

# BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL'S PRIVATE RENTED ACCESS SERVICE

## What is this scheme?

Birmingham City Council, in partnership with members of the Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme (MLAS), has developed a Private Rented Access Service to help people on low incomes access the private rented sector. We're looking for accredited landlords to offer their properties to be let through this scheme.

## Why are we doing this?

Demand for social housing far outstrips supply, so the private rented sector plays an important role in offering customers choice. The Private Rented Access Service offers people in housing need private accommodation alongside the other available housing options.

Customers who receive state benefits can't always access quality landlords and properties, which can result in the most vulnerable people living in the

poorest quality accommodation. We want to work with you to change that.

## Who are our customers?

Single people and families who struggle to find affordable housing. The majority of people using the service will be looking for a long term, settled tenancy.

## What does the service offer?

The Private Rented Access Service offers:

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) paid direct to the landlord (where appropriate).
- A rent bond guaranteed by the council against rent loss/damage.
- A steady stream of potential tenants.
- A dedicated landlord support service to advise and guide landlords on service related issues.
- Committed support to help process LHA safeguarding applications.



- A dedicated tenant liaison service to carry out tenant checks and assessment.
- Ongoing support for tenants to help maintain successful tenancy management.
- A way for landlords to advertise properties for free to potential tenants.
- A rent bond savings service delivered by a credit union.
- Regular information for landlords on grants available to improve the condition and energy efficiency of properties.
- Access to Birmingham City Council's Landlords' Forum.

There are also plans for our tenant liaison service to pilot an accredited tenant training programme. This will be offered to all potential tenants who apply for accommodation and will include modules on renting in the private sector.

### Birmingham Home Choice

This choice based lettings scheme is the new way to rent homes from Birmingham City Council and some housing associations. Customer can bid on properties advertised through the website at [www.birminghamhomechoice.org.uk](http://www.birminghamhomechoice.org.uk)

Customers place bids for properties using this system through the internet, their mobile phone or digital TV. We're looking to include properties from the private rented sector in the future and it's

hoped that the Private Rented Access Service will be included.

### How can you let your property through this scheme?

Birmingham City Council's Private Rented Access Service only works with MLAS accredited landlords. If you're not accredited, you can register your interest in the scheme until you are.

Accreditation through MLAS is achieved by attending a one day course (currently priced at £125 including refreshments and lunch), agreeing to follow a code of conduct, and confirming that you are a 'fit and proper person' (for example, you have not been convicted of any offence or had action taken against you under the Housing Act 2004).

To find out more about MLAS, or to register for an accreditation course, please visit the website [www.mlas-online.co.uk](http://www.mlas-online.co.uk) or call 0121 414 6438.

If you have property in Birmingham and would like to register to let it through the Private Rented Access Service, or want more information, please call 0121 464 2049.

