



REQUEST 19123

Use of Private Landlords

- a. Does the council currently lease residential or commercial properties from private landlords or companies?
- b. If yes, what property types are accepted (e.g., single lets, HMOs, flats, blocks, B&Bs, hotels, conversions)?
- c. Does the council accept properties **outside its borough**?

RESPONSE

Use of Private Landlords

- a. Yes, we currently lease residential properties from private landlords through the Council's Ethical Lettings Agency (private sector leasing scheme).
- b. Self-contained accommodation of all types are accepted, to include family homes and self-contained apartments and flats. Entire (small) blocks of apartments are considered, up to 8 units. HMOs are not accepted.
- c. No.

Lease Terms & Requirements

- a. What are the standard lease terms (length, break clauses, renewal options)?
- b. Does the council offer FRI leases or guaranteed rent?
- c. What minimum standards/certifications are required (e.g., EPC, fire safety, HMO licensing)?

Lease Terms & Requirements

- a. The standard lease offered is 5 years in length, with no break clause. There is an option to renew the lease (for another 5-year term) after it expires.
- b. No, we do not offer FRI leases. Under our lease terms, the Council provide a guaranteed rent and take on some maintenance obligations (such as internal responsive repairs and safety checks), whilst the owner retains responsibility for structural repairs and capital items and takes out the appropriate buildings insurance.
- c. Before acceptance onto the scheme, the property must meet the ELA Property Standards (as per annexed copy), and copies of a recent Landlord Gas Safety Record and Electrical Installation Condition Report must be provided.

Rental Pricing

- a. What rent levels does the council typically pay?
- b. Please provide the typical ranges by property type.
- c. How are rents calculated (e.g., market comparison, internal formula, LHA rates)?
- d. Are any incentives or refurbishment contributions offered?

Rental Pricing

- a. Rent levels are confirmed on a property-by-property basis, as different factors such as average market rents, property condition, demand and expected management costs must be considered.
- b. It is not possible to provide typical ranges, as rent levels vary across the Wigan Borough and are subject to the factors as above described.
- c. Rents are calculated using an internal formula, starting with an Affordable Rent (80% of Market Rate) which is charged to

the tenant, with the Council's management and maintenance costs ('retained margin') then deducted.

d. Generally, no. Any additional incentives or refurbishment contributions are dependent on the availability of any external funding schemes or programmes. If such offers are available, they will be promoted and discussed with interested landlords.

Unit Requirements

a. What is the minimum number of units the council will consider (single units vs. multi-unit blocks)?

b. Are there preferred unit sizes (1-3 bed)?

Unit Requirements

a. The Council are happy to consider single units.

b. Family homes (2, 3 and 4-bedroom) are preferred, although single person accommodation will also be considered.

Tenant Use & Support

a. What tenant groups are placed in leased properties (e.g., homeless households, temporary accommodation, care leavers, asylum seekers)?

b. Does the council provide any support or management services within these placements?

Tenant Use & Support

a. Diverse tenant groups are placed in our leased properties, including families/households moving on from temporary accommodation. All tenants are in high housing need, and pass affordability and suitability checks in relation to the offered property. Leased properties are used to provide settled, long-term accommodation.

b. The Council's ELA Team manage the leased properties; this includes general tenancy management, regular property inspections and adhoc/low-level assistance to help ensure the sustainment of the tenancy. Tenants with significant support needs are not eligible for ELA leased properties.

Current Demand & Process

a. Is the council currently seeking new landlords or property providers?

b. Which property types are most needed?

c. What is the onboarding/procurement process?

d. Please provide any available guidance or standard agreements.

Current Demand & Process

a. Yes.

b. Family homes (2, 3 and 4-bedroom) are most needed.

c. The onboarding process (in summary):

1. Landlord contacts the ELA Team with an available property.
2. Indicative rental offer made.
3. If accepted, ELA Officer attends property to assess condition and locality. List of works provided to landlord (if required) to meet ELA Property Standards, and rental offer (re-)confirmed.
4. Landlord arranges required works and provides relevant documentation, including LGSR, EICR, EPC, buildings insurance, proof of ownership and ID.

5. Documents checked and photographic schedule of condition compiled by ELA Officer.
6. Council Legal Team draw up the lease, to be reviewed and signed by landlord.
7. Lease commences.

d. Please see:
<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Business/Property-and-Land/Private-Landlords/Ethical-lettings-agency.aspx> and
<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Business/Property-and-Land/Private-Landlords/Lease-your-property-to-the-council.aspx> for further information.

Current Portfolio

- a. How many properties does the council currently lease from private landlords?
- b. Please provide a breakdown by property type.
- c. What is the average occupancy rate?

Contact Details

- a. Please provide the relevant department/officer responsible for private sector leasing or temporary accommodation procurement, with email and phone contact.

Current Portfolio

- a. ELA – 55 properties
- b. PSL – 3 properties
- c. GMFLS – 22 properties

Contact Details

- a. Contact details for the ELA Team (private sector leasing):

Email PSLHomes@wigan.gov.uk
 Tel (with voicemail facility) 01942 489 204.

Ethical Lettings Agency Property Standards

All properties will need to meet our agreed set of standards (as a minimum) before acceptance onto the scheme. Prior to a formal lease offer being made, our Property Inspectors will carry out an inspection of the property to ensure that the below items have all been met. If the property fails to meet our standards, you will be advised of the works required to rectify any identified faults.

These standards are inclusive of, and additional to, the **Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)**. The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities to identify and protect against potential risks to health and safety posed by deficiencies in dwellings, and applies to all residential accommodation. Please familiarise yourself with the [HHSRS guidance](#) which sets out the responsibilities of landlords to provide a decent, safe property free from hazards.

Property Standards Checklist

Item	Item Description	Met? (Y, N, or N/A)
	A current Landlord Gas Safety Record (dated <u>within last 12 months</u>). An up-to-date Electrical Installation Condition Report (<u>dated within last 3 months</u>), to have been carried out upon the completion of any refurbishment works at the property.	
Property Certification	In the event that the property has been fully rewired, an Electrical Installation Certificate will suffice as long as this is dated <u>within the last 3 months</u> . This must also be accompanied with the appropriate Part P certificate. All certification provided will be audited by our Electrical Compliance Team. An Electrical Installation Certificate will also be seen as sufficient if this relates to the most recent electrical installation/works carried out at the property.	

	<p>A current Energy Performance Certificate with a minimum E rating (wherever possible, a C rating to be achieved).</p> <p>A copy of the current buildings insurance policy.</p> <p>A current Asbestos survey (this will be a requirement ahead of any works commencing).</p>	
Electrical	<p>Installation must be inspected, tested and deemed to be safe and satisfactory by a competent electrical installer registered with an approved governing body such as NICEIC, NAPIT or Stroma, according to BS7671. Proof of 'Satisfactory' Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) required, with no outstanding C1, C2 or FI faults.</p> <p>N.B. The EICR provided must be up-to-date (dated within the last 3 months), having been carried out upon the completion of any refurbishment works. If the property is being leased to the Council with a tenant in situ, without any refurbishment works being required, an up-to-date EICR (dated within the last 3 months) must still be provided.</p> <p>All circuits to be protected by a minimum of 2 RCD switches.</p> <p>Consideration must be given to Surge Protection devices according to BS7671.</p> <p>Consumer unit to be meeting all legal requirements.</p> <p>The hall lighting switch must be two way, where there is a risk of tripping over (small hallways do not require a 2-way switch if not already present).</p> <p>All small appliances (when supplied) to be PAT tested.</p> <p>Sufficient smoke alarms provided – one alarm to each floor of the property where a room is used partly or wholly as living accommodation. Further information in relation to fire safety is provided below this checklist.</p> <p>Security alarm – if present – to be removed and disconnected.</p> <p>Remove all loose cables and wires, including alarm, phone extensions and former tenant's fittings.</p> <p>Light fittings with working bulbs provided to all rooms.</p> <p>The following fittings are to be provided as a minimum (including when the property is being re-wired):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ceiling rose and pendant (unless existing IP44 rated spot lights have been accepted) in all rooms controlled by a light switch, and; • Two ceiling rose and pendants in through rooms and large rooms in excess of 20m² • 2 switched double socket outlets in all bedrooms • 2 switched double socket outlets in living and dining rooms. 	

Water & Heating	All properties must be mains fed only. All lead pipework removed, with no cold-water storage. Tanks and cylinders (except new pressurised HWC for electric-only properties) must be decommissioned.
	All stop taps will be accessible and in good working order.
	Water flow should be of a reasonable velocity to meet Ofwat Guaranteed standards scheme (0.7 bar).
	Existing cold water storage tank must be removed, unless agreed otherwise with ELA Officer/Property Inspector. <u>If</u> accepted, tank must meet current regulations, and will be screened, cleaned internally and suitably covered/insulated.
	The property should be provided with efficient heating capable of maintaining a temperature of 21°C in the living room and 18°C in the hallway, bathroom, bedrooms, and kitchen when the external temperature is minus 1°C.
	If heating and hot water is gas delivered, then boiler systems (new or existing) require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power flush & all radiators to be tested • Radiators adequately sized for each room/space (BTU calculator provided to confirm this) • Boiler must be hard wired only. Fused Spur to be fitted with 3-amp fuse • Cold water filter • Dated CO detector • A wall-mounted thermostat. • TRVs to all radiators (except for room where thermostat is located) • Boilers over 15 years in age to be replaced with Worcester Bosch or Vaillant condensing combi boilers only. • Warranties must be received for appliances (minimum 5 years Worcester Bosch or 7 years Vaillant).
	Heating system in good, safe working order. If gas, all fittings will need to comply with the Gas Installation and Use regulations, and a current Landlord Gas Safety Certificate provided.
	Carbon monoxide detectors are installed in any room containing a fixed combustion appliance such as a gas boiler, fire or wood-burning stove (excluding gas cookers).
	Debt-free gas and electric meters, with keys/cards provided if pre-payment meters.
	Boiler and heating controls must be explained, and manuals provided.

External	All external walls will be structurally sound, and free of any major defects, graffiti or holes.
	Roofs are wind and watertight. Fascias, gutters, down pipes and gullies will be in good condition.
	Front and rear doors will be operational, correctly fitting and lock securely. A minimum of 3 keys will be required per lock (2 copies will be provided to the tenant and 1 retained by the Council).
	Windows will be double glazed, operational and correctly fitting with secure window handles. Restrictors are fitted where required to the first-floor windows.
	There are no broken or cracked panes of glass, and no failed units.
	Manhole covers will be level and securely fixed. Gullies will have grid covers fitted.
	Paths, paved areas, steps and driveways are level and free from trip hazards.
	Gates and fences are to be provided to gardens, securely fitted and free from any major defects.
	Gardens must be tidy and manageable, with any overgrown bushes or trees pruned. All ponds will be filled in.
	Sheds and other outhouses can stay in situ <u>only</u> if they are safe and free of major defects, but otherwise should be removed. If left, sheds and outhouses will be considered a gifted item (and not maintained through the lease agreement).
	All gardens and outside spaces must be cleared of any rubbish and debris, including builders' rubble and surplus soil.
	All appropriate bins for refuse and recycling should be provided (Blue for paper/cardboard, Brown for metal, glass and plastic containers, Green for garden debris and food, and Black for general household waste), and clear of any rubbish. Replacement bins – if lost or damaged during the course of a tenancy – are the responsibility of the tenant in situ.

Kitchen	Kitchen layout must be of suitable size and function to meet HHSRS specifications, with worktop space at least 3m in length.
	Worktops and units will be modern and functional, with inset sinks, pillar taps and sufficient tiling/splashback.
	All units are securely fixed, with doors securely fitted and no loose handles.
	Suitable floor covering e.g. vinyl will be provided.
	A 600mm (minimum) wide space allowed for washing machine, with suitable cold-water feed, drainage facilities and low-level socket available for connection.
	Space and socket provided for fridge freezer.
	Cooker space provided with gas or electric cooker point. If electric, 45-amp outlet within cooker space to be provided, with switch isolation in an accessible position so as not to be compromised by external influences.
	Kitchen layout to ensure that the cooker front can be accessed only (sides of the cooker are not exposed).
	Adequate sources of ventilation to be provided e.g. extractor hood, extractor fan 30 l/s adjacent to the hob or 60 l/s elsewhere.
	<p>For Health & Safety and Building Regulatory reasons, there must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 no. double sockets provided where space is available above worktop • Individual switched labelled spurs required for separate oven, hob and washing machine • Cooker outlet plate or control panel with socket outlet provided • Connection units supplying boiler (if applicable) provided • Boiler (if applicable) to be hardwired to switched spur • Socket provided for fridge freezer • All sockets must be switched

Lounge, Halls, & Stairways	Fire (if provided) to be serviced and in good working order. If fire removed, ensure supply has been safely capped/disconnected, and the fire space boarded over and made good.	
	Floor coverings e.g. carpets or laminate flooring are <u>not</u> required. They can be left in situ if in good clean condition, but will be considered a gifted item (and not maintained through the lease agreement).	
	Staircases and handrails will be securely fitted, and treads will be free of splits or cracks. The handrail must be a suitable profile and fixed at the appropriate height of 900mm and 1000mm above the step nosings.	
	All gaps between spindles will be less than 100mm and the guarding (balustrade) to the landing area will be at least 1,100mm high.	
	Wooden batten to be provided above all windows (to allow for curtain poles to be fitted by tenant).	
Bathroom	All bathroom fittings must be in good condition and working order.	
	Bath and sink must have working taps and plugs, and sufficient tiling/splashback.	
	A new toilet seat (securely fitted) must be provided.	
	Showers are to be provided over baths, with either a pole/curtain or screen (must be toughened glass) securely fitted. NB. A shower (and no bath) will suffice for 1-bedroom accommodation, but a bath (with overhead shower) is essential for family 2, 3 and 4-bedroom accommodation.	
	Suitable floor covering e.g. vinyl will be provided.	
	Timer or humidistat extractor fans to be provided to internal bathrooms, with suitable isolation and a minimum ventilation of 15 litres per second/54m ³ per hour	
Bedroom	Bedrooms must (as a minimum) allow sufficient space for a single bed, wardrobe and small chest of drawers. It is recommended that a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5sqm, and is at least 2.15m wide, and a double bedroom has a floor area of at least 11.5sqm, and is at least 2.75m wide.	
	Wooden batten to be provided above all windows (to allow for curtain poles to be fitted by tenant).	
	Floor coverings e.g. carpets or laminate flooring are <u>not</u> required. They can be left in situ if in good clean condition, but will be considered a gifted item (and not maintained through the lease agreement).	
	Fire escape window to be provided as required – See Fire Safety Guidance below for further information.	

