

The Landlords NEWSPAPER

September
2021



Welcome to our new and improved newsletter

This publication is for all registered landlords and agents throughout West Lothian.

Our aim is to keep you updated with what is important to you, and this edition will include the following:

- Service update and survey findings.
- Private sector leading team.
- The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020.
- Rent Better - Scottish wide research on the privated rented sector

- Landlord Registration Forum
- Challenge Poverty Week: Landlord Forum
- COVID Recovery: Public Health, Services and Justice System Reforms Consultation.

Rent Better - Scottish wise research on the private rented sector....

Call for landlords and letting agents for research on the Private Rented Sector in Scotland. . .

Research is being undertaken across Scotland to understand the impacts of changes that have been made to the private rented tenancy regime in Scotland. whether you have 1 property or 500, the researchers at Indigo House are interested in what you think.

The research is looking at the impact of the PRT, and the Coronavirus emergency legislation on landlords and tenants. If you are interested please click the image below and it will take you straight to the Rent Better website, where you will find more information.

<https://rentbetter.indigohousegroup.com/call-for-landlords-and-letting-agents/>



RentBetter

How is private renting in Scotland changing?

'Call for Landlords and Letting Agents'



Private Sector Leasing Team

West Lothian Council Private Sector Leasing service utilises empty private let properties and provides a guaranteed income for at least 12 months to private landlords and agents in West Lothian. We would like to invite landlords /agents who have 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedroom properties available to contact us who may be interested in the scheme. If you would like to find out more or to request an application pack, please speak to an officer by contacting:

The Accommodation team

01506 280000

private.lettingservices@westlothian.gov.uk

THE CORONAVIRUS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2020 UPDATE

The Scottish Government implemented The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 on 1st April 2020. The legislation provides new powers and measures to help protect the public, maintain essential public services, and support the economy during the Coronavirus outbreak. The aim of the legislation is to protect both private and social tenants from eviction.

On 9th June 2021 the Scottish Government introduced The Coronavirus (Extension and Expiry) (Scotland) Bill. The Bill amended the expiry date of the Scottish Coronavirus Acts until 31 March 2022. The bill further allowed for the Acts to be extended once more, should this be needed to respond further to the pandemic, subject to Parliament's approval of the required regulations, to 30 September 2022.

For the private rented sector, this means a continuance of all current emergency provisions;

- Extended notice periods
- Tribunal discretion
- Private landlord pre-action protocols
-

We have updated our website to include a section on evictions, this will be updated regularly. Should you require further assistance you should use this on the first instance, please click or tap below to access the site.



**West Lothian
Council**

Service Updates & Survey Findings

Since the start of the pandemic the Landlord Registration Team having been working to improve the service we provide, how we engage and support private landlords.

In December 2020 we conducted a survey with all registered landlords in West Lothian to ascertain their satisfaction with the Landlord Registration Team. We received a total of 560 responses from the survey.

The responses from the survey showed that an overall majority of landlords were satisfied with the services provided by the Landlord Registration Team.

However, it is noted that comments were made in relation to the change in the process of how Landlords contact the Landlord registration Team. This change was ultimately implemented as a reactive measure to the Covid-19 Pandemic, however, operationally, allows for more efficient and effective operational running of the service, as such, it will remain.

From the survey data, there does appear to be an overall lack of knowledge of which services the team provide. This was mainly related to the support and advice side of the service and the role of the Technical Officer. The survey has now been analyzed and several actions have been implemented to improve the team overall;

Website Update

The website has now been updated with useful information and covers all topics relating to private renting. The website also has a new layout which will make it easier to navigate, the website will be updated monthly to reflect any changes in the service, legislation and regulations and updates from the Scottish Government.



Newsletter

A newsletter will be added to our website every three months, this newsletter will cover different topics each time. This will include issues and advice on repairs, tenancy management, updates from internal and external services and various other topics.

A link will be issued to all landlords direct to the website where you will be able to view the newsletter or download a copy.

Top Tips

If you want to download a copy now, please click the download button on the toolbar below!

Email Notifications

The team have amended email notification (out of office / automated responses) to communicate this change to customers indicating our Service Level Agreement.

Contacting the Landlord Registration Team

The team no longer offers a drop-in option within the Civic Centre. All mail and certificates must be submitted by emailing us at landlordregistration@westlothian.gov.uk, when the service returns to undertaking face to face advice and support, this will be by appointment only.

Please do not attempt to seek unscheduled appointments at the Civic Centre, as you will be turned away. We continue to offer a full service in terms of support, advice, and registration remotely.

If you require advice or assistance from the team you this will be carried out by email, telephone or request a scheduled call. You can find our website with support and guidance here:





Jim Bauld
First Tier Tribunal Housing and Property Chamber

Landlord Registration Forum

Our first Landlord Registration Forum since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic was held on the 26 August 2021 virtually on Microsoft Teams. The event was very successful with around 40 landlords and letting agents attending.

