

# RENT START

Property letting made easier.....



## DO YOU HAVE A PROPERTY TO LET?

Basildon Council's Private Rented Sector Team are expanding the letting options available for landlords by introducing the Rent Start scheme alongside the successful Property Solutions scheme.

Rent Start is a scheme targeted at letting rooms in shared houses, bedsit or studio flats and, in some cases, self-contained one bedroom flats or houses. It is designed to help landlords find good quality tenants for their accommodation with the added reassurance of ongoing advice, help and support, all provided free of charge!

The Team can introduce you to a choice of tenants quickly and easily so, if you are looking to let your property, get in touch!

## WHY CHOOSE RENT START?

We understand that your property is your investment. With an emphasis on sustainable tenancies and a track record of successfully creating, supporting and managing in the region of 11,000 social tenancies, we are delighted to extend our experience into the private sector, offering you the security of working with an organisation that has a commitment to creating opportunity and change to improving lives.

We will work with you to make letting your property as easy as possible, saving you time and, where we can, mitigating some of the risks involved with letting property. We will also provide access to a wide range of information which can help you run your business.

## RENT START OFFER

- A choice of tenants who have been assessed to ensure they can afford the tenancy and have the skills in place to maintain it successfully
- Payment of one month's rent in advance
- A deposit bond equal to one month's rent to cover against damage or rent arrears.

You will also receive the following services:

- Completion of your tenant's Right to Rent Check
- An inspection of your property in accordance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- A named officer within the Private Rented Sector Team who can provide you with advice and assistance at the start, during and end of a tenancy including legal advice where required
- Facilitation of rent direct payments (where possible and agreed)
- Completion of a full inventory with photographic evidence
- Provision of a tenancy agreement
- Yearly land registry checks to mitigate some of the risks of landlord identity fraud
- Completion of exit inspections when the tenancy ends
- Prompt resolution (within 14 days of receipt) to claims against the damage deposit bond.

## WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

- To ensure your property is available for inspection (to confirm it is free from Category 1 hazards as set out in the HHSRS)
- Current Gas Safe Certificate
- Valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Electrical Safety Certificate
- If your property requires a licence, an up to date licence or evidence that an application for a licence is provided.

\*\* We do not manage the property for you – the Tenancy Agreement will be between the landlord/agent and the tenant. Landlords are expected to manage the tenant and the property themselves, attending to any repair work where necessary. A dedicated officer will be available to assist and offer advice and support where required in order to sustain the tenancy\*\*

## THE PROCESS;

Before the tenancy begins, the letting negotiator will arrange to inspect your property, providing feedback where necessary to ensure it meets Health and Housing Safety Rating System (HHSRS) standards. We aim to inspect the property within 48 hours.

Once the rent is confirmed we will;

- Assess all prospective tenants for affordability and suitability, checking for history of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour or damage to previous properties
- Arrange a mutually convenient time for you to meet the appointed tenant - this is a choice based service. You have the right to decline an appointed tenant. In these circumstances, we would be happy to appoint another.

If you are happy to proceed at this stage we will;

- Conduct a thorough inventory to include photographic evidence
- Provide the Assured Shorthold tenancy (AST) agreement and supervise the signing of this. If using your own AST, this will need to be presented to the Housing Solutions Manager for approval
- The bond will be issued at the time of signing the agreement
- Complete Housing Benefit (HB) form with the client to avoid unnecessary delays in the claim – we have provisions in place to ensure (for in-borough properties) a fast-track service and landlord HB direct payments.

Rent Start sources accommodation for singles or couples that have approached our service for assistance finding a home within the Private Rented Sector (PRS). Potential tenants may be on a low income, meaning they would be entitled to full or partial Housing Benefit. Housing Benefit when renting a property in the PRS is known as Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which is a capped amount calculated on the number of rooms in a property / the household make-up. **The rent you charge must be affordable relative to the LHA rate.**

LHA rates for properties within the Basildon Borough are currently as follows;

	Weekly	Calendar Monthly
<b>Single room rate</b>	<b>£65.41</b>	<b>£283.44</b>

Please visit [www.lha-direct.voa.gov.uk](http://www.lha-direct.voa.gov.uk) for details of LHA rates for properties outside of the Basildon Borough.

For those eligible for LHA, we will ensure that payments are made directly to you, and have provisions in place to fast-track applications for Landlords working within our scheme. We will accept properties outside of the Basildon Borough, providing there is a demand for such properties, however; you would need to contact the local council to request Housing Benefit direct payments.

Alternatively, your tenant may receive Universal Credit. This means that the housing element will be paid direct to the tenant. Wherever possible, we will aim to have this paid directly to you. We will also work with the tenant to set up a standing order to ensure regular payments are made to you.

### **On-going involvement;**

On sign-up, you will be issued with your dedicated liaison officer's contact details, who can be approached should any issues arise during the course of the tenancy.

A member of the team will conduct a mid-tenancy inspection, ensuring your property is being maintained to a good, clean standard.

### **At the end of the tenancy;**

If you require the property back, we will provide notice to quit templates, ensuring that this is served lawfully and where appropriate, appoint a new tenant for you to minimise rent void periods. We will work collaboratively with your existing tenant to source alternative accommodation, minimising the risk of costly court action.

On the last day of the tenancy, we will conduct an exit inspection with you and the tenant in attendance wherever possible. We can decide if there is any claim to be made under the bond on the day to ensure fast payment to you.

If the tenant is not in attendance, any claim against the bond agreement will be investigated within 14 days, any payment to be issued to you thereafter.

