

Cannabis

A growing problem

Don't turn a blind eye - as a landlord or letting agent you have a legal and ethical responsibility to protect and preserve the communities in which we live. Under current legislation (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) landlords or property managers can receive a prison sentence or large fine if they allow the production of controlled drugs to take place in their accommodation.

Drugs can wreck communities, as a landlord you could end up paying a high price for allowing a property you own to be used for drug production, this could include:

- Losing access to your premises for good or a long period of time
- Considerable cost of clearing up and making premises safe for future tenants to live in
- Loss of rent / income
- Damage to business or personal reputation
- Potential reduction in property value
- When selling the property, having to disclose to future buyers that the premise has been used for the production of controlled drugs.

How to spot a cannabis factory:

- A strong, pungent smell coming from the building
- Electrical wiring that has been tampered with
- Powerful lights left on all of the time
- Windows blacked out
- A sudden increase in electricity bills
- Large quantities of rubbish – bin bags full of vegetable matter

The production of other types of synthetic drugs also takes place; most of the chemicals required to make these drugs are readily available, but it is the process involved in producing them which is extremely volatile. When a drug production has taken place it can take months for the property to be returned to its former use.

How to deter drug production in your property:

- Be wary of any prospective tenant willing to pay months of rent in advance, or above the going rate, particularly in cash
- Never accept tenants without checking references and backgrounds
- Be suspicious if the tenant will not allow you access to the property or only allows you in small areas
- Has the tenant asked to meet away from the property to pay rent etc.
- Has the tenant put deadlocks or alarms on internal doors or made attempts to install fortifications on the exterior of the property

What to do if you suspect a tenant of illegal drug activity:

- Record your suspicions and any vehicle details
- Contact Police on 101 (if non-emergency)
- Speak to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team in confidence

- Contact Police on 999 if a crime is taking place



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