidance</u>. Where viewings are unaccompanied, agents should make sure viewers and the occupants of the home understand how they should conduct themselves to protect their health and the health of others.

 Once the viewing has taken place, the occupant should ensure surfaces, such as door handles, are <u>cleaned</u> with standard household cleaning products and towels disposed of safely or washed as appropriate.

## 3. Making offers or reservations

You are free to make or accept an offer or reserve a property as normal.

- There is a greater risk that home moves may need to be delayed if someone in the transaction shows symptoms of COVID-19 or is self-isolating. You should ask your legal adviser to consider any necessary measures to help make sure that contracts or agreements are as flexible as possible to accommodate this risk.
- Prospective purchasers or renters may wish to visit a property again once they have agreed a sale; for example to measure up. Where this has been agreed to, the above advice on prioritising virtual visits, hygiene measures, maintaining social distancing at all times and mitigating contact where possible should be followed.
- Purchasers may also want to arrange for tradespeople to carry out inspections in the property. Where possible these should be scheduled with one person visiting the property at a time. No tradespeople should enter a property, for these purposes, where a member of the household is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or self-isolating. Where a tradesperson is visiting the property, the occupier should maintain social distancing, wash their hands regularly and minimise contact as far as possible, for example by staying in another room. These visits should be carried out in line with government safer working guidance.

#### 4. Property searches and surveys

Your legal representative should be able to carry out searches on your property online in order to progress your transaction and you should contact them to discuss timescales for this work.

Your surveyor can undertake surveys of the property you wish to purchase. There are no restrictions on the types of survey that can be carried out and you should talk to your surveyor to understand the most appropriate type of survey for the home you intend to purchase.

On custom and self-build projects, surveyors can visit plots you wish to purchase and undertake valuations to support the release of staged payment mortgages.

 Surveyors should not enter a property where a member of the household is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or self-isolating.

- Where possible, we encourage inspections to take place by appointment only, with one person visiting the property at any time. Surveyors should follow government guidance for professionals working in other people's homes and guidance on social distancing.
- If your home is being surveyed, you should ensure the surveyor has access to all the parts of the property they need to inspect and minimise contact with the surveyor, for example by staying in another room.

## 5. Agreeing to move

Once you have exchanged contracts or signed a tenancy agreement, you have entered into a legal agreement to purchase or rent the property. We encourage all parties to be as flexible as possible and be prepared to delay moves if necessary, for example if someone involved in the transaction becomes ill with COVID-19 during the moving process or has to self-isolate. You should not expect to move into any home where people are ill or self-isolating.

Your legal adviser should be able to help you to ensure that any contract
you enter into has sufficient flexibility to allow the purchase to be delayed in
the event that an individual in one of the parties contracts COVID-19 or has
to self-isolate.

## 6. Moving your belongings

Removal firms are able to carry out work but their usual procedures may be different to ensure moves take place as safely as possible.

- There is no guarantee your chosen removal firm will be operating at the time you require. We encourage you to contact removal firms as early as possible in advance of your move date.
- If removal firms are unavailable, another household can help you move your belongings, but social distancing guidelines and hygiene measures should be followed where possible.
- You and your household should also try and do as much of the packing yourself as possible. However, where you are using a removals firm, you may wish to get their advice on packing in advance, in particular the arrangements for packing fragile items.
- We ask that, where possible, <u>you clean your belongings</u> with standard domestic cleaning products before they are handled by others, including removal firms.
- While the removers are in your home, you should ensure any internal doors are open and try to minimise your contact with the removers, maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres where possible.

- All parties should wash their hands regularly and/or use hand sanitiser and should avoid touching surfaces where possible to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19.
- You should not provide refreshments but you should ensure removers have access to hand washing facilities, using separate towels or paper towels if possible, which should be washed or safely disposed of afterwards.

## **Advice to industry**

All businesses should follow the government's <u>latest guidance for employers</u> <u>and businesses on COVID-19</u> and <u>safer working guidance</u>. Individual sector bodies may issue their own supplementary guidance in order to protect their members.

We encourage all professionals to familiarise themselves with relevant government guidance and any supplementary guidance issued by their representative bodies.

It is important that all businesses work together to ensure we <u>stay alert to stay safe</u> to minimise the spread of infection and we expect all sectors to consider how they can operate in a way which minimises the need for face to face contact.

"Back to back" viewings of properties should be avoided, with sufficient time allowed between each viewing for the necessary cleaning to take place. We advise all businesses to have measures in place to prepare for staff returning from countries on the list of those affected by the requirement to quarantine. Staff members will not be able to return to the office or meet clients and will need to work virtually where possible.

## **Estate agents**

Estate agency offices can remain open to the public in all tiers. Estate agents agents should inform customers and their own staff about their Covid-19 procedures, so that they are safe throughout the sales process.

