

Dear Tenant,

Research into the Private Rented Sector in North Staffordshire

I am writing to ask for your help. The Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University, has been commissioned by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and local authority partners in North Staffordshire, to examine the private rented sector in the area. We are particularly interested in exploring the impact of the North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme. As part of this research we are conducting a short survey of tenants on their experiences of renting from a private landlord.

We are interested in your views regardless of whether you rent your property from an Accredited Landlord or not.

I would therefore be very grateful if you could spare **ten minutes** to complete the attached questionnaire and return to us by email or post by **Tuesday 8th December 2009.**

Email to: stephen.green@shu.ac.uk

Post to: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research
Sheffield Hallam University
Unit 10 Science Park
City Campus
SHEFFIELD S1 1WB

Please note that in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, all your answers will be treated in **strict confidence** and no one will be able to identify you or your views from the research. As a small 'thank you' for taking part, completion of the questionnaire makes you eligible for entry in a free to enter **prize draw** where the winner will receive a **£100 High Street shopping voucher**. If you would like to enter this draw, simply complete the entry form overleaf and return it along with your completed questionnaire by the 8th December 2009. One lucky winner will be drawn out of the hat. The winner of the Prize Draw will be notified by December 22nd 2009.

Thank you very much for your help. Your time and input are very much appreciated. Please contact me if you wish to know more about the project.

Yours faithfully



Dr Paul Hickman
Director of the Sheffield Hallam University Research Team

PRIZE DRAW ENTRY FORM

To enter the free prize draw to win a £100 High Street Shopping voucher, please complete the following form and return it with your completed questionnaire:

I wish to be entered into the prize draw

Name:.....

Address:.....
.....
.....

Telephone Number:

Email:.....

Your details are confidential and are protected under the Data Protection Act (1998)

Survey of Private Rented Sector Tenants in North Staffordshire

Instructions

1. If you wish to email us your responses, please insert a 'Y' next to your answer.
2. For the purposes of this survey the *North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme* is referred to as the *Accreditation Scheme*.

The information you provide will be processed by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University. Everything you tell us will be **completely confidential and anonymous**. In line with the Data Protection Act 1998, the information you provide will not be passed on to anyone else and will not be used to identify you. If you have any concerns about how we use your information or queries about the survey more broadly please contact Dr. Stephen Green on 0114 225 3073 or stephen.green@shu.ac.uk.

As this is a survey of tenants who rent their homes from a private landlord, I first want to confirm that you are a private rented tenant?

Yes - I am a private rented tenant

NOW GO TO SECTION A

No - I am not a private rented tenant

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME
BUT PLEASE DO NOT
COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Your Present Home

1. **Do you rent your home:** (tick one box only)

- Directly from an individual private landlord?
 Through a letting agent/ letting company?

2. **Do you know how to contact your landlord?**

- Yes
 No

3. **Do you know your landlord's name and address?**

- Yes
 No

4. What type of accommodation do you live in? (tick one box only)

- Terraced/ end-terraced house
- Semi detached house
- Detached house
- Low rise flat/ maisonette
- High rise flat
- Bedsit
- Room in a shared house
- Other, please specify.....

5. How many people are there in your household? (please insert a number in the box)

6. How many bedrooms do you have? (if you live in a shared property, please state how many bedrooms you personally rent - tick one box only)

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or more

7. How long have you lived in this property? (tick one box only)

- Less than a year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years

8. How long have you lived in private rented accommodation? (tick one box only)

- Less than a year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years

9. Which of the following statements best describes your main reason for renting? (tick one box only)

- I prefer to rent rather than buy a property
- I am renting because I cannot afford to buy a property
- Other, please specify.....

10. Which of the following statements best describes your main reason for renting from a private landlord? (tick one box only)

- I prefer to rent from a private landlord because they provide better quality housing and a better service than the Council or a housing association
- I prefer to rent from a private landlord because it is easier to move home when you rent privately than when you rent from the Council or a housing association
- I am renting from a private landlord because I cannot get a Council or housing association property because there is a shortage locally
- I am renting from a private landlord because I am not eligible for Council or housing association accommodation because of rent arrears
- Other, please specify.....

11. How did you find your current property? (tick one box only)

- Word of mouth
- Through the Accreditation Scheme website
- Advert in a Local newspaper
- Advert in a local shop
- Advert on a website
- Letting agent
- Advert elsewhere, please specify
- Other, please specify.....

12. Thinking about when you moved to your current address, how difficult was it to find a property? (tick one box only)

- Very difficult
- Fairly difficult
- Neither difficult or easy
- Fairly easy
- Very easy

13. What was the main reason behind your decision to move to your current home? (tick one box only)

- I had no choice: it was the only place I could find
- I had no choice: it was the only place I could find that I could afford
- I had no choice: I was desperate to move
- I chose it because it is in a good location
- I chose it because it is close to where my friends and family live
- I chose it because it is in good condition, warm and modern
- I chose it because the landlord of the property provides an excellent service
- Other, please specify.....

14. Thinking about the rent charged for this property, how would you describe it?

(tick one box only)

- Very high
- High
- About right
- Fairly low
- Very low

15. Do you have a written tenancy agreement with your landlord? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

16. How satisfied are you with this property? (tick one box only)

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

17. How satisfied are you with your landlord? (tick one box only)

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

18. Would you rent another property from your landlord? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No

19. Has your landlord ever threatened you with eviction? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No

20. Who would you contact if you had a problem with your landlord? (tick all that apply)

- The Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- The Council's Housing Standards Team
- The Council's Environmental Health team
- Another Council department
- A housing advice service
- Don't know
- Other, please specify.....

Section B: The North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme

We would now like to ask you a few questions about the Accreditation Scheme.

21. Have you heard of the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 22
- No NOW GO TO SECTION C

22. How did you hear of the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- Through my landlord
- Through my previous landlord
- Through friends
- Through other private rented tenants
- Through visiting the Council website
- Through direct contact with a representative of the Council
- Through information sent to me
- Other, please specify.....

23. Is your landlord in the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 24
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 25
- Don't know NOW GO TO QUESTION 25

24. How do you know this? (tick one box only)

- My landlord told me
- I found this property through the Accreditation Scheme website
- Others tenants of my landlord told me
- Friends told me
- I received information from the Accreditation Scheme
- Other, please specify.....

25. Do you feel that the Accreditation Scheme is mainly for: (tick one box only)

- Landlords?
- Tenants?
- Both landlords and tenants?
- The Council?
- