

# The Letter

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## Chinneck Shaw celebrates the opening of a new branch office in Castle Road



On the 26th May 2023 Chinneck Shaw officially opened a new office at 65 Castle Road, Southsea. This milestone was the culmination of more than 3 years worth of work to find, and design, an office which truly reflected our company ethos.

**Directors Neil Shaw and Lizzie Burt tell us how they took an idea for a new office from a business dream to a reality, and it all started with a “eureka moment”:**

**Lizzie:** We always knew we wanted to open a Southsea office, but there’s a real cluster down there already and we didn’t want to be on a high street full of other estate agents. We have a very different approach to business and we wanted to be somewhere that felt right. I’ve known Castle Road all my life and one day about 3 years ago had a “eureka moment” and knew it just had to be there. After a few visits Neil and Susan were sold on the idea too.

**Neil:** The only problem was, there were no premises available. So the hunt started.

**Lizzie:** We tapped into local knowledge, and whatever any little birdies could tell us: was anyone planning on moving? I spent many an

evening walking up and down Castle Road to see if any signs appeared. I remember distinctly one Saturday evening looking, and feeling despondent that there was still nothing available.

**Neil:** But the following day, it was my turn to walk down the street, and out of the corner of my eye I spotted a “closing” sign in a window. I called the number, but was told that unfortunately, it was already sorted.

**Lizzie:** Luckily, we have a friend who knows all the traders, and she did a little digging for us and discovered that the soon-to-be-vacant premises was actually taken by another Castle Road business - The Barbership! This meant that the Barbers’ was going to be empty. Turn over for the rest of the story...

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**Neil:** It was perfect. We got our friend to act as a liaison, but we had to promise not to give the game away, as they hadn't yet told the landlord they were moving! He promised he would let us know as soon as he had given notice.

**Lizzie:** Neil couldn't wait though, he did a little sleuthing himself and found out who the landlord and managing agent were and subtly let them know we were looking for premises in Southsea, specifically Castle Road. Then the waiting game began.

**Neil:** Then we got the word from Tony Wood that he had given notice, and we were off. I phoned the managing agent immediately and with a little back and forth, a viewing was arranged.

**Lizzie:** It took a little while, but eventually we secured the lease. Which meant we were on to the next phase: designing and building an office space that could be a destination for all things property, with a real Southsea vibe.

**Neil:** Lizzie had a real vision for the style and atmosphere we were after, and she spearheaded a fantastic team of designers at Excite Interiors and our contractor Steve who worked together to bring the vision to life. In fact, when we visited the finished office, I couldn't believe how close the real thing was to the renderings drawn up by the designers.

**Lizzie:** We really are so excited to welcome our neighbours, landlords, tenants, sellers, and buyers to visit us in the new office, and to bring their dogs along too!

## Contractor Spotlight



**Name:** Steve Batten  
**Company:** Holdarch Ltd.  
**Specialism:** General Building Works

**About Steve:** Steve has been responsible for many renovations and refurbishments for landlords in the Portsmouth and surrounding areas, and, of course, for bringing the designs for our Castle Road office from digital renderings to life. A familiar face to many, Steve is always ready to handle maintenance requests big or small, and all with a smile on his face.

When you visit the Castle Road office, look out for the brass handle on the trap door to the cellar. Steve salvaged the "gas" handle and has had it stowed away in his garage for many years, just waiting to find the right home and when he saw the floor of our office, he just knew he had found it.



**5 star review.**

**Very professional and helpful throughout – a pleasure to deal with.**

Many thanks to everyone who has given us five star reviews on Google. To see our reviews or leave your own please search Chinneck Shaw on Google or Working Feedback.

Providing customer satisfaction is by far the most rewarding part of our job so it's brilliant to receive such feedback.

# Industry Update

In this section, we keep you up-to-date with all the changes to the private rented sector including important legal developments. In this issue, we're highlighting the impact of the Renters Reform Bill which is currently being considered by Parliament.



## The Renters Reform Bill



Perhaps the most significant shift to the private rented sector for 30 years has come in the form of the Renters Reform Bill which is expected to come into law sometime in 2024. The bill forms part of the Government's levelling up plans, aimed at improving the health of the private rented sector and offering more routes to homeownership for eligible tenants.

### Some of the key facets of the bill are:

- **The abolishment of Section 21 'no fault' evictions to protect tenants from rogue landlords and retaliatory evictions.**
- **Enhancement to Section 8 to offer more comprehensive possession grounds. This will make it easier for landlords to recover their property if they need to sell or redevelop and to simplify repossessions in the case of rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.**
- **Intention to remove fixed-term contracts which, in some cases, may mean earlier possession is available.**
- **The introduction of a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman which will provide fair, impartial, and binding resolution to many issues with the intention to provide quicker, cheaper, and less adversarial outcomes than those from the court system.**
- **The creation of a Privately Rented Property Portal aimed at helping landlords understand their legal obligations and demonstrate compliance, while providing the most accurate information to tenants to enable them to make informed decisions when entering into a tenancy agreement. This portal will also support local councils, helping them target enforcement activity where it is needed most.**
- **The right for tenants to request a pet in the property, which the landlord must consider and cannot unreasonably refuse. To support this, landlords will be able to require pet insurance to cover any damage to their property.**

**While these reforms are significant, context is vital when considering these changes.**

The proposed abolition of Section 21 evictions has been headline news, but research by a prominent lettings group considered 271 landlords and found that 80% have never used Section 21. Of those that had, 6% did so when the tenant was in breach of the lease and only 3% where the tenant was not in breach of the lease. These changes are largely designed to target those who utilise more aggressive tactics, meaning these reforms will have little effect on the majority of landlords.

If you're concerned about what this legislation means for you and your properties, Chinneck Shaw would be pleased to discuss this with you. Call us, or drop in and we will be pleased to advise you further.

## Property Management News

Chinneck Shaw are thrilled to have been approached by the landlord of Magdalen Court to take over management of this property. We are eager to care for this distinctive building, and look forward to working closely with our new clients.





