



# RENTING PRIVATELY

Information about renting from  
a private landlord



## Properties to let

**2 Bed Flat To Let Hounslow**

TW3 Two bedroom, two bathroom modern apartment with parking - central Hounslow. Ideal for a professional person or couple, located in central Hounslow

**1 Bed**

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**2 Bed Flat To Let HOUNSLOW**  
Robinson Farwood Assoc  
are delighted to

2 Bed

- Finding a property
- Rent, deposits and housing benefit
- Tenancy agreements
- Repairs

## Renting privately

**Renting from private landlords is often the only option available to single people and couples, particularly in the short term.**

Renting privately can be a good option for you as you will be able to arrange a property quite quickly and choose the type of property you like, in a location you choose.

Private tenancies can be fully furnished, partly furnished or unfurnished. Think about the sort of home that will suit you before you start looking.

**You might want a place that is:**

- near your family and friends;
- shared with other people or the landlord;
- furnished or unfurnished;
- in a particular area;
- available for a short time;
- at an affordable rent; or
- on the ground floor.

Be realistic about what you are prepared to accept and what you can afford.

## Where to look

You can find adverts for properties to rent in newspapers and in shop windows and on 'for sale' boards.

Landlords also let their properties through letting agencies who will find a tenant on their behalf.

You can find details of local letting agencies in the yellow pages or Thompson local directory. Letting agencies are likely to charge a fee for their services when you have accepted a property with them, they cannot make a charge to you for just registering with them.

## Useful Websites

[www.easyroommate.com](http://www.easyroommate.com)

[www.Loot.com](http://www.Loot.com)

[www.net-lettings.co.uk](http://www.net-lettings.co.uk)

[www.findaproperty.com](http://www.findaproperty.com)

[www.londonnet.co.uk](http://www.londonnet.co.uk)

[www.easylondonaccommodation.com](http://www.easylondonaccommodation.com)

[www.propertyfinder.com/rent](http://www.propertyfinder.com/rent)

[www.primelocation.com/uk-property-to-rent](http://www.primelocation.com/uk-property-to-rent)

[www.homesandproperty.co.uk](http://www.homesandproperty.co.uk)

## Newspapers

A lot of people find accommodation through newspapers. Places go quickly so it is important to start early and follow up the advert as soon as possible. You might want to try:

**Hounslow Guardian**

**Hounslow Chronicle**

**Hounslow Feltham and Hanworth Times**

**Loot:** Daily paper which has a large London wide accommodation section

**Evening Standard:** Daily paper with London wide accommodation section. Wednesday in particular has a large section

**London Lets:** Wednesday only, for accommodation throughout London

**The Guardian:** Capital Radio flatshare list in The Guardian, '**The Guide**'.

**West London Post.**

## I don't have a deposit/rent in advance

Sometimes the biggest difficulty in renting privately can be having the rent and deposits needed in advance. Most private landlords require a deposit, usually equivalent to one month's rent before letting a room or a property. A deposit is returnable and will be given back to you when you leave the property unless there

is any damage other than usual wear and tear. In addition to a deposit, landlords sometimes require rent in advance. If you have been claiming Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance for six months you can apply to the Department for Work and Pensions for a budgeting loan for 'rent in advance'. You can claim up to £1000 to enable you to secure private rented accommodation. Contact your Jobcentre Plus office or the Pension Service, or visit [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) for more information.

## Guarantors

You may be asked to provide a guarantor who will sign an agreement that they will take responsibility on your behalf for any tenancy problems, including guaranteeing the rent if you fail to pay it.

## How much rent will I have to pay?

Rents can vary greatly depending on the type of property and its location. If you rent privately and are on a low income you may be able to claim housing benefit to help you pay your rent.

In April 2008 a new way of calculating housing benefit was introduced called Local Housing Allowance (LHA) which is based on the area you live, the number of people in your property and your households size.

