

Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme

Dartford Borough Council acknowledges the importance of the provision of rented properties in the Private Sector across the borough. Our desire is to work alongside responsible Private Landlords/Agents to promote good quality housing. In order to promote the provision of safe and well managed properties the Council introduced its highly successful **Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme** in 2004.

Aims of Scheme:

- To raise standards of private sector rented accommodation
- To provide a quality benchmark for privately rented properties in the borough
- To recognise and promote good practice, standards and management by private sector Landlords and Agents

What is Accreditation:

Accreditation is a Code of Standards relating to the physical condition and management of a property in the private rented sector. Landlords who join the scheme and abide by the standards have their property/ies "accredited". The scheme is voluntary, free and there is no compulsion for landlords to join - but there are advantages.

Benefits of accreditation for Landlords/Agents include:

- Promotion of reputation as a good Landlord/Agent
- 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
- Access to financial assistance from the Council for certain property improvements (subject to availability)
- Improved Landlord/Tenant relations

Benefits for Tenants:

- Peace of mind/security for Tenants knowing the property is safe, well-maintained and managed
- Improved Landlord/Tenant relations

Benefits to the Community:

- A supply of good quality accommodation
- Improvement/regeneration of local area
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour
- Improved community relations

Application to the Scheme:

Entry to the scheme is free and it 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.

Once your application is received, your property will be inspected by an Officer from the Private Sector Housing Unit, who will aim to advise you of the outcome of the application within six weeks.

Property eligibility requirements

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Repair:

- 1) To comply with the Government's Decent Homes Standard:
 - To meet the current Statutory Minimum Standard for Housing – it must therefore be free from any Category 1 Hazard under the Housing Act 2004 Part 1 Housing Health & Safety Rating System
 - To be in a reasonable state of repair
 - To have reasonably modern facilities and services
 - To provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

Energy Efficiency Measures required:

- 2) Cavity Wall Infill (where applicable).
- 3) Loft Insulation to current Building Regulation Standard
- 4) Insulated hot water tank, or tank jacket (where applicable).
- 5) Hot water tank thermostat.
- 6) Permanently secured double glazing system.
- 7) Heating system serving the whole property.
- 8) TRVs/ Controls to all radiators.
- 9) Low energy lightbulbs (where feasible)

Gas Supply & Power Safety Measures:

- 10) Provision of a current (ie within the last 12 months) satisfactory Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate from a GAS SAFE gas contractor. This must be provided to the Council and Tenant on an annual basis.
- 11) Provision of a current, (i.e. within the last 5 years) satisfactory Periodic Electrical Safety Certificate. This must be carried out by a competent person (i.e. a member of a national electrical association eg NICEIC or ECA, ELECSA OR NAPPIT contractor) confirming installation complies with B.S. 7671 and the latest IEE Regs.
- 12) Provision of a carbon monoxide detector in any room containing a gas/open fire, or gas boiler.
- 13) Portable appliance test certificates carried out by a competent person (i.e. a member of a national electrical association e.g. NICEIC, ECA, ELECSA or NAPPIT contractor) should be supplied for all electrical appliances provided under the terms of the Tenancy

Security Measures

- 14) Provision of insurance approved five lever mortice lock system to front entrance door, capable of operation in the direction of escape without the use of a key.
- 15) Door chain or limiter
- 16) Locks on all ground floor windows

Refuse Storage Facility

- 17) Provision of an adequate dustbin/refuse storage facility for exclusive use by the residential occupants

Means of Escape from Fire and other Fire Precautions

- 18) Adequate provision of a safe means of escape from the building in case of fire, as specified by Dartford Borough Council and agreed by Kent Fire & Rescue Service
- 19) Fire blanket located in Kitchen and a maximum 1 metre distance from the cooker
- 20) Annual servicing of fire alarm and emergency lighting (if applicable) systems by NICEIC, ECA, NAPPIT, ELECSA or equivalent contractor.