- Agents should ask whether any party is showing symptoms or has been asked to self-isolate before going ahead with any viewing, or visits to offices.
- Agents should inform visitors to their offices of the need to wear face coverings. Agents should ensure their offices are 'Covid secure' and that they take appropriate measures to prevent the spread of the disease.
   See <u>guidance on making the workplace secure</u>. Agents should wear face coverings while in close face-to-face contact with visitors and where other protective measures are unlikely to be in place, such as in clients' homes during a viewing. See <u>guidance on face coverings</u>.

- Agents should strongly encourage clients to view properties virtually in the first instance and then only physically inspect properties which they have a strong interest in.
- Where they do not accompany the visit, they should make sure that both buyers and sellers clearly understand how the viewing should be conducted safely.
- Agents should avoid driving clients to appointments. Advise clients to find
  alternative means of travel including public transport, walking, cycling or
  using their own vehicle. If this is not possible, follow the <u>latest guidance on</u>
  <u>travelling safely with others</u> including the use of a face mask and cleaning
  the vehicle regularly.
- All parties viewing a property should wash their hands with soap and water (or hand sanitiser if not available) immediately after entering the properties, with internal doors opened and surfaces having been wiped down before they enter. Separate towels or paper towels should be used if possible and washed or disposed of safely after use.
- Agents should do what they can to promote flexibility when arranging move dates, for example advising clients to ensure contracts have explicit terms to manage the timing risks presented by coronavirus.
- Agents should work with their clients and other agents to broker a new date to move where sales are due to complete and one of the parties falls ill with coronavirus or has to self-isolate.
- Agents should ensure that <u>any keys are appropriately cleaned</u> before handover.
- Agents should ask clients whether they have returned to the UK from one of the countries not on the <u>exception list</u>. If clients have returned from a country on the quarantine list, agents can continue to progress their home move virtually until the quarantine period is over. See <u>guidance on returning</u> to the UK.

#### **Developers and new build sales**

Developers can continue with sales during this period but should ensure that their sales teams follow the government's <u>safer working guidance</u>. Developers should inform consumers and their own staff about their procedures, so that they are safe throughout the sales process.

- Where possible, developers should promote virtual viewings.
- Where physical viewings do take place, including visits to show homes, these should be by appointment with one household visiting one property at a time.

- Agents should inform visitors in advance of the need to wear face coverings.
   We would also recommend agents to wear face coverings while in face-to-face contact with visitors where social distancing is not possible and there are no physical safety measures in place. See guidance on face coverings.
- Developers should clean surfaces between viewings.
- For new reservations and contracts, developers should work with conveyancers to ensure contracts take account of the risks posed by coronavirus, including building in flexibility in case move dates need to change as a result of someone falling ill with coronavirus or needing to selfisolate.
- Developers should do what they can to support anyone with coronavirus symptoms or self-isolating, and those they are in chain with, to agree a new date.

#### **Tradespeople**

Moving home is often a time when people want to undertake repairs and improve their new home or prepare their old home for sale. This work can involve fitting new kitchens, redecorating, and other home improvement work. This work is also important when people aren't moving home. It is a key way for households and landlords to maintain and improve the home environment and address poor quality accommodation while also providing important work for tradespeople whose businesses have been affected by the virus. Tradespeople should follow the follow the government's <u>safer working in the home guidance</u>. Companies should ensure employees understand how to operate safely and communicate this to customers.

#### **Conveyancers**

Conveyancers can open for business and can take on new instructions. They should make sure their clients are aware of the differences in completing transactions during this period.

- Conveyancers should aim to conduct as much of their business remotely as possible.
- Where client meetings need to take place, measures should be put in place to ensure appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures.
- Conveyancers should do what they can to promote flexibility making
  provisions for the risks presented by coronavirus, for example when advising
  their clients who are ready to move not to exchange contracts on an
  occupied property unless they have made explicit provision for the risks
  presented by the virus.

• Conveyancers should prioritise support for anyone who is clinically vulnerable, with symptoms of coronavirus or self-isolating to agree a new date to move.

New Build Home Warranty Assessments and claims against the warranty Inspectors can carry out warranty assessments on new build properties including self and custom build. Inspectors should follow public health guidance on social distancing and guidance for working in other people's homes.

Companies should ensure employees understand how to operate safely and communicate this to customers.

- New build warranty providers can continue to provide a normal service to homebuilders and consumers, including site visits and inspections.
- No work should be carried out by a person who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild or anyone who has been asked to self-isolate.
- Inspectors should contact the household in advance to check that no member of the household is showing symptoms of coronavirus or self-isolating. If they are, works should be delayed.
- Where residents are making a claim against their new build warranty, in the
  first instance they should speak with the warranty provider. Where possible
  the warranty providers should investigate claims remotely using video or
  photo evidence. If this is not possible and an inspector needs to visit an
  occupied property, this should be done by appointment and measures put
  in place to ensure physical contact is minimised, for example with residents
  staying in another room during the visit.

