



Factsheet 63

Finding private rented accommodation

June 2023

About this factsheet

This factsheet has information about finding private rented

4 Viewing the property

Before accepting a tenancy, a

6 Before moving in

Before signing a tenancy agreement, read it carefully and ask about anything you do not understand. It should include:

the type of tenancy or licence

the start date and, if fixed term, the end date

the names of all people involved the landlord, the named tenants, and other members of the household

the rent, how it is paid,

Your landlord or agent has 30 days from receiving your deposit to tell you, in writing, which scheme has been used to protect it. If they fail to comply with this and other rules, the court can order them to pay you compensation of between one and three times the value of the deposit.

If your landlord does not comply with their deposit protection obligations, there are restrictions on when they can use the no fault eviction procedure. See section 7.3 of factsheet 68, *Preventing evictions*, for more information.

8 Financial help

Finding private rented housing can be difficult if on a low income, as you must usually pay a security deposit and sometimes rent in advance.

If you need help to raise this money and are at risk of homelessness otherwise, contact the local authority. They have a duty to help certain households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

eligible for assistance

they should take reasonable steps to help, for example by providing financial or other assistance to enable you to 3t8ETMC 1(d)-3(ing)151>3006anable yoAvthlp certain

9 Letting agencies

Letting agencies

Approved redress schemes

Unless publishing advertisements, disseminating information, or brokering contact with landlords, they must belong to a government-approved redress scheme. This means you can refer a complaint about an agent to an independent person, who investigates the issue and makes a decision.

There are two approved schemes: the Property Ombudsman, and the Property Redress Schemes. Agents must give details of which scheme they are signed up to, alongside a list of their fees. Both schemes investigate complaints about their members free of charge, but they have different policies and procedures and may take different approaches.

Broadly, they may help with a dispute about how an agent has behaved, for example if you experience avoidable delays, or if the agent treats you badly, breaches their obligations, or fails to follow their procedures. Available remedies include an apology, an explanation of their behaviour, and up to £25,000 in compensation.

A complaint is not normally considered by a scheme until you have completed your has been eight weeks since you first complained and you are yet to receive a final response.

Discrimination

It is unlawful for a letting agency to discriminate against

Who is disqualified from renting?

You are disqualified from renting if you are not a British citizen and:
you require leave to enter or remain in the UK but do not have it, or
you have leave to enter or remain in the UK subject to a condition that
you are disqualified from renting.

The Home Office has advised that long-resident Commonwealth citizens
(often called *Windrush*
lived in the UK permanently since before 1973 and have not been away
for long periods within the last 30 years. There are different rules for
other long-resident non-EEA nationals.

Who has a time-limited right to rent?

Your right to rent is time limited if you have been granted a study, work,
or family visa for a limited period of time. *pre-*
settled status

If so, the landlord or agent must carry out follow-up checks after a
minimum of 12 months to ensure you have not been disqualified.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

You have an unlimited right to rent if granted settled status under the
EUSS, and a time-limited right to rent if granted pre-settled status. If you

What documents are acceptable?

The landlord or agent must review and copy an original document from a prescribed list. The documents include:

British or Irish passport

passport, travel or immigration document showing you are exempt from Tf2nt

Property Redress Scheme

www.theprs.co.uk

Telephone 0333 321 9418

Consumer redress scheme for property agents and professionals.

safeagent

www.safeagents.co.uk

Telephone 01242 581712

Accreditation scheme for lettings and management agents. Members must meet defined standards of customer service.

Shelter

www.shelter.org.uk

Telephone 0808 800 4444 (free call)

National charity providing telephone advice to people with housing problems on tenancy rights, homelessness, repairs, and housing benefit.

UK Association of Letting Agents

www.ukala.org.uk

Telephone 03300 55 33 22

Trading association representing letting and property management agents in the UK. Their members meet strict entry criteria, adhere to a code of practice and are recommended by the National Landlords Association.

Age UK

Age UK provides advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online. Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

Age UK Advice

www.ageuk.org.uk

0800 169 65 65

Lines are open seven days a week from 8.00am to 7.00pm

In Wales contact

Age Cymru Advice

www.agecymru.org.uk

0300 303 4498

In Northern Ireland contact

Age NI

www.ageni.org

0808 808 7575

Scotland contact

Age Scotland

www.agescotland.org.uk

0800 124 4222

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