### **What We Ask Of Landlords**

To participate in Rent Start, your property must be fit for human habitation and meet certain Health and Safety standards, as outlined below.

You will also need to provide us with all documents requested for the application to be valid, for example, you need to provide a valid gas safe certificate and N.I.C.E.I.C Electrical

safety certificate together with subsequent certificates on their expiry. All electrical appliances must be PAT tested (portable appliance testing). The property must also have an up to date Energy Performance Certificate (50+ rating). For further advice and information on these requirements, please visit;

<https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/your-landlords-safety-responsibilities>

If your property requires a licence, an up to date licence or evidence that an application for a licence is provided.

During the course of tenancy term you are responsible for on-going maintenance and repair works. You will therefore need to ensure that you have adequate insurance and funds available for any emergency work which may be required.

Please note that from October 2015, you are required by law to have an adequately placed, fitted carbon monoxide detector, together with a hard wired, interlinked smoke detector system.

### **Property requirements**

Your property will only be accepted onto the scheme if it is deemed to be clean, safe and in reasonable decorative order. We would ask that the property be vacant for inspection, in order to validate its condition for 'damage bond' purposes. Recommendations made in terms of HHSRS requirements based on this inspection must be completed prior to being accepted on the scheme.

# Rent Start Application Form

If you are interested in joining the scheme, please fully complete the form, returning this to the Private Sector Lettings team (PSL). We will then contact you to discuss the scheme further, and arrange a convenient time to conduct the initial property inspection.

## Ownership Details

Landlord Name

Managing Agent

(if applicable, we will need to see proof of ability to act on the Landlords behalf)

## Landlord Address

## Contact Details

Tel: Home

Mobile:

Tel: Work

Agent:

Email:

I am the legal owner of the property

Yes

No

If you would like to find out more about how Basildon Borough Council use your personal data please go to [www.basildon.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.basildon.gov.uk/privacy)

## Details of property to be let

### Full address of property

Is the property  Furnished

Unfurnished

### Property type

Flat

Shared

House

Maisonette

For flats only:

Which floor is the flat located on

Is the block serviced by a lift?

Yes

No

Please specify any shared / communal areas such as hallways or gardens;

Is the property above a shop/retail or business premises? - please specify;

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Please specify the number of rooms for use solely by the potential tenant

Kitchen

Living

Dining

Bedroom

Bathroom

Cloakroom

Garden

Other - please specify

Is the property currently vacant?

Yes

No

If no , approximate date it will become vacant

## Landlord - declarations and documents

***\*Proof of all of the following MUST be provided to the PSL team before a tenancy can commence***

1. I have proof of ownership\*  
(Deed, letter from lender or Solicitor or Land Registry documents)

Yes

No

2. I have permission from the Freeholder /  
Leaseholder that they property may be let\*

Yes

No

3. I have permission from my mortgage  
lender to rent the property\*

Yes

No

4. For Agents / appointed representatives - I have  
permission from the legal owner to manage the  
property and have written consent to join the scheme\*

Yes

No

5. I have permission from my Building Insurance  
provider to rent the property\*

Yes

No

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6. I have valid Building, Landlord and/or Rent insurance

Yes

No

Please specify

7. I declare that any electrical appliances supplied have been PAT tested

Yes

No

8. I declare that any furniture provided complies with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1993

Yes

No

### Health and Safety Requirements

1. I have a valid Gas Safe Certificate\*

Yes

No

Expiry date

2. I have a valid N.I.C.E.I.C Electrical Safety Certificate\*

Yes

No

Expiry date

3. I have a current Energy Performance certificate\*

Yes

No

4. Does the property have hard wired smoke detector smoke alarms?

Yes

No

How many?

5. Does the property have a fixed carbon monoxide reader?

Yes

No

Location

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6. My property is free from damp and mould

Yes

No

If no, where is damp / mould present and the severity of this?

7. If the property is open-plan, are the entrance and kitchen doors half hour fire doors?

Yes

No

(Required to comply with Building standards 476 Part 22.)

### Fit and Proper Landlord

Basildon Borough Council needs to be satisfied that you are a 'fit and proper' Landlord if you are to be accepted onto the scheme.

**Please specify which of the following apply;**

Have you or anyone associated with renting and/or managing the property;

1) Committed any offence involving;

Fraud or dishonesty.

Violence.

Illegal drugs.

Any other offence listed in Schedule 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003(b) (offences attracting notification requirements).

Details

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2) Practised unlawful discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender reassignment in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business?

Yes  No

Details

3) Been found guilty of any offence relating to housing (to include landlord or tenant law)?

Yes  No

Details

4) Been found guilty of any offence in accordance with any applicable code of practice for the management of a house in multiple occupation, approved under Section 233 of the Housing Act 2004©?

Yes  No

Details

### **Declaration**

Thank you for taking the time to complete the application form. By signing this document, you are confirming that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge and that you consent to Basildon Council carrying out additional enquiries where required.

Basildon Borough Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. The council may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.

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Owner  
signature

Date

Print  
Name

Agent  
signature

Date

Print  
Name

Position

Company  
Stamp

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If you would like to work with a dedicated local service provider offering a professional service free from agency fees, then please do not hesitate to contact the **Private Rented Sector Team** on **01268 206902** or email **PRS@basildon.gov.uk**, who will be able to discuss the scheme with you in further detail or download our application form today at **www.basildon.gov.uk**

If you require this document in a different format (e.g. different language, Braille, large print etc.) please contact Basildon Council on 01268 533 333

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