Amenity Standards

21) Comply with Dartford Council's 'Amenity Standards for HMO's'

Emergency Contact Details

22) Landlord/Person in control/or nominated person's contact details to be permanently displayed in a prominent position in the entrance hall

Landlord/Management eligibility requirements

An acceptable standard of property management must be maintained. Landlord's/ Property Managers must comply with **Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 372 The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006**.

Landlords/Property Managers will have a sound record of management. Applications will be assessed using the following checklist:

- No history of 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.
- No unspent convictions

You must have the following documentation:

- 1) Rental Agreements
- 2) Insurance Certificates
- 3) Rent Books
- 4) Current (Annual) Gas safety Certificate
- 5) Current Electrical Test Certificate
- 6) Current PAT certificates (if applicable)
- 7) All properties let after 1 October 2008 must have an Energy Performance Certificate
- 8) Statement of compliance with Furniture & Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988
- 9) Current Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Certification
- 10) Evidence of Fire Prevention Service Contract (detectors, sounders, call points etc)

Accreditation decision

Approval:

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 provide copies of current gas safety certificates, PAT certificates if applicable, fire alarm, emergency lighting (where applicable) and detection system servicing documentation
- You will be required to self certify that the property continues to satisfy the required physical as well as management standards.
- 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.

The certificate of Accreditation awarded must be clearly displayed in a prominent position within the property to which it refers.

After the initial three years the award is renewable thereafter on a self certification basis.

All Certificates remain the property of Dartford Borough Council ('the Council') and may be revoked at any time, if in the opinion of the Strategic Director 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.

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

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.
- 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 have the right to request a review. If you wish to request a review you must provide your reasons in writing to the Housing Options & Private Sector Manager, Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent DA1 1DR within 21 days of the notification of this decision.

Withdrawal of Accreditation

If in the opinion of the Private Housing Team, 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.

Your details:

Name:	Owner / Agent (delete as appropriate)
Address (for correspondence):	
Home/Work telephone:	
Mobile telephone:	
Email:	

Certificates:

Please confirm by ticking the boxes below, that you have enclosed the following documentation for each property listed within your Application Form. Failure to provide all required documentation will render your application INVALID and the application will therefore be refused.

- Current satisfactory and valid GAS SAFE Gas Safety Certificate (ie within the last 12 months)
- Current satisfactory and valid NICEIC, ECA, NAPPIT, ELECSA (or equivalent) Electrical Certificate (ie less than 5 years old)
- An Energy Performance Certificate if the property was let after 1 October 2008
- Current satisfactory and valid fire alarm and emergency lighting (if applicable) certificates (ie within the last 12 months) carried out by a NICEIC, ECA, NAPPIT, ELECSA (or equivalent) contractor
- Portable appliance test certificates (if applicable) carried out by NICEIC, ECA, NAPPIT, ELECSA (or equivalent) contractor

Declaration of applicant:

- I 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 declare that to the best of my 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:
 - No history of non compliance or prosecution by the Council in relation to statutory Enforcement Action concerning the condition/management of the property.
 - No outstanding Local Authority debts on the property
 - No outstanding allegations of illegal eviction, or harassment within the property
 - No record of fraud in connection with mortgages, loans, or housing benefits within the last ten years or problems with recovery.
 - No unspent convictions
- **Compliance with Furniture & Furnishings (Fire safety) Regulations 1988**

Please tick appropriate box:

 - 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.
- I confirm that in addition to the certificates enclosed, I hold all the relevant, valid and current required documentation as outlined in the Landlord/Management Eligibility Requirements listed in the Accreditation Information Pack. (Copies may be requested on an 'ad hoc basis' by the Council).

- I confirm that the management of the property/ies complies with the requirements outlined in **Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 372 The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006**.
- I 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 knowledge all the information provided in connection with this application is true and accurate.
- I have read, understood and accept the conditions by which the Certificate is issued.

Signed:

Print full name:

Date:

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.