General Requirements	The property will be of a good standard of repair and décor throughout, with all ceilings and walls free from major visible defects.
	All internal doors and furniture will be correctly fitting and serviceable.
	Architraves and skirting will be complete.
	Floors will be sound and secure, and floorboards securely fitted and free of major defects.
	N.B Concrete floors: For any homes built pre-1970s, the floors may be constructed without a damp proof membrane (as this was not a requirement of Building Regulations at the time). Therefore, the existing concrete floor(s) may be susceptible to sulphate attack resulting in the floor lifting in areas and may require a full replacement in the future, which would include excavating and damp proof membrane incorporated in the design. This may also result in a new damp proof course as part of the works. The integrity and condition of concrete floors will be checked by Property Inspectors during the course of their inspection.
	The loft space will be free of rubbish, with the correct amount of insulation fitted. Any water tanks, cylinders and pipework in the loft will be insulated.
	There will be no evidence of dampness or condensation related mould growth. NB. Our Property Inspectors will take damp readings using a calibrated non-abrasive protimeter and thoroughly check the property walls for signs of rising damp and/or water penetration at the pre-lease inspection. If at this point concerns are raised, a full damp survey by a qualified surveyor will be required.
	Polystyrene ceiling tiles and covings will be removed.
	Any internal doors with glass panes will be checked to make sure they are safe.
	The property must be thoroughly cleaned throughout with no evident stains or residue. This includes the sweeping and mopping of all floors as appropriate, wiping down all woodwork, cleaning glazing internally, washing down all kitchen surfaces and units, cleaning all sanitary ware, baths, sinks and toilets, wiping down radiators and removing any mail, packaging or rubbish.

Additional Fire Safety Guidance

IF there is a solid door on the kitchen then two smoke alarms (to the top and bottom of stairs) are satisfactory. However, if there is no door installed, or the staircase communicates directly to the kitchen (LACORS Guidance), you will need to **EITHER**:

- Supply and fit a mains wired inter-linked automatic fire detection system to the property in accordance with BS5839: Part 6 for a Grade D: LD3 system, with battery back-up. The spacing, area coverage and positioning of the fire sensors shall be in accordance with the recommendations of BS5839: Part 6. As a minimum, fire sensors shall be located in the following areas of the property and shall be of a type that is suitable for their location:
 - 1) Heat detector to kitchen.
 - 2) Smoke detector to front living room and 1st floor landing area.

The fire warning system must be audible throughout the building. A sound level of 75db(a) shall be available at every bed-head with the respective door closed shut.

You will need to provide a fire escape window to a 1st floor room. This window is to have an unobstructed openable area that is at least 0.33m² and measures a minimum of 450mm high and 450mm wide. The bottom of the openable area of the window should not be greater than 1100mm above the internal floor. The escape window to be fitted with a non-locking handle and non-locking restrictor (which can be overridden in the event of fire without a key) to limit the opening of the first-floor windows to approximately 100mm.

OR

- Provide a safe means of escape via the internal staircase, from the 1st floor to a ground floor final exit door, that does not require an occupant to pass through or past the kitchen by providing and fixing an internal door to the kitchen. An FD30 fire door and frame set is recommended, but as a minimum a sound, well-constructed solid and close-fitting conventional door is required. Hollow, flush egg-box type doors are not acceptable.

You will need to supply and fit two battery-powered smoke alarms. To be sited on the ceilings at the top and bottom of the staircase. The smoke alarms should be of a tamper-resistant construction with built in 10 year+ lithium battery cell e.g. (Fire Angel ST620 - www.screwfix.com). These will be checked to ensure they are functioning at every property inspection and at every change of tenancy.