

Landlords Newsletter

CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL

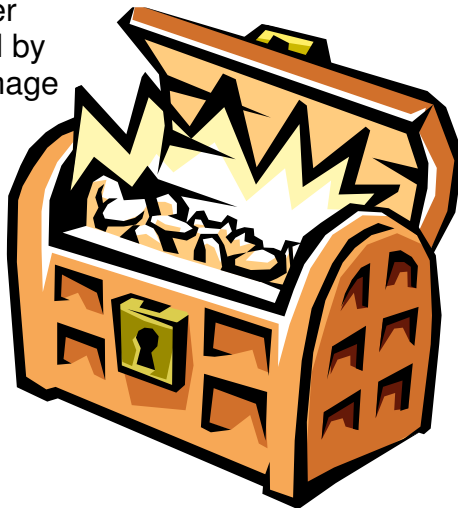


www.carlisle.gov.uk

Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DIGS) Carlisle

The Accommodation Deposit Guarantee Scheme has been set up to help people in need move into secure privately rented accommodation. DIGS can provide a deposit guarantee in the form of a written bond to cover the deposit required by the landlord for damage or theft. DIGS is a charity funded by various statutory and voluntary agencies, and managed by the Citizens Advice Bureau. It provides help with tenancies in the Carlisle area.

The charity would like to hear from landlords who are interested in using the service, if you would like to find out more contact DIGS co-ordinator Graham Bell on 01946 694166 or e-mail digs.cumbria@ntlworld.com



Landlords Forum

On 11 June 2007, Carlisle City Council held a Landlords Forum at the Civic Centre, Carlisle. Guest speakers included John Socha from the National Landlords Association on Tenancy Deposit Protection Schemes and Carolyn Haskins from Communities and Local Government on Home Information Packs. The event was well attended by local landlords and various organisations, so thank you to all those who attended the event. Feedback from the questionnaire handed out was positive, but if anyone has any ideas for topics/speakers at the next landlords forum please get in touch with us, its your event. The next Landlords Forum is due to be held in September/October 2007.

Empty Properties

Carlisle City Council are working in partnership with Local Registered Social Landlords (RSL), to set up a voluntary leasing scheme, to bring empty properties in the area back onto the housing market. The Council is offering Empty Property Grants to help owners bring properties back into use and ensure that they are not a wasted

resource in our community, at a time of increasing housing demand in the area.

An Empty Property Grant will cover 50% of the cost of the eligible works, up to a maximum of £10,000, in return for the owner leasing



the property to a RSL for five years.

This partnership allows the property to be managed by the RSL, relieving the landlord of the stress of having to manage and let the property and providing a guaranteed income. For further information please contact the Councils Grants Department on 01228 817320

Update on Houses in Multiple Occupation

The Housing Act 2004, introduced the requirement for all landlords who own properties which are occupied by 5 or more persons and are three or more storeys to make an application to their Council for a Mandatory House in Multiple Occupation Licence. This requirement has now been in place since April 2006 and since then the Council

have issued 21 Mandatory Licences. An additional 63 landlords with properties on the previous HMO registration control scheme, were



passed into the transitional licensing scheme and issued with operating licences. These licenses are subject to the same conditions as per the previous control scheme, for a period of 3 years. If you would like further information on HMO Licensing, please contact the Private Sector Housing Team on 01228 817341.

Fire Safety – Houses in Multiple Occupation

New Fire Safety Regulations came into force on 1 October 2006. The department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has published an introductory booklet and guidance document for landlords. Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide 3 – Sleeping Accommodation is available to download from www.communities.gov.uk. The guide tells you what you have to do to comply with the Fire Safety law and helps you to carry out a Fire Safety Risk Assessment and identifies the general fire precautions you need to have in place. Sleeping Accommodation includes the common areas of Houses in Multiple Occupation. In addition to the HMO Government Sleeping Guide No.3, the Council is working with the other Local Authorities in Cumbria and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Services. This is to ensure a joint working approach is adopted throughout Cumbria, in line with the new national fire safety protocol. The Fire Safety Housing Working Group published the guide in June 2007 and is currently

developing national risk based fire safety standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation, which is expected in the late Autumn 2007.

Carlisle City Council has recently changed its refuse and recycling service. Wheeled bins for non-recyclable household refuse have been issued to over 40,000 properties with the remainder provided with purple sacks. The Council's kerbside recycling services have been extended and limits placed on the amount of refuse collected. The aim of the changes was simple: to increase the amount of waste recycled and decrease the amount of waste sent to landfill. The response to the new scheme has been very positive. Since its implementation, more household waste is being recycled than is ending up in landfill. Whilst the new arrangements are working well in most areas of the city, there are some property types

that are proving to be more difficult to provide the new service to than others. Rented properties, and in particular houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) have proved to be especially challenging for the Council's Waste Services Section. Under the new arrangements, the Council's collection policies provides

each household with one 240 litre wheeled bin plus the relevant kerbside recycling services. However, this provision is often inadequate for rented properties, where there may be five or more persons sharing a house, and HMOs with numerous bed-sits. Where necessary, additional refuse and recycling bins can be provided and having now fully implemented the new arrangements the Council is anxious to hear from landlords who feel that the provision made for their properties is insufficient to meet the needs of their tenants. If you would like your rental properties to be provided with additional refuse and recycling bins please contact the Council's Waste Services section on 01228 618549

New refuse and recycling arrangements