

Private Rented Accommodation – Q&As

1. **What does it mean to rent in the 'Private Sector'?**

- Renting in the 'Private Sector' means to rent a property from a Private Landlord or Estate Agency. The property is not owned or managed by the Local Authority or a Registered Social Landlord.

2. **What property can I rent?**

- EHDC will assess your housing and financial situation.
- The Local Housing Allowance indicates an affordable rent.
<https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx>

3. **Can I rent in the 'Private Sector' if I have a low income or claiming Housing Benefit?**

Yes, please refer to our guide on 'How to find a property'.

4. **I have found a property to rent, what should I do next?**

- You should contact your Housing Advisor. An Income and Expenditure Form should be completed if this has not already been submitted.
- If you intend on claiming Housing Benefit at the property you are required to obtain a Manual Calculation from the HB team.

5. **Will you contact the landlord/ agent for me?**

- Yes, the prospective Landlord/ Agent will be contacted to discuss the terms and conditions of the Tenancy Bond/Deposit Scheme. You will usually be asked to pay a deposit, rent in advance and sometimes additional fees for referencing or to hold the property,
- If the property is let privately then a HHSRS Check may be required by the Private sector Housing Team. This check ensures that the property is safe to let.

6. **Do I need to repay money that the Housing Team use to help me secure a tenancy?**

- Any financial assistance you receive from EHDC will be repayable, either during the term of your tenancy or in the event of a claim against the Bond or Deposit. You should consider this before you accept financial assistance, as non repayment of the funds will have a negative impact on the future assistance you can expect from the Housing Department.

7. **When will I know if I will receive assistance from the tenancy bond scheme?**

- No Bond or Deposit or any other financial assistance is guaranteed without authorisation by the Housing Manager.
- Once authorisation has been obtained, you will be advised and are free to accept the tenancy and put down any holding fees.

8. **When will my landlord/ agent get confirmation that a Bond or Deposit is in Place?**

- Once sufficient evidence has been provided, either the Deposit funds will be released, or the Bond becomes active.



9. Support throughout the Tenancy

- To protect your tenancy it is very important that you keep up to date with rent payments and maintain any Housing Benefit claim. If you have a shortfall in rent you should have a direct debit or standing order in place from the start of the tenancy.
- Any concerns with your property should be directed to your landlord/ agent in the first instance.
- If you require any further assistance or support please contact the Accommodation Liaison Officer (ALO) or your Housing Advisor.
- The Bond/ Deposit protection ends with the tenancy. Any Deposit funds will be returned to the Housing Department by the DPS Scheme unless there is a claim on the funds by the landlord/agent.
- If there is a Claim on the Bond/ Deposit the ALO Team will consider this in line with the tenancy Bond/ Deposit Agreement. The tenant will be given an opportunity to contest this claim.
- Any successful claim against the Bond/ Deposit will result in these funds being recharged to the tenant. The tenant will be invoiced for the funds paid out on their behalf to the landlord/agent.

7. What happens to my Hampshire Home choice application once I move into my private rented property?

- If you remain eligible for Hampshire Home Choice, you will need to login and update your address and move in date.

NOTE:

- **You should satisfy yourself that the property is suitable for you. Read and understand the full terms of the tenancy agreement.**
- **You should take legal advice to help you if you have any concerns.**
- **Please check that the rent shown on the tenancy agreement matches the rent that has been agreed with your Housing Advisor.**
- **It is also advisable that an inventory is in place signed by the tenant and landlord/agent.**

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Accommodation Liaison Officer
Amelia Mahler on 01730 234314
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