

HMO Property Accreditation Pack

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Please ask for: Ian Mackay
Direct Line: (01322) 343379
Direct Fax: (01322) 343678
E-mail: ian.mackay@dartford.gov.uk

Dear

Re: Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme

Following consultation with local landlords via the Landlords Forum the Council has introduced a Property Accreditation scheme to promote high standards of accommodation in Dartford, and to reward landlords who are committed to providing good quality, properly managed housing.

The benefits of being recognised as the owner of an Accredited Property are:

- A range of discounts on local services,
- A certificate of accreditation to display on your premises
- The right to display the accreditation logo on your Stationery & letterheads.
- The recognition that accreditation brings.

The scheme is open to all categories of rented property including Houses in Multiple Occupation, as well as single family homes. To qualify for acceptance into the scheme you will need to satisfy certain standards as detailed in the enclosed documentation.

Entry to the scheme is free, and the application pack contains all the information you require. Once your application is received, your property will be inspected by an Officer from the Private Sector Housing Unit, who will advise you of the outcome of the application normally within six weeks.

Successful applicants will be awarded Accreditation Status to one of two standards as determined by the scheme. Accreditation lasts for 3 years and is renewable thereafter on a self certification basis, details of this is included in the pack.

Finally should you have any queries or require further information please contact the Private Sector Unit on Dartford (01322) 343379.

Our staff will be pleased to explain the scheme in detail and take you through the application process.

We look forward to welcoming you into the scheme, and working in partnership with you.

Yours sincerely

Ian Mackay
Technical Officer (Private Sector Unit)

HMO PROPERTY VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Application Guidance

At a first glance you may find the standards and procedures for application a little daunting. However, do not be put off as this guidance note and the attached documentation has been prepared in order to assist you in your application.

A key aspect of this scheme is our commitment to keep you informed of the progress of your application.

The following is a checklist of the criteria that we will apply in consideration of your application.

Landlords/Property Managers will have a sound record of management, and all applications will be assessed using the following checklist.

- No non compliance of statutory Enforcement Action on the property.
- No outstanding Local Authority debts on the property
- No outstanding allegations of illegal eviction, or harassment within the property
- No record of Housing Benefit fraud or problems with recovery.

A survey of the property to be accredited will normally be carried out within six weeks of your application, (*subject to the number of properties contained within the application, note multiple applications may delay this initial process*), and subject to the conditions of accreditation being satisfied you will be required to provide copies of the following documentation.

- 1) Rental Agreements
- 2) Public Liability Insurance Certificates
- 3) Rent Books (weekly rents)
- 4) Current (Annual) Gas Safety Certificate
- 5) Current Electrical Test Certificate
- 6) Current Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Certification
- 7) Evidence of Fire Prevention Service Contract (Extinguishers, Detectors, Sounders, Call Points)

Subject to the requirements of the scheme being satisfied the property will be accredited.

There are two levels of accreditation and the standards that determine your eligibility are listed in the enclosed pack.

The certificate of Accreditation awarded must be clearly displayed in a prominent position within the property in question.

Refusal of Accreditation

- If the inspection of the property highlights problems or identifies failure to comply with the standards you will be advised in writing of the works required to enable your application to proceed.

These works will be completed within an agreed/mutually acceptable timescale. Upon completion to the satisfaction of the Inspecting Officer accreditation will then be awarded.

- Note: *Failures requiring minor works only will be allowed provisional accreditation status. These works will be completed within an agreed timescale or the provisional accreditation will be cancelled.*
- Poor management such as failure to comply with Local Authority Notices, harassment of tenants, poor maintenance of those areas under the landlord's control, will result in the refusal of accredited status.
- Should you disagree with the decision to refuse accreditation, you may appeal to an independent panel, who will hear and assess your case. Details of this procedure can be obtained upon request.

Withdrawal of Accreditation

If in the opinion of the Private Housing Unit, a failure of the standards occurs and is not corrected within an acceptable period; the properties accredited status may be suspended or withdrawn. Should cancellation of accredited status occur you will be informed in writing.

Period of Accreditation

Accreditation will be for a period of three [3] years. At the end of the first twelve month period, and annually thereafter:

- You will be required to self certify that the property continues to satisfy the required physical as well as management standards.
- You will be required to provide copies of current gas safety certificates, together with fire alarm, emergency lighting and detection system servicing documentation.
- NICEIC Electrical Certification will be renewable of a 5-yearly basis or on the change of tenancy.

To ensure and maintain standards any accredited property may be the subject of a spot check.

NOTE: A visit will ALWAYS be carried out on receipt of a complaint regarding the provision of services or conditions.

PRIVATE SECTOR PROPERTY ACCREDITATION SCHEME ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Accreditation Grade 1 Clauses 1-29 (All clauses Inclusive)

Accreditation Grade 2 Clauses 1-29 (Omitting those printed in red)

HMO CLASSIFICATION

Repair: To current fitness standard : Section 604 Housing Act 1985

- 1) To be in good repair.
- 2) To be structurally stable.
- 3) To be free from damp.
- 4) To have adequate provision of natural lighting.
- 5) To have adequate provision of a wholesome water supply.
- 6) To have provision of adequate facilities for the drainage of foul waste & together with the provision of sanitary conveniences, for the number of persons in residence. Ratio of 1:5.
- 7) To have suitable facilities for the preparation of and cooking of food to include the disposal of waste water, for the number of persons in residence. Ratio 1:3.
- 8) To be visibly well maintained.

Compliance with Government Decent Homes Standard

- 9) To meet the current Statutory Minimum Standard for Housing.
- 10) To be in a reasonable state of repair.
- 11) To have reasonably modern facilities and services.
- 12) To provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Energy Efficiency Measures

- 13) Loft insulation to current Building Regulation Standard.
- 14) Hot water tank insulation or tank jacket (where applicable).
- 15) Tank thermostat.
- 16) Permanently secured double glazing.
- 17) Cavity wall insulation (where applicable).
- 18) Heating system to all rooms.
- 19) TRVs/Controls to all radiators.

Gas Supply & Power Safety Measures

- 20) Service record of annual gas safety maintenance by approved engineer (applicable to landlords supply pipes & installations).
- 21) Certified safety record of wiring, and electrical fittings to be issued at the start of each tenancy, and thereafter on a 5 year programme.

Security Measures

- 22) Provision of solid core non glazed entrance door fitted with a telescopic spy/viewing facility.
- 23) Provision of a named door bell system linked to each room.
- 24) Provision of insurance approved 5 lever lock to the front entrance door, capable of operation in the direction of escape without the use of a key.

Means of Escape from Fire and other Fire Precautions

- 25) Adequate provision of a safe means of escape from the building in case of fire, as specified by Dartford Borough Council and agreed by the Kent & Medway Towns Fire Authority.

Refuse Storage Facility

26) Provision of adequate refuse storage within a designated area for the exclusive use of the residents.

Emergency Contact Details

27) Landlord/Person in control/or nominated person's/contact details permanently displayed in prominent position in entrance hall.

Property Management Requirements

28) Acceptable standards of property management maintained.

29) Compliance with Furniture & Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988.

VOLUNTARY PROPERTY ACCREDITATION APPLICATION FORM

Please fill in your details in BLOCK CAPITALS

NAME:

ADDRESS:

DAYTIME TELEPHONE NO:

FAX NO:

E-MAIL:

In order to apply for Property Accreditation you will need to include the following documentation **for each property listed with your Application Form and Declaration.**

- Current Gas Safety Certificate
- Fire Alarm Test Certificate (If applicable)
- Current NICEIC Electrical Certificate
- Signed copy of Statement of Compliance with Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988
- Signed copy of Conditions on Award of Certificate

Note:- The granting of accreditation does not infer any form of immunity from prosecution, notices, directions, orders, or any other enforcement action whether formal or informal by Dartford Borough Council.

**PRIVATE SECTOR PROPERTY ACCREDITATION SCHEME
DECLARATION OF APPLICANT**

I / We undertake to abide by the conditions of the Scheme and to supply the Local Authority with any information required, in connection with the accredited properties.

I / We declare that to the best of my/our knowledge, all the partners, directors, and other persons responsible for the activities of the company, partnership, agency, which manages the accredited properties listed on this application have not:

- Been convicted of harassment, illegal eviction, or fraud in connection with mortgages, loans, or housing benefits within the last ten years.
- Been prosecuted by the Council for failing to carry out works required by a Notice and that the Council have not had to complete any such works in default at any of the properties owned or managed by myself or any partners, directors, or agents of the company or partnership which manages the properties listed on this application during the last five years.

I / We agree that the Council may withdraw accreditation and remove the Certificate of Accreditation from the property concerned if any of the conditions provided in connection with this declaration are breached.

To the best of my / our knowledge all the information provided in connection with this application is true and accurate.

SIGNED:

FULL NAME in BLOCK CAPITALS:

DATE:

***VOLUNTARY PROPERTY ACCREDITATION SCHEME
CONDITIONS ON AWARD OF CERTIFICATE***

All Certificates remain the property of Dartford Borough Council ('the Council') and may be revoked at any time, if in the opinion of the Director of Community Services for the Council, the standards required for awarding accredited status have not been maintained.

The Council retains discretion to enable the suspension of the certificate for a given period or to revoke the Certificate altogether.

The Certificate is non transferable and applies only to the property as indicated.

I have read, understood and accept the conditions by which the Certificate is issued.

SIGNED:

FULL NAME in BLOCK CAPITALS:

DATE:

**VOLUNTARY PROPERTY ACCREDITATION SCHEME
STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH FURNITURE & FURNISHINGS
(FIRE SAFETY) REGULATIONS 1988**

Please tick as appropriate:-

I have read the leaflets:-

- The Safety of Goods Supplied in Rented Accommodation
 The Supply of Secondhand Furniture

Contained in this pack and can confirm either that :-

- To the best of my knowledge, all relevant furniture, furnishings, and other goods supplied in my rented accommodation fully comply with this legislation.

OR

- My properties are let unfurnished and I therefore consider that this legislation is not applicable. However, should I supply furniture, furnishing, or other goods in the future, I will undertake to ensure that all relevant items comply.

NAME:

COMPANY:

SIGNED:

DATE:

**HMO PROPERTY ACCREDITATION
SELF ASSESSMENT INSPECTION CHECKLIST**

ADDRESS:

ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATE NO:

NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER/AGENT (Acting on behalf of the Owner):

TELEPHONE NO:

TENANT(S):

PLEASE TICK ON THE LEFT HAND SIDE ALL THOSE THAT APPLY

- 1) Current CORGI Gas Safety Certificate. Enclose copy with this form to this office + Copy to Occupants.
- 2) Inspection Report From NICEIC approved Electrical Contractor.
- 3) Furniture Complies with current Government Fire Safety Standards.
- 4) General Maintenance:
- Fit for human habitation
 - Free from serious disrepair
 - Landlord contact details clearly displayed within property
- 5) General Standard of Management:
- Tenancy Agreements
 - Property Public Liability Insurance
 - Safe & clean common parts
 - Property not overcrowded
 - Cyclical maintenance
 - Refuse storage
- 6) Fire Protection
- Provision of maintained alarm, detection and emergency lighting system. *Copy of annual report to be included with this form.*

- Maintenance of self closing 30 minute fire protected doors. *To include maintenance of intumescent strips and cold smoke seals.*
- Provision of general purpose fire extinguishers and fire blankets within all kitchens or rooms containing cooking facilities.
- Maintenance of non-key operated locks to all fire doors. *To include final exit door.*

7) Thermal Comfort

- Provision and maintenance of adequate form of space heating
- Provision of loft insulation 250mm Y / N
If No, please state thickness _____
- Provision and maintenance of insulated tank jacket
- Draught proofing, to windows and doors

8) Repairs and Maintenance

- All parts of the house maintained in reasonable repair
- Emergency repair arrangements in place.
- All occupants aware of how to report repairs

9) Security

- Solid core front door fitted with a 5 lever mortice lock

I hereby confirm that I have carried out an inspection of the above property on _____ and confirm that it complies with the above requirements for continued Grade 1 / 2 (delete as appropriate) accreditation.

SIGNED*:

NAME:

DATE:

*If signing on behalf of a company/as an agent please state in which capacity you are signing:-