**Fife Private Rental Solutions (FPRS)**

**Client FAQ’S**

**1. Who can get help from FPRS?**

Fife Private Rental Solutions staff will discuss the Private Rented Sector with any individual or service. One of our team will complete an assessment and advise on whether FPRS are able to assist. In some cases, it may be advisable to explore all available housing options before moving into the private rented sector, if this is the case you would be asked to contact Fife Council to have a discussion regarding all available housing options.

**2. How do I refer?**

If you are already on the Fife Housing Register and waiting for an offer of housing but wish to explore the private rented sector, or your circumstances do not require further housing advice or registration, you may contact us directly to request access to the service, this can be done via website: [www.trustinfife.org.uk](http://www.trustinfife.org.uk) phone: 01592 201849 or email: info@fprs.co.uk

Referrals to Fife Private Rental Solutions can also be made through Fife Council’s Homeless Assessment Team if you are registered as homeless. If you have not yet had a homeless assessment, and are at risk of homelessness, you should either attend your nearest Fife Council Local Service Centre or contact on 03451 550055 or the Out of Hours team on 0800 0286231.

FPRS also accept referrals through Fife Council’s Housing Access route, Housing Advisors will look at all available housing options and will refer on to suitable organisations. They can be contacted on 03451 550033 or through your nearest Fife Council Local Service Centre.

**3. Fife Council have said I am intentionally homeless, can you help?**

Anyone receiving an intentionally homeless decision can refer or be referred to Fife Private Rental Solutions by their Homeless Prevention Officer. If this is the case, please contact your Homeless Prevention Officer and they will arrange a referral to be sent. Alternatively, if you feel that you wish to explore your options in the PRS, the FPRS team would be happy to chat regarding your options.

**4. Can you assist me with a deposit and first month’s rent?**

In the first instance, if you meet the service criteria, FPRS can guarantee a deposit for up to 12 months, with this being reviewed regularly. Affordable repayments would be agreed with you to build up your own cash deposit. At the end of FPRS’s involvement, the deposit monies would be passed to the landlord, so helping to protect the future of your tenancy.

Unfortunately, FPRS are currently unable to assist with rent in advance, however, we will be able to discuss and advise on additional funding resources that may be available for this.

**5. I work, can I get assistance?**

Fife Private Rental Solutions staff will provide advice and guidance to anyone regarding the private rented sector. Due to funding criteria, we may be restricted as to the financial assistance we can provide however, we can still give advice and guidance where a deposit guarantee cannot be covered, so please contact the team to discuss your individual circumstances.

**6. I moved into my flat (last week) but still need to pay the landlord deposit, can you help?**

When renting a property there are several Regulations that must be met by the landlord, FPRS prefer to ensure that these requirements are met before the move in takes place. However, the team are still able to provide advice regarding your situation, and if the landlord is amenable to providing further information and complying to the Regulations, FPRS may be able to assist with a Deposit Guarantee (see question 5 for details). Please get in touch to discuss this further.

**7. The letting Agent is looking for a guarantor, can you help?**

A Guarantor is someone who will accept financial responsibility for your rent should you fail to pay it. FPRS are currently unable to act as a Guarantor but can give you advice on who may be able to assist.

If you are unable to provide a guarantor, the team can discuss alternative options to your property search.

**8. I want to move closer to family support but can’t afford the deposit, can you help?**

Fife Private Rental Solutions recognise that the need to be near a support network is of great importance and can in fact help people sustain their tenancy. If you wish to explore what options are available to you, please read through some of our other FAQ’s and contact us using the details in question 2.

**9. I claim benefits, can I afford a private property?**

Affordability for a private property will depend on several things, including income. The FPRS team can advise you on whether it would be affordable, even when claiming benefits.

**10. I’m on benefits, how much housing benefit am I going to get towards a private let?**

Fife Council are not accepting any new Housing Benefit applications for private rented property, however if you already have Housing Benefit in payment and are just doing a change of circumstance, this should be considered. Any new applicants/tenants would be asked to complete a request for Housing Costs through Universal Credits.

The amount of assistance is based on your family make up and any other income. There is a guide as to the maximum assistance you could be entitled to (deductions may be made depending on circumstances such as income, debt repayments), this is referred to as the Local Housing Allowance. Information is available on [www.fifedirect.co.uk](http://www.fifedirect.co.uk), the amounts are generally reviewed each new financial year,

your household income will be considered to work out an applicable amount. There are a few organisations that will assist you to work out your finances, including the DWP, and there is also an online benefit calculator which you may find helpful: [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

**11. Will you help me find a property?**

The responsibility to identify a suitable, affordable property remains with you – after all you know what would best suit your needs, however FPRS work closely with many landlords and Letting Agents across Fife, are aware of properties that become available and do regular property searches to help find suitable accommodation. We would encourage you to search online for advertised properties and keep us informed of any viewings you arrange; we can then give advice prior to any agreement being made.

**12. Where can I get assistance with furnishings?**

If you are claiming a benefit, the Scottish Welfare Fund may be an option to assist you to get furnishings for your property, there may also be availability through social media and other charitable organisations and shops.

Social Media such as Facebook or Freecycle can be a good source of furniture items, many are advertised at reduced cost or free if you can collect.

FPRS work closely with different organisations to provide the best assistance we can, for example, The Cairn Centre is a local charity shop that can sometimes provide a starter pack for clients moving into a property with FPRS assistance, if they have no household items. Should you require assistance, please speak to a team member.

**13. I’m in a private let but there’s lots of damp and repairs and my landlord won’t do anything about it – can you help with a deposit for another flat?**

If your property is in an unsuitable condition, we would urge you to obtain independent housing advice from Frontline Fife: 01592 800430, <https://www.frontlinefife.co.uk/our-services/advice-link/>, or your local Citizens Advice & Rights Fife office: <https://www.cabfife.org.uk/>, these issues will only worsen and there are services in Fife to assist your landlord to make appropriate repairs.

After exploring these options, should you still wish to consider an alternative property, please contact the FPRS team to discuss your individual circumstances.

**14. I have no-where to go tonight, what should I do?**

If you are in housing crisis and require immediate assistance, during office hours please visit your nearest Fife Council Local Office, or contact Fife Council’s Information, Advice & Prevention team: 03451 550033, or after 5pm and at weekends, Fife Council’s Out of Hours line: 0800 0286231