



Horsham
District
Council

Private Sector Leasing

A guide to leasing a
property to Horsham
District Council



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What is Private Sector Leasing

Private Sector leasing, or PSL for short, is a scheme where the council takes on a lease on a privately owned property. The council then uses the property as temporary accommodation for homeless households.

Benefits for families and the local community

Homeless families benefit from this scheme, as we are able to provide good quality temporary housing for them in their local area. At this moment in time, temporary accommodation is often located outside the district and can be some distance away. This can disrupt home life, work and school for families who are already going through a stressful time. This scheme enables us to use self-contained properties for those in need a emergency housing.

Benefits for landlords

- Guaranteed rental income for the lease period – irrespective of any void periods or tenant rent arrears
- Rent paid quarterly in advance
- We will manage the property for you. We will take possession of your property and sublet it to families in housing need. We manage the property and any tenancies at no additional cost to you
- Lease agreement between 3 – 5 years
- No letting agent or management fees
- No contact with the tenants
- Assurance that all legislation relating to letting is being met.
- Property returned in original condition
- Inventory checks will be completed at start and end of the lease
- No need to use deposit protection schemes

Frequently asked questions

What types of properties are required?

We are in need of 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom unfurnished self-contained properties. The properties need to be within the Horsham District. The council will consider most types of properties, including flats, maisonettes, bungalows and houses.

Property condition

Properties must be in a good state of repair, as required under the Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS). All properties must have adequate and suitable fixed space heating.

Vacant possession

Only vacant properties will be accepted into the scheme. If you currently have tenants in your property, the council cannot consider your property for the scheme.

Furnished or unfurnished

Properties should be unfurnished with suitable floor coverings. Any appliances or white goods you decide to leave in the property must be confirmed as a donated item. These will not be replaced if any faults occur.

Conservatories, ponds and garages

It is very unlikely that we will take on properties with conservatories, ponds, or garages.

Gardens

- Gardens will need to be clear of rubbish, building materials and animal faeces
- Any vegetation including shrubs and trees needs to be cut back
- Fences need to be continuous, secure, safe and in good repair
- Gates need to be operational and gate posts/pillars need to be secure
- Paved patio areas, paths and steps must be even and sound with no tripping hazards
- Garden ponds must be emptied and filled to make them safe
- Greenhouses must be dismantled and removed

Heating

The property must have gas central heating. Where there is no mains gas supply, fan assisted storage heaters are acceptable.

Security

You must supply 3 full sets of keys for the property. Any lockable outside door must have a key. Window keys will need to be supplied for any locks on uPVC windows. Restrictors on windows above first floor flats must be provided on any type of accommodation.

Smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide monitors

Smoke alarms must be installed on every storey of the property and be in working order. Smoke alarms ideally need to be hard wired in, but a 10-year tamper-proof battery-operated smoke detector is also acceptable.

Carbon monoxide alarms are required in every room that contains a fixed combustion appliance.

How much rent am I likely to receive?

For the duration of the lease we will guarantee rental payments to you. These payments will be processed quarterly in advance. During the lease you will face no commission fees, no void costs and no rent arrears.

Furthermore, between tenancies you will also not incur any fees such as redecoration costs.

For the duration of the lease, you will receive 80% of the current Local Housing Allowance Rates.

We are keen to ensure that the PSL scheme is attractive to property owners. Whilst we recognise that these rent amounts are below current market rates, our scheme does offer many benefits. We are confident that the package we offer is good value and is relatively low risk when compared with letting the property on the open market.

Am I expected to supply safety certificates?

Safety Checks

Before the lease is signed, we will need:

- Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR)/CP12 certificate
- NICIEC Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR) and PAT testing on any built-in appliances.
- Energy Performance Certificate
- The gas and electrical certificates will need to show that no remedial works are required to make the property safe.
- Working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

These reports may highlight work that needs to be done to the property before we can accept it onto the PSL scheme.

Who is responsible for the repairs?