If you are a single person under the age of 25, it is likely that you will only be eligible to receive Housing Benefit to cover the average cost of a room in a shared property.

## **Hounslow Revenue Services will look at:**

### **Your personal and financial circumstances:**

- money you and your partner have coming in - earnings, some benefits, tax credits and occupational pensions;
- your savings and any savings your partner has; and
- your circumstances (age, size of family, disability, whether anyone living with you should help with the rent).

### **The particulars of your home and the rent you pay, including whether:**

- the rent is reasonable for your particular home if you rent privately;
- your home is a reasonable size for you and your family; and
- the amount of rent is reasonable for the area where you live.

### **Housing Benefit will not usually be paid if:**

- you have savings of over £16,000, unless you are aged 60 or over and getting the 'guarantee credit' of Pension Credit;
- you live with a close relative in their home;
- you are a full-time student (unless you are disabled or have children);
- you are an asylum seeker or are sponsored to be in the UK; or
- you do not meet the right to reside or the habitual residence test.

Housing benefit will not affect any other benefits you get.

**To find out more or apply for Housing Benefit contact:**

Hounslow Revenue Services on **020 8583 4242**  
or call into one of the council offices.

## Arranging to view properties

When you have found a property you are interested in you will need to arrange to go and see if you like it.

As a safety precaution, it's a good idea to get a friend to go with you on the viewing and to also let someone know where you're going. When you get to the property you should make sure the property is in a good state of repair, that its secure and all of the heating, lighting and plumbing works.

Usually private rented properties are available straight away, so try to be prepared to move in or start paying the rent quickly otherwise you might be able to get the landlord to hold the property for you for a short while.

As some properties may be popular it's always useful to be organised and if you like it be ready to make a decision. Remember, the viewing is not just for you to see if you like the property, the landlord will also be seeing if they think you will be a good tenant, so it is important to make a good impression.

## Information you will need to provide

Most landlords or letting agents will want to make formal checks to see if you will be a good tenant. This may include asking for references, undertaking a credit check and they may want to contact your previous landlord. You will need to provide your personal details and details of your salary and previous addresses.

## Your tenancy agreement

When you decide on the property you would like to rent, you will sign and be entering into a legal contract called a tenancy agreement with your landlord. Most private self-contained tenancies are assured short-hold tenancies and usually last for six months or sometimes a year and can be renewed by you and your landlord at the end of this time.

### **Your tenancy agreement should give details of:**

- the tenancy start date;
- the length of the tenancy if it is for a fixed period;
- the amount of rent, when it is due and when it may be reviewed or increased;
- what notice is needed from you and the landlord to end the tenancy; and
- yours and your landlord's rights and responsibilities.

## Once you have moved in

The landlord is legally responsible for repairs to the structure of the building; the roof; the windows and doors; drains; baths; toilets; heating; hot water; damp and general building repairs.

As a tenant you are expected to carry out minor repairs in your new home such as replacing a fuse or clearing a blocked drain. You would also be expected to repair damage caused by you, your family or visitors to the property.

When repairs need doing, inform the landlord as soon as possible in writing if not urgent or by phone if it is an emergency, for example a water leak.

For repairs which are not urgent, you have to allow your landlord a reasonable time to do the repair. There are no set times for how long a repair should take, it depends on how urgent it is.

**This leaflet can be supplied in community languages, large print, audio tape/CD or Braille.**

**We welcome your comments and suggestions about communications.**

**Contact the Communications Team:**

 **020 8583 3535**

 **[hcscommunications@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:hcscommunications@hounslow.gov.uk)**

# RENTING PRIVATELY

## **Prevention & Housing Advice Team**

Civic Centre  
Lampton Road  
Hounslow  
TW3 4DN

**Telephone:** 020 8583 3842

**Email:** [housingadvice@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvice@hounslow.gov.uk)

**[www.hounslow.gov.uk](http://www.hounslow.gov.uk)**

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