#### **Surveyors and EPC assessors**

Surveyors and EPC assessors are free to visit properties to carry out surveys. Surveyors should follow the latest government guidance for working in other people's homes.

Where surveys are carried out, all public health <u>guidance on social</u> <u>distancing</u> must be followed. Companies should ensure employees understand how to operate safely and communicate this to customers.

 Surveyors and assessors should contact the owners of the property to be surveyed prior to the survey or assessment to make sure they understand which areas will be surveyed and ensure that all doors and access panels are open and surfaces have been <u>cleaned with household cleaning products</u> in line with public health advice. During a visit, members of the household should follow social distancing guidance, staying 2 metres away wherever possible, for example by staying in another room.

- No work should be carried out by a person who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild or anyone who has been asked to self-isolate.
- Surveyors and assessors should wash their hands immediately upon entering the property, using separate towels or paper towels which need to be washed or disposed of safely after use.
- Surveyors should be clear in any reports about areas which they weren't able to inspect due to public health limitations.

#### **Removals firms**

Removal firms are allowed to operate and should follow the latest government guidance on safer working. Where moves are carried out, social distancing should be followed. Companies should ensure employees understand how to operate safely and communicate this to customers.

- Removers should contact the household in advance to check that no member of the household is showing symptoms of coronavirus or selfisolating. If they are, works should be delayed.
- They should also encourage households to ensure all internal doors are open and surfaces and possessions have been <u>cleaned with household</u> cleaning products prior to them entering the property.
- No work should be carried out by a person who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild.
- Removers should wash their hands on entering the property using separate towels of paper towels which need to be washed or disposed of safely after use.
- Removers should seek to minimise contact with homeowners and, where possible, remain 2 metres apart from householders at all times.
- Removers should implement a buddy system and ensure that the same people work together when moving bulky items and furniture.
- Removers should bring their own refreshments but you should ensure they have access to hand washing facilities, using separate towels or paper towels if possible, which should be washed or disposed of safely afterwards.
- Removers should also make sure they have read the <u>latest guidance on</u> travelling safely.

## **Letting agents and private landlords**

Letting agents and landlords should be aware of and follow the government <u>guidance on coronavirus and renting</u> which contains further advice that may also be applicable such as on possession proceedings, repairs, maintenance and health and safety. Tenants should also be made aware of this guidance.

Tenants' safety should be letting agents' and landlords' first priority. The government has put in place protections for tenants during the coronavirus outbreak, including legislation to delay when landlords are able to start proceedings to evict tenants by requiring landlords to give tenants longer notice periods than usual.

The guidance below for landlords and letting agents is to help them safely let empty properties, or properties which tenants are voluntarily vacating. Letting agents and landlords should endeavour to work with their tenants to sustain tenancies as far as possible, where the tenant wants and is able to stay.

- Landlords and letting agents should not conduct viewings in properties where tenants are symptomatic or self-isolating.
- In other cases (such as where tenants have been determined to be <u>clinically</u> <u>extremely vulnerable</u>) where viewings can proceed, they should be conducted in line with the guidance on viewings earlier in this document.
- Any visits to a property must be made in accordance with government's guidelines on working in other people's homes and social distancing.
- If possible, necessary repairs, gas and electrical safety checks should be conducted in the period between a property being vacated and a new tenant moving in. If this is not possible and visits are needed to an occupied property, this should be done by appointment with measures put in place to ensure physical contact is minimised, for example with residents staying in another room during the visit.
- Letting agents may also want to consider obtaining landlord and tenant consent for inventory clerk appointments to also occur before a tenant moves in or after a tenant moves out during vacant periods if possible.
- Letting agents and landlords should take steps to ensure any properties are
  prepared ready for new tenants. This may include cleaning to minimise any
  potential spread of the virus in line with government advice.
- Letting agents and landlords should consider how best to conduct tenancy check-ins for new tenancies agreed, taking care to follow government advice on <u>social distancing</u> and public health advice to minimise possible spread of coronavirus.
- Letting agents and landlords are reminded of the <u>temporary COVID-19</u>
   <u>measures that adjust right to rent checks</u>, temporarily allowing these checks
   to be conducted remotely. Lettings agents and landlords should consider
   other areas where in-person payments, referencing or checks can be
   conducted remotely instead and take further legal or professional advice if
   required to implement properly.

- Moves into a house in multiple occupation (HMO) are allowed. However,
  there may be additional risks involved in moving into a HMO at this time
  which is why it is important that all involved take reasonable precautions.
  During viewings, tenants that share a HMO are advised to stay out of indoor
  common areas, such as kitchens, bathrooms or sittings areas, during a
  viewing. If it is not a tenant's own private room that is being viewed they
  can also remain inside their room with the doors closed.
- Moves into student accommodation are allowed. Letting agents, universities
  and accommodation providers should consider how best to conduct tenancy
  check-ins, following the latest public health advice and taking reasonable
  steps to reduce transmission.

If you have questions, please contact us by phone or email.