Repairing Obligations	Landlord	Council
Structural and exterior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chimneys, chimneys pots, stacks and flues • Roof coverings (tiles, slates etc.) • Roof leadwork (flashings etc.) • Rook ceiling joists • Gutters, drains, drainpipes and external pipes • Fascia boards, soffits and large bargeboards • External walls • Window, windowsills, window frames, and the glass • External doors and frames • Patios, pathway and steps • Gulleys and inspection chambers • Head tanks • Boundary walls, gates and fences • Landscaping and trees • Lifts • Fire escapes • Dry and wet rot • Failure of double-glazed units • Sheds and other outbuildings 	Yes	No
Insurable risks	Yes	No
Kitchen fittings including kitchen units	Yes	No
Built in appliances	Yes	No
Any defects at the start of the tenancy	Yes	No
Annual gas certificate	No	Yes

Damage caused by the council or our tenant (unless it is an insurable risk)	No	Yes
Removing rubbish at the end of the tenancy	No	Yes
Keeping the garden trimmed and tidy	No	Yes
Internal repairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of taps in bathroom and kitchen • Unblocking sink wastes and gulleys • Replacement of defective door furniture • Maintenance of seals to showers, baths, washbasins etc. • Key replacement 	No	Yes

All maintenance carried out on any Council-owned stock or leased properties will be conducted by maintenance contractors employed by the Property Services department at Horsham District Council.

Should any repairs be required at the property which fall under your responsibility, we will contact you to discuss the next steps on addressing the fixture.

At the end of the leasehold agreement, the property will be returned to you in the same condition (minus fair wear and tear) as when the agreement started.

Damages

If the property is damaged as a result of misuse by the tenant, the council will arrange the repairs and will take appropriate action to recover the costs from the tenant.

Full property management

We will:

- Carry out a full inventory and schedule of condition with photographic evidence
- Set up and manage new tenancies
- Act as a point of contact for tenants when any issue arises with the property (i.e. maintenance)
- Arrange for annual gas service checks to be carried out
- Ensure compliance with existing and future legislation

What happens if the tenant causes anti-social behaviour?

All tenants are required to sign a tenancy agreement which includes clauses about noise and nuisance. Anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated. Should a tenant break their tenancy agreement, the Council will try to resolve the situation. If the tenant continues to cause a nuisance the Council will take legal action against them to secure an eviction.

Rent

The collection of rent will be between the Council and their tenant.

Who is responsible for the bills?

We will take meter readings when the lease starts and will provide the tenant with the utility provider's information. We will also provide the information needed for the tenant to set up their council tax payments.

- The Council's tenants will be responsible for paying the Council Tax, electricity, gas, water and house contents insurance.
- The landlord will be responsible for paying the building insurance and any service/maintenance charges.

What happens when the agreement comes to an end?

The council will contact you 6 months prior to the lease agreement coming to an end to determine if you are happy to continue to lease your property to the council or if you wish to bring the agreement to an end.

Should any tenant refuse to leave the property, the council will take legal action against the tenant and will bear the costs and fees that incur.

The council will continue to pay your agreed rental payments until the property can be handed back in vacant possession. The property will be in a good state of repair and decoration excluding fair wear and tear. Before the property is handed back to you, the council will complete a check-out inventory and take details of any damages that are more than fair wear and tear. In the event of any dispute the inventory will be your proof of condition of the property at the commencement of the lease.

If you are interested in the scheme and you have a property you would like to be considered for the PSL Scheme, please complete the online form on our website. The Housing Officer (Private Letting Service) will contact you to discuss the scheme and arrange a viewing of the property. Alternatively, you can contact the officer on 01403 215572.

A quick checklist of how PSL works

1. The property is viewed by our Housing Officer. If the property is suitable, the officer will explain the PSL scheme and will inform the owner of any necessary works that are needed prior to the lease commencing.
2. The owner will need to obtain and send any necessary paperwork to the Housing Officer
3. The Housing Officer will check that the paperwork is correct and inform the owner of any issues.
4. If any remedial work is required on the property based on what the compliance certificates state, this will need to be carried out.
5. Once the owner has carried out all the necessary repairs, they will need to provide evidence of the remedial works. The owner will need to ensure that the property is cleared and cleaned.
6. When the property is ready, the owner will notify the Housing Officer, who will arrange an appointment to visit for a final inspection.
7. If the property meets the required standard, the Housing Officer will arrange an inventory by an independent company.
8. A date will be arranged for the signing of the lease agreement and for the keys to be handed over.

How to contact us

Please contact the Housing Officer (Private Letting Service) who can advise you and answer any questions you may have.

Call: [01403 215572](tel:01403215572) or [07867 340938](tel:07867340938)

Email: HorshamPSL@horsham.gov.uk

Or write to us at:

Private Sector Lettings and Leasing

Housing Services
Horsham District Council
Parkside, Chart Way
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

If you have any suggestions on how we can improve the scheme, please let us know.

We are aware that however we try, occasionally things go wrong. Please help us to put them right. If you would like to make a complaint, please go to our website on www.horsham.gov.uk and access the feedback and complaints form.