**TENANCY SHARE – FAQ’s**

* Q. “I’m living in Temporary accommodation; can I be involved with tenancy Share?”
* A. Yes, we can offer support to anyone who is Homeless in gaining a shared tenancy, we also have Residential Units in Kirkcaldy, where if you wished, you may be able to be transferred to, enabling you to receive support and “in house” Tenancy Share information sessions.
* Q. “I don’t want to move from the accommodation to be closer to your Project Kirkcaldy as this is not a suitable location for me. Can I still receive this information?”.
* A. Yes, we have Tenancy Share staff who can contact you by phone, text, email, video-call and who can arrange to meet you at an agreed location for information sessions.
* Q. “I’m not good at remembering things and my Mum keeps me right, can she take part in these sessions with me?”
* A. Yes, she can do this, we would ask that you give consent for her to be your “Next of Kin” contact and that you inform her of this, so we also get her contact details.
* Q. “I know someone who has said I can rent out their flat, can I still have Tenancy Share support”.
* A. We are happy to work alongside any landlord who is registered and follows the guidelines. If you provide us with the property and landlord details, we will check this and give them a call. Do not agree or sign anything before we do this.
* Q. “I don’t have anyone I know who wants to share. How can I get a sharer?”
* A. There are a number of ideas we could give you to find someone to share with; speak with friends and family, see if anyone you know on Facebook may be interested and in the same housing situation, we can also set up informal meetings through the Tenancy share scheme, with other people who are in a similar situation to yourself and who you might get on with.

* Q. “Can I share with my boyfriend/girlfriend?”
* A. No, as a couple you would be able to secure a 1-bedroom property, you would not need to “share” a 2-bedroom property because any rent or entitlements you are due would be payable as a couple. If you require assistance for a private let as a couple, Fife Private Rental Solutions will be able to offer advice and possibly assist you to source a property.
* Q. “I’m on benefits so will I be accepted for a Private Let and will I be able to afford this?”
* A. Yes you can apply for and hopefully be accepted for a Private Let, your rent entitlement through benefits should cover your half of the rent if it is within budget, if not there may be a shortfall to be discussed. As part of our assessment and support, we will complete an Income/Expenditure form with you so you can see if this would be affordable to you.
* Q. “I don’t have any savings so how will I be able to pay rent in advance and the deposit?”
* A. Tenancy Share is managed by Fife Private Rental Solutions (FPRS) which has a deposit Guarantee scheme. For any deposit guaranteed, you would have a payment plan to build up a cash deposit over a year, this is then transferred to the landlord. You will be advised and assisted to find alternative funding for your rent in advance – start thinking about this early, some Landlords may come to an arrangement with you to pay it off.
* Q. “Me and my friend get our benefit money on different dates so how would we be able to arrange for the deposit money to be collected, as only one of us may have this when you visit?”
* A. It will not matter that you are paid at different times, you are individual clients and tenants whose personal and financial details are dealt with are confidentially. The team are able to visit more than once a week if required and this way individual time or support can be offered to both sharers.
* Q. “I work full time and my friend who I want to share with is on benefits so would this work for us?”
* A. It can yes, this could be suitable for you as you are each responsible for your own half of the rent and deposit. You would pay rent from your wages, (could set up Direct debit/standing order). Your friend’s rent would be covered by their benefit allowance. However, through the Information sessions we provide, we will explain how you may have to come to an agreement about paying Council Tax.
* Q. “I’m a student, do I need to pay Council Tax?”
* A. No, you will be exempt while you are registered as a student, however this is a discussion you will need to have with your sharer, especially if they are not a student.
* Q. “If my sharer did not pay his half of shared bills (Council tax, gas and electricity etc), would I be held accountable for the arrears and would a contract between the two of us cover any misunderstanding with this?”
* A. This is an area we would discuss with you both to prepare you for sharing. Some contracts have a “lead name” so you will need to be clear who is paying what and when. We encourage a “Sharers Charter” to be agreed and signed between flatmates, so expectations are discussed in advance, this makes it easier to bring up tricky topics as they occur. The Tenancy Share team are also there for support and guidance if needed.
* Q. “I’m not very good at managing my benefit money and have never had a tenancy before. Is there any support for this?”
* A. Yes, we will do an Income/Expenditure form with you and can also provide Budgeting support before and during your tenancy until you feel more confident about managing your bills. We can also refer you to other Agencies for any support requirements (e.g., Short-term Housing Support/Greener Kirkcaldy).
* Q. “My friend and I have found a property but there are only white goods in the flat and we are not left with any extra money from our benefits to buy furniture. Is there any help we can get?”
* A. You may be eligible to apply for a Scottish Welfare Fund – Community Care Grant, this could take a few weeks to process, so apply as soon as you know about a sign-up date.You could also think ahead now and join a Credit Union, they offer loans once you have become a member. There may be other funding options or furniture resources, look on the Internet (Gum tree, Freecycle Fife or Facebook), where people donate items for free. You could also browse through local Charity shops for cheaper, previously owned furnishings and homewares.

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