**Electrical safety checks to become mandatory**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has announced that mandatory five-year electrical installation checks (Electrical Installation Condition Report, EICR) on private rented housing in England will be introduced.

The implementation date has not yet been clarified, but the MHCLG intends to introduce legislation as soon as parliamentary time allows.

A transitional period will apply for two years. In year one, all new private tenancies will be affected and in year two all existing tenancies will come within scope.

Properties that already have a valid electrical installation condition report (EICR) will not need to replace it until five years have passed since it was issued.

Landlords and agents must ensure that inspectors issuing EICRs must hold the appropriate qualifications, or face fines.

The announcement has been expected for some time, and has been welcomed by the industry.

David Cox, Chief Executive, ARLA Propertymark said:

“We’ve had mandatory gas safety checks for years, and therefore it is logical to extend similar checks to electrical safety. However, there may not be enough qualified inspectors to cope with demand from the whole industry in a short period of time, and therefore we will need a long lead time so landlords can meet the requirements. The industry has a very busy year ahead with mandatory client money protection coming into force, the tenant fees ban taking effect, and the prospect of anti-money laundering regulations being extended to lettings; it cannot withstand any further changes this year.”