



Your Housing Options

A guide to finding a home in the private
rented sector



Housing options



The only housing option for many single people is to find a home in the private rented sector. It is the quickest and simplest way to find a home.

Private landlords

Not all private landlords are the same. Some landlords rent out a room in their own home whereas others manage many properties.

What do landlords want?

All landlords want a tenant who will...

- *Pay their rent*
- *Look after their property*
- *Pay their bills*

You need to show that you will be a good tenant.

Top tip!



Build a portfolio to show that you'll be a good tenant. Include...

- Your CV
- References from previous landlord
- References from work/voluntary placements

Deposits and rent in advance

Most landlords will ask for a deposit and rent in advance. We may be able to help with a 'Housing Voucher'. You could also apply for help from a Budgeting Loan or Discretionary Housing Payment.

Housing Benefit

You can get help to pay your rent if you have a low income or claim benefits. The amount you get depends on your income, your age and where you live. The maximum you can get is limited to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

Housing Benefit for people under 35 years old

If you're under 35, the maximum you can get is the *Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR)*. This will usually cover the cost of a room in a shared house or a room with a resident landlord.

If you're under 35, you are exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate if...

- You receive Middle/Higher Care DLA
- You've spent at least 3 months in a hostel with resettlement support (25-35 year olds)
- You've left prison and are subject to Multi Agency Public Protection (25-35 year olds)
- You're under 22 and have spent time in care since your 16th birthday



Benefits of private renting

- More choice and greater flexibility
- Family and friends can help you look for a room
- An opportunity to have a fresh start
- More privacy than hostels
- Cheaper rent than hostels

Start looking!

Letting Agents



Agents let rooms, flats and houses on behalf of private landlords. You can find letting agents on most high streets – and nearly all have a website. Visit as many agents as you can...

But remember, agencies can be expensive ...

Online



You can find landlords directly at:

www.zoopla.co.uk

www.rightmove.co.uk

www.gumtree.co.uk

www.loot.co.uk

www.craigslist.co.uk



Find house and flat shares

www.flatmaterooms.co.uk

www.spareroom.co.uk

www.roomhunters.co.uk

www.roombuddies.co.uk

You can also find rooms and flats...

- *In shop windows*
- *On supermarket notice boards*
- *In the local papers*



A home in Harrow

Demand for housing is very high and not everyone will be able to find a home. If you can't find a home locally...

- Look in other parts of London
- Think about other parts of the UK

Top tip!



To help your search, find out about discounted travel...'

www.tfl.gov.uk/fares-and-payments/adult-discounts-and-concessions



At the viewing

Remember to ask...

- *Will the deposit be protected?*
- *How long is the tenancy?*
- *Who pays the bills?*
- *Can I smoke or have pets?*
- *Can you fix fixtures and fittings before I move in?*
- *Have you installed smoke alarms & Carbon Monoxide Detectors?*



Top tip!

Get noticed over other viewers...

- Don't be late
- Dress to impress
- Think about what to say
- Take your portfolio
- Tell the landlord that your Housing Benefit will be paid direct to them



What is an HMO?

- HMOs are houses in which unrelated people share facilities, such as the kitchen and bathroom.
- HMOs with more than 2 floors and more than 4 people must be licenced. Check that the HMO has been licenced.
- HMO landlords must provide working smoke alarms

Further information

Housing Advice



@ housing.advice@harrow.gov.uk

☎ 020 8424 1093

www.gov.uk/private-renting

www.gov.uk/browse/benefits

www.entitledto.co.uk/

www.gov.uk/housing-benefit/overview

www.voa.gov.uk/corporate/RentOfficers/LHADirect.html

