

3. PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING



The size and nature of the local private rented housing market Location and Costs

In Perth and Kinross 8.7% of households live in the private rented sector, this as opposed to the Scottish average of 4.7%. The average weekly rent is £40-45 per week.

Research has indicated that turnover in the private rented sector is lower than the council or owner occupied sector. Rents ranged from £160 per month for a 2-apartment semi detached farmhouse to £850 for an unfurnished 7-apartment farmhouse. Turnover in the private rented sector is highest in Perth City and Central Perthshire and lowest in Highland Perthshire. Rents however are lowest in Highland Perthshire.

Integrated accommodation service (Rent Deposit Scheme)

Perth and Kinross Council and Churches Action for the Homeless have set up an integrated accommodation service. This provides opportunities to access accommodation in the private rented sector. CATH pay the rent required in advance and give a guarantee rather than a deposit. The first payment of Housing Benefit will then be paid to CATH and subsequent payments to the landlord directly.

This service is provided for single homeless people or couples.

For further information contact:

The Accommodation Co-ordinator
Churches Action for the Homeless
10 York Place (above Iceland)
Perth
PH2 8EH
Telephone 01738 580563 or 580548

How to find out about private rented accommodation

- Read the ads in the local papers. Accommodation for rent is advertised in the:
 1. **Perthshire Advertiser**, which is published on a Tuesday and Fridays, and is Perth and Kinross wide
 2. **Blairgowrie Advertiser** which is published on a Thursday and covers Eastern Perthshire (Blairgowrie/Coupar Angus and Alyth)
 3. **Strathearn Herald** which is published on a Thursday and covers the Strathrean area (Crieff/Comrie/Auchterarder).
 4. **Courier** – the main day for property is a Thursday but there are some properties to let on other days
 5. or put an ad in yourself.

- Contact the **Perthshire Solicitors Property Centre PSPC**
6 South St Johns
Perth
PH1 5SU
Tel: 01738 635301
Fax: 01738 621168
E-mail

The PSPC have a list of properties to rent. They also advertise properties to rent in the local PSPC weekly guide. Both of which are available from the PSPC office. Also contact solicitors and estate agents individually for information. See Yellow Pages/Phonebook for further information.

- The Tourist Board have details of accommodation for holidaymakers in the 'Where to Stay' guide. This includes guesthouses, hotels and houses/flats. This accommodation is generally let at rates starting from £200 to £300 per week. Out of season or longer lets would be by arrangement with the owner. The 'Where to Stay' guide is available free of charge from the Tourist Board Lower City Mills West Mill Street Perth 01738 627959.
- Look out for small ads that appear, for example, on the supermarket notice boards or in the windows of some shops and post offices
- Private Guest houses/ Bed and Breakfasts also provide accommodation – see Yellow Pages/Phonebook
- Accommodation advice is also available from a variety of advice agencies see appendix B
- Ask around; particularly in the country areas where some private renting opportunities may be "advertised" by word of mouth.
- Perth College issues a booklet to students who are moving into the area to study at the college. This provides details of people who have indicated that they would be interested in providing accommodation to student(s). This includes lodgings within someone's home and self-contained flats. Anyone considering moving to Perth to study at the college should contact the Admissions Office Perth College Crieff Road Perth telephone 01738 621171 for further information

NOTE that it is an offence -

- 1. for accommodation or letting agencies to charge to put your name on a list; and**
- 2. for landlords in Scotland to levy any form of premium on the rent**

Housing Benefit entitlement

People on low incomes with high rental costs are usually entitled to receive Housing Benefit to help them pay the rent.

It is important, however, to remember that there is no automatic entitlement - Housing Benefit will only be paid to someone who has gone through the application

process properly and satisfies the statutory requirements for the payment of Benefit. Moreover, the level of Housing Benefit awarded may not pay the rent in full.

It is very important, therefore, that anyone who may be relying on Housing Benefit to make a private rented opportunity affordable should contact the Housing Benefit advisers at the Council, Citizens' Advice or other advice agency **before** they accept the tenancy. It is advisable to obtain a pre- tenancy determination(PTD) from the Housing Benefit office in advance of signing a tenancy agreement to ensure it is affordable. **(See Appendix A for further details on Housing Benefit).**