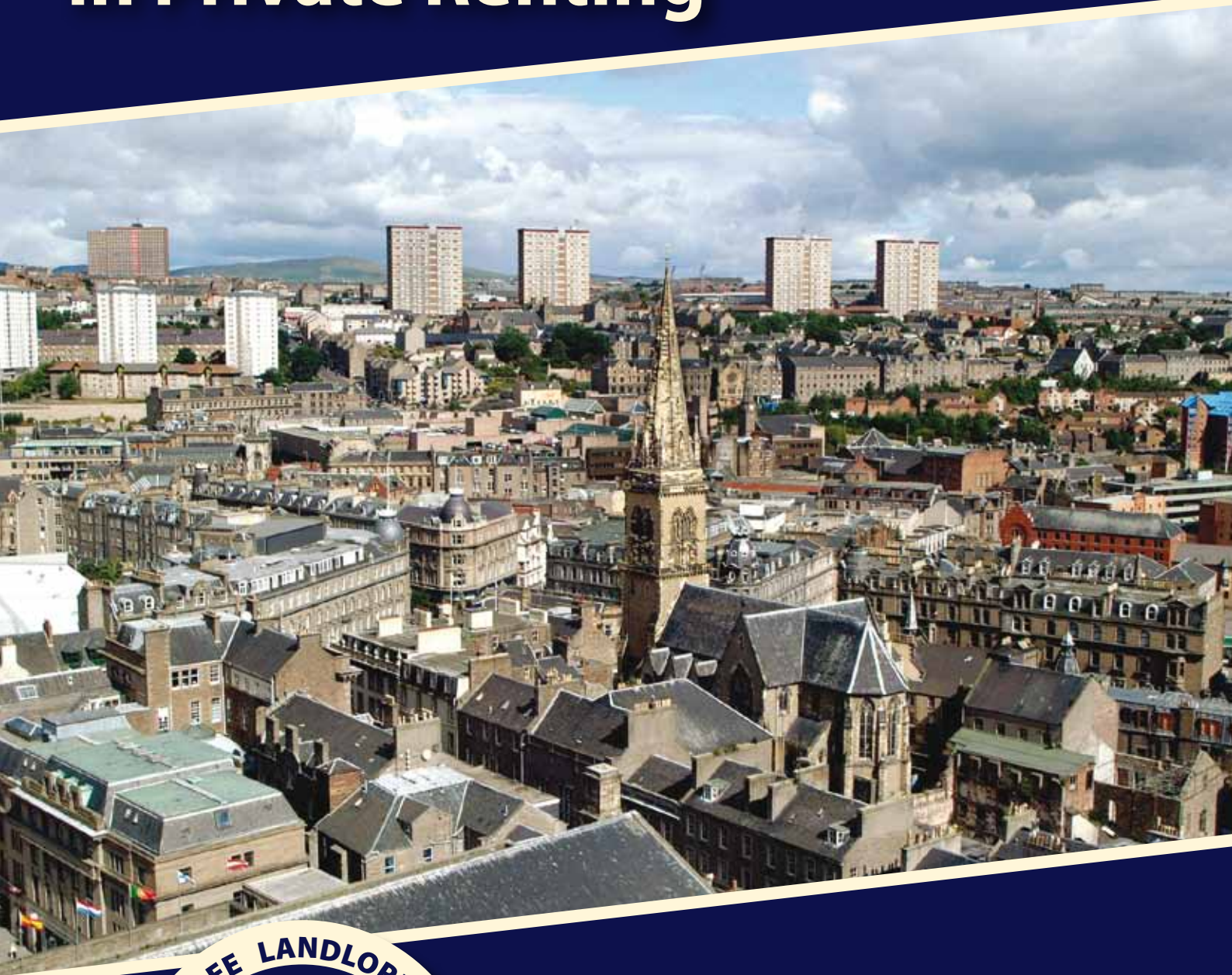


Dundee Landlord Accreditation Promoting Good Standards in Private Renting



DUNDEE LANDLORD ACCREDITATION

Promoting Good Standards in Private Renting

The Scottish Executive and Communities Scotland are promoting Landlord Accreditation Schemes as an effective way of raising the standards and recognising good practice for private rented housing. In Dundee a Steering Group was set up, drawn from representatives of local lettings agents, landlords, and Dundee University along with Dundee City Council to develop Dundee Landlord Accreditation (DLA).

