

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Private Rented Sector Service



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Cheshire West
and Chester

Cheshire West and Chester Council PRS Service

We are part of a brand-new team within Cheshire West and Chester Council called 'the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Service'. Our offer has been developed to provide a tenant matching service for landlords who are able to deliver on affordable rents for their private sector properties.

When we say 'affordable rents', we mean rents that fall in-line with the current Local Housing Allowance rates within Cheshire West and Chester.

As a team we are here to support both the landlord and the tenant; and we can also help with preventative work if the tenancy runs into any difficulties. However, we aim to minimise such problems by trying to get things right from the start!

Landlord Incentives

Our service will also provide a **gratitude payment** as a thank you for choosing to work with Cheshire West and the PRS Team; and in some instances we may also provide discretionary payments for more challenging cases.

Tenancy	Gratitude payment
Single	£250
Couple	£350
Family	£500

We offer help to tenants with **rent deposits**; or we can offer a **security bond** to landlords which is held by the Council to offer assurity that will cover a set value in the case of rent arrears, damage, theft, or abandonment support costs at the end of a tenancy.

We can also offer a '**pet bond**' for Landlords who are happy to provide accommodation to pet owners; and the pet bond works in the same way as the security bond.

Other benefits our service can offer

The Team aims to effectively set-up the tenancy from the start to minimise the risk of tenancy breakdown and will help to settle the tenant(s) into the property to ensure a positive and supportive experience by providing a 12-week safety net to both parties.

Once staff are happy that support can be retracted, and both the landlord and tenant feel confident that things are going well, an exit plan will be implemented.

The tenant will be aware that the tenancy will undergo monitoring intervals over a 12-month period, and they will also understand that any difficulties they encounter should be raised with the team.



We are also available to support the landlord throughout the 12-month tenancy period, with advice and guidance, mediation services and communication with the tenant if there is a contact issue.

Our aim is to effectively support the landlord and tenant journey; helping landlords to achieve stable lets by successfully settling tenants into private sector tenancies that are affordable.

The service enables people to exit homelessness and access an independent tenancy of their own.



If you would like to meet our Lettings and Support Team, we would be happy to set-up a meeting!

Please contact us at

privaterentenquiries@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk 0151 337 6322

FAQs

Does the Council find the tenant?	Yes, the Private Rented Service (PRS) team will suitably match the tenant to the landlord's property. The Council will carry out affordability checks to ensure the tenant can afford the rent and that they will be able to sustain their tenancy.
Who provides the tenancy agreement and paperwork?	It is the landlord's responsibility to provide the tenancy agreement and paperwork. The Council do not assist in paperwork, however once signed the PRS team will request a copy of the tenancy agreement along with other documents such as Gas/Electricity/Energy Performance Certificate's.
What happens if a tenant cannot afford the deposit?	If a tenant is unable to afford the deposit, the Council can offer to cover the deposit through the Bond Scheme Agreement. The landlord can claim the deposit from the Council, should any issues arise which fall within the bond agreement.
What is a Bond Agreement?	The Bond is a paper agreement which can be accepted by landlords in place of a cash deposit. It is designed to help people who are on low incomes who are not able to raise a cash deposit themselves. Landlords can claim cash from a bond agreement, if the tenant damages the property or gets into rent arrears, within the first 12 months of the tenancy. Bonds initially last for 12 months, although this can be extended under certain circumstances.
Will the Council be able to offer tenancy support should issues arise?	Yes, the PRS Tenancy Support Officer will initially provide a 12 week 'settling in' period after the tenancy sign-up to support both tenant and landlord. The PRS team will carry out 3 month interval checks with the landlord to see if there are any issues. If an issue has arisen, the PRS team will assist where possible to resolve issues.
Does the Council offer property maintenance or repairs?	No, property maintenance and repairs remain the responsibility of the landlord. However, in some situations discretionary support with damages may be offered when a tenancy ends.
Do we have to take the tenant suggested by the PRS Team?	No, the agent/landlord will have the final say on who they are renting to however the PRS Team will only suggest tenants who are suitable for the accommodation in question, and who are tenancy-ready.
Does the PRS Team manage the tenancy?	No, it is still the responsibility of the agent/landlord to manage the tenancy. The PRS Team can assist in finding suitable tenants, and can support them for 12 weeks to help ensure the tenancy is successful.
Does the Council lease the property?	No, the PRS Team do not lease properties. The landlord is wholly responsible for the let and for the property management.