We wish to thank our speakers for their time and contribution to making our Private Landlord Forum a success, and we look forward to their continued participation at future events.

- Jim Bauld - First Tier Tribunal Housing and Property Chamber.
- Zak Abercrombie - West Lothian Council.
- Siobhan Hilley - West Lothian Council
- Andy Hildich - West Lothian Council.

We also wish to extend our thanks to everyone who attended and we look forward to seeing you at the next event which will be held before the end of the year.

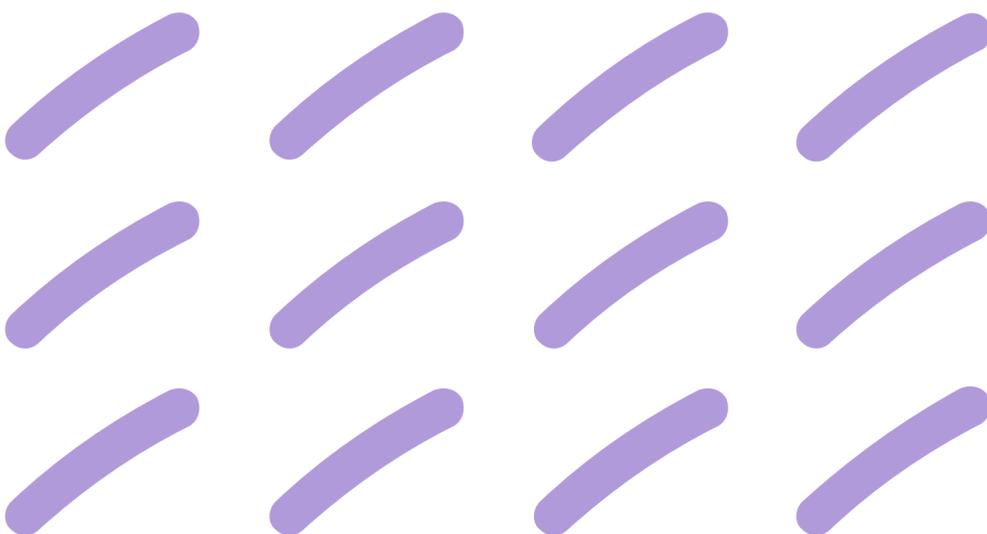
To ensure we meet your needs we would like to hear what speakers you would like to attend at future forums. Please email any suggestions to landlordregistration@westlothian.gov.uk



NATIONAL AND LOCAL ISSUES!

The forum provides an excellent opportunity for you to hear about national and local issues that affect private landlords as well as sharing experiences with other landlords.

All presentations and handouts will be published onto the dedicated webpage for Landlord Registration, which can be found by clicking the image below.



CHALLENGE POVERTY

CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK

Landlord forum

#EndPoverty
a compassionuu

FRIDAY
8TH OCTOBER
2021

10AM - 12PM

As part of the Council's continued programme of engagement with our partners we would like to invite you as a landlord / frontline officer working with tenants in West Lothian to an information exchange seminar. The seminar will look to share good practice and share/learn about all the local help and support that's available for tenants.

The seminar will take place as part of this year's Challenge Poverty Week on Friday 8th of October between 10 -12.

The seminar aims to:

- Provide an overview of homelessness in West Lothian
- Introduce the councils new Customer Experience Team (housing)
- Update on fuel poverty and the local help and support available
- Share information on benefits, changes to benefits and the new Low Income
- Pandemic Payments

To join and share your experiences please register by clicking the image below:



Landlord Registration Forum

The Scottish Government has launched a new consultation on the impact of Covid-19 legislation they introduced in 2020. This consultation will run until 9 November 2021.

The consultation seeks views on issues that have occurred as a result of the emergency COVID-19 legislation introduced during the pandemic – for landlords, this meant changes to the grounds on which they could evict tenants with rent arrears.

For the private rented sector, the consultation is seeking views specifically on the discretionary grounds for pre-emption requirements and for eviction proceedings where tenants have been unable to pay rent. It is important that landlords provide their input to inform future decisions on this legislation, and what difficulties/benefits this has brought to the sector and to landlords themselves.

For more information on the consultation and to have your say please click the image to the right.



USEFUL INFORMATION

Landlord Registration Team 01506 281252

West Lothian Home Choice Team 01506 282765

West Lothian Council Customer Service 01506 280000

Environmental Health 01506 280000

Shelter Scotland 08080 800 4444

The Renting Scotland Website

The Shelter Scotland Website



| Pages | Pageviews | % Pageviews |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| / | 5,932 | 23.33% |
| /information-resources | 1,306 | 5.14% |
| /decisions | 867 | 3.41% |
| /information-privacy | 697 | 2.74% |
| /information-privacy-guidelines | 692 | 2.72% |