While many landlords do provide safe, good quality accommodation there are some, particularly those who have recently entered the market, who simply do not have the knowledge or expertise to manage their property in a professional way. Like many industries the private rented market is facing the challenges of modernisation and improving customer services, which is all coming under increased public scrutiny.

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a set of standards relating to the management and physical condition of privately rented accommodation. Landlords and letting agents who join the scheme and abide by the standards are 'accredited'.

For new and inexperienced landlords, DLA provides support and guidance. Assistance is also available for any landlord or letting agent who wishes to achieve accreditation.

This is a voluntary scheme and although there is no compulsion for landlords and letting agents to join, there are many advantages.

What is the Difference Between Landlord Accreditation and Landlord Registration?

These are two entirely separate entities whereas the Landlord Accreditation is a voluntary scheme, Landlord Registration is government legislation which refers to the provision of Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004. This requires all landlords to register with their Local Authority by April 2006.

For further information on Landlord Registration and your obligations under this legislation, please contact Private Sector Services Unit on 01382 435407.

What Are the Main Aims of Dundee Landlord Accreditation?

- To raise the standard of private rented housing and its management.
- To give accredited landlords and letting agents a marketing advantage.
- To give assurance to prospective tenants that the property they seek to rent is good quality.
- To encourage tenants to seek out accredited landlords and letting agents to rent from.
- To encourage landlords with below standard properties to improve them to accreditation standard.

What Are the Benefits of Being Accredited?

- The status of being publicly identified as a good landlord through certificates and logos provided for display.
- Distancing yourselves from incompetent or unscrupulous landlords.





- The business advantage of advertising your accredited status to tenants who place emphasis on good quality and well managed accommodation.
- Access to comprehensive information, advice and training on all aspects of letting.
- Entitlement to a range of services and promotions to assist in the daily management of properties.

It is also anticipated that accredited status will bring landlords the following general but important benefits.

- A lower turnover of tenants producing savings on re-letting and loss of income from voids.
- A decrease in abuse of properties.
- An advantage over other providers in attracting new and better tenants.
- A better image with potential lenders.
- Improved contact and advice from the Council.

How Does the Tenant Benefit?

- Confidence that your landlord is professional and reputable.
- Assurance that the Accreditation Scheme's Code of Standards will be followed.
- Information regarding rights and responsibilities as a tenant.
- Provision of a Tenants Handbook.

Who Can Apply for Membership?

Any landlords or letting agents who let property within the city of Dundee can apply to join Dundee Landlord Accreditation by completing the application form contained in this pack.

Should there be evidence that a landlord or letting agents' practice does not comply with the Code of Standards then they may be refused membership of the scheme.

Membership is free, however, in the future this may be subject to review.

To apply simply complete the enclosed application form and return to: Dundee Landlord Accreditation.

How will the Scheme Work?

The Accreditation Scheme relies on self-certification by landlords and letting agents who state they agree to abide by the Code of Standards for Private Renting in Dundee. However if some properties do not meet the standards, membership will still be considered provided an improvement plan with a timescale is submitted along with the application.

On membership being granted, landlords and letting agents will receive a membership pack which includes a certificate, ID card, and tenancy handbook.

The Accreditation Scheme will inspect a sample of properties and interview tenants at any point to ensure that landlords and letting agents are complying with the Code of Standards.

Landlords may be removed from accreditation if they fail to meet the requirements of the Code of Standards.

What does the Code of Standards Cover?

Dundee Landlord Accreditation Code of Standards is largely based on the National Core Standards and Good Practice Guidance for Private Landlords and Local Accreditation Schemes by Communities Scotland.

The Code of Standards covers 10 categories of standards:

- **Communication with Tenants**

Accredited landlords must ensure that they have effective communication with the tenant including clear statements of rights and responsibilities and complaints procedures.

- **Equality Issues, Complaints, Disputes**

Accredited landlords ensure that they treat all tenants in a fair and equitable way and do not discriminate against certain groups of tenants.

- **Management of the Tenancy**

Accredited landlords must ensure that they provide tenancy agreements that comply with the law and adopt the Accreditation Scheme's Code of Standards.

