

INSIGHT

# Preparing a Property for Letting: The Landlord Checklist

A landlord checklist to ensure faster lets, better tenant retention and stronger rental income

---

Published by Levin & Whitmore • Updated 2026

## Presentation matters more than you think

The single biggest predictor of how quickly a commercial unit will let is how it presents on the first viewing. Not the rent. Not the location. The presentation.

Clean, well-lit, properly maintained spaces let faster and at better rents than identical units that look tired or neglected. The investment is small. The return is significant.

Budget for a professional clean, minor redecoration in neutral colours, and basic landscaping of any external areas. Fix obvious defects. Make sure all lights work. Remove all the previous tenant's clutter.

## Get your documents in order

Nothing kills a deal faster than a delayed legal pack. Before you even start marketing, make sure you have your EPC, asbestos survey, fire risk assessment, title documents and any compliance certificates ready.

Solicitors will want them. Tenants' solicitors will want them. Having them ready can shave weeks off the process and signals to tenants that you are a professional landlord.

## Be specific about what's included

Service charges. Repair responsibilities. Reinstatement obligations. Fit-out allowances. The details matter, and ambiguity creates friction.

Spell them out clearly in your marketing pack and heads of terms. The clearer you are upfront, the smoother the deal will progress. Tenants and their advisers will ask these questions anyway — get ahead of them.

## Price realistically

The biggest reason units sit empty is overpricing. The temptation to "test the market" at a high rent costs you weeks — sometimes months — of lost income.

Get accurate market evidence, set a realistic asking rent, and be prepared to negotiate. Speed beats stretch. An extra £5/sq ft on the headline rent is worthless if the unit sits empty for an extra 3 months.

In the 2025 market, regional prime office rents have grown 8–10% per year in the Big Six cities. But this is for prime, Grade A space. If your asset is secondary, don't expect prime rents.

## Plan the handover

A structured handover sets the tone for the entire tenancy. Schedule of condition. Meter readings. Keys. Compliance handover. Welcome pack with contacts and procedures.

Spend an hour getting this right and you'll save days of disputes later. A clear schedule of condition on day one is the single most valuable piece of paper in any dilapidations dispute at the end of the lease.

### About Levin & Whitmore

We are commercial property specialists operating across the UK from offices in Glasgow, Dundee and London. We manage portfolios for private landlords, family offices, investors and businesses — protecting income, reducing voids, and improving asset performance. For a free portfolio audit, call 0141 255 0742 or visit [levinandwhitmore.com](https://levinandwhitmore.com).