

Finding rented accommodation

There is national and local shortage of affordable rental accommodation. You will need to think and carefully consider the options available to you in both the private and social rental sector. This self help guide explains the options that are available to you and what you need to consider.

1. When viewing a property

- Bring any references you may have from previous landlords
- Bring ID such as a passport, driving licence or utility bill
- Be prepared with question you may want to ask such as, whether payments for gas, electric, water and phone services are included in the rent or whether you will need to pay the suppliers yourself.
- Confirm who you need to contact if there are any repairs needed to the property or you need to raise any concerns.

2. Can I afford the rent and how often do I have to pay my rent i.e. weekly or monthly?

If you are on low income or on welfare benefits you may be able to get help with your renting costs. For more information please visit the Shelter website www.England.shelter.org.uk and search for Get help with rent.

It is unlawful for lettings agencies, estate agents and private landlords to refuse to let properties to people who are on Housing benefit or Universal Credit.

3. What up fronts costs do you need to consider when renting privately?

Deposits; you will be generally required to pay a deposit of one month's rent in advance before you move in. This rent deposit must not exceed 5 weeks rent.

The landlord must then place this deposit into a government backed tenancy deposit

scheme (TDP). For more details on the TDP schemes please check the www.gov.uk website.

Holding Deposit- you may be asked to pay a holding deposit if you have reserved a property while the landlord, or their agents check/chase up references etc. It is illegal for them to ask for fees to do credit checks etc. You should be able to get this holding deposit back once you have been let the property but it is worth checking with landlord or their agents to confirm this.

If you cannot afford to pay a deposit, please visit the Shelter website www.England.shelter.org.uk for further information on where to seek financial help.

4. When accepting a property

When then tenancy begins you should be provided with

- A copy of your signed tenancy agreement
- Details of your Tenancy Deposit Scheme
- A Gas Safety certificate (if applicable)
- An Energy Savings Certificate
- How to Rent Booklet from the Gov.UK website

Further Tips:

- Take photographs of the property to ensure that if/when you leave the property you have a record of the condition of the property when you moved in. This will help if there any issues at the end of the tenancy.
- Make sure you pay your rent through your bank account ensuring that the transaction is clearly labelled as such. If you do not have a bank account, the landlord should provide you with rent book and it is important to receive a receipt and keep these as proof that you have paid your rent.

If you require any further advice and guidance please contact Birmingham City Council Private rented team by telephoning: 0121 303 5070 or by emailing: prs@birmingham.gov.uk

For further information regarding useful hints and tips when privately renting please visit: WWW.gov.uk and search for "How to Rent " or Shelter: www.England.shelter.org.uk and search for "Private Renting "

This information was correct at the time of printing - August 2021



The Social Rented Sector



This type of accommodation is owned and rented out by local councils and housing associations and registered providers such as Midland Heart.

You will need to register for accommodation at www.birminghamchoice.co.uk. However, you will need to check if you are eligible and qualify to join the councils' housing register. Further information on the eligibility criteria read the Summary of the Birmingham Allocations Scheme which can be found on the Birmingham Choice website detailed above.

If you are accepted on to the Councils' housing register you will then be able to bid for a property through Birmingham choice based letting scheme.

There is a huge demand for this type of accommodation and you may be waiting for some considerable time before you are successful with your bid.

Birmingham City Council published in their Housing Options in Birmingham booklet, that in February 2021 there was 17,355 households on the housing register. Birmingham City Council advertise approximately 100 properties a week and have an average of 81 bids per property. This means that in some areas of Birmingham if you are waiting for a house you could be waiting for up to 20 years.

For further details please visit the Birmingham Choice Website at www.birminghamchoice.co.uk

For independent housing advice and advocacy contact
Shelter: 0344 515 1800 www.shelter.org.uk
Citizens Advice: www.citizenadvice.org.uk



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