- **Minimum Property Condition**

Accredited landlords must meet the minimum property conditions set out in the Code of Standards.

- **Structure and Fabric**

Accredited landlords must ensure that their property is wind and watertight and in good tenable condition for the duration of the tenancy.

- **Repairs and Maintenance**

Accredited landlords must ensure they meet their repairing obligations by responding to tenants requests for repairs.

- **Facilities and Fittings**

An accredited landlord should ensure that the fixtures and fittings supplied are kept in good working order and fit for purpose.

- **Furnishings and White Goods**

An accredited landlord should ensure that furnishings and white goods are clean and in good working order and comply with relevant parts of the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations.

- **Heating, Insulation and Energy Efficiency**

It should be the aim of accredited landlords to consider how they could improve the energy efficiency of the property.

- **Health, Safety and Home Security Features**

Accredited landlords should ensure that they comply with the regulations regarding health and safety of tenants and to take appropriate measures to ensure the security of the property.

Further details of the standards can be found in the booklet Code of Standards for Private Renting in Dundee.

What will the Procedure be for Breaches of the Dundee Landlord Accreditation?

If a landlord or letting agent is found to be in breach of the Code of Standards, they will be asked if either they have further information available or if they agree to remedy the breach. If no further information is available the landlord or letting agent will be given reasonable recommendations to rectify the breach. The landlord or agent must comply with the scheme's recommendations.

Any action taken will be reported in an open and transparent way to demonstrate the scheme is being enforced.

What is the Procedure for Appeals?

Landlords and agents have the right of appeal if they disagree with a decision to refuse membership or consider any complaints against them to be incorrect.

An appeal will be heard by the Partnership which is made up of representatives of the stakeholders' group. The Partnership will hear the appeal in a fair and unbiased way and all parties will have the opportunity to ask questions. The landlord or letting agent will be informed in writing the decision of the Partnership.



Membership to Dundee Landlord Accreditation is **free** and all members are entitled to the following services and promotions:

» **DLA Website**

- *Due to be launched September/October 2011.* Accredited members can advertise their vacant properties free of charge on this site and chat to other members using the forum.

» **DLA Logo**

- Members are entitled to use the DLA Logo on adverts, letterheads, their website etc. to display their accredited status.

» **Tenancy Handbook**

- A guide for landlords and tenants, outlining their rights and responsibilities. The handbook also details information on tenancy agreements, deposits, harassment and how to end a tenancy.

» **Advertising Discount**

- Receive 10% discount off the advertising fees with The Courier and The Evening Telegraph.

» **EPC Discount**

- Special rates on Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) offered to accredited members.

» **Training**

- Training/information seminars on a variety of relevant subjects including Anti-Social Behaviour, Housing Benefits, Landlord Registration, HMO Licensing, New Legislation, Tenancy Agreements and Evictions. Details of forthcoming events can be found at: www.dundee.gov.uk/housing/privatesector/

» **Newsletter**

- Periodical newsletter keeping you up to date on any new legislation and what is going on within the private rented sector.

» **Taycard**

- Membership of the Taycard corporate discount scheme with various discounts available in numerous retail, leisure and professional outlets.

» **Improvement and Repair of Private Sector Properties**

- The Private Sector Services Unit can provide advice, information and limited financial assistance to owners, landlords and private tenants to enable them to deal with a range of housing related matters. Telephone 01382 435408/435423 for further information.

» **Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project**

- Free property survey with recommendations on how to improve energy efficiency also assistance in sourcing funding for the works.
- Free home visit to your tenants with advice and recommendations on all energy issues including efficiency, prevention of condensation, fuel debt and billing problems. For further information telephone 01382 434840.

What Happens Next?

Simply complete the application form and return to:

Dundee Landlord Accreditation

Dundee House
50 North Lindsay Street
Dundee
DD1 1NB

Tel: 01382 437118

E-mail: dla@dundeecity.gov.uk

This information is made available in large print or in an alternative format that meets your needs.

Chinese	欲知詳情，請致電：01382 435825
Russian	Более подробную информацию можно получить позвонив по телефону: 01382 435825
Urdu	مزید معلومات کے لئے برائے مہربانی 01382 435825 پر فون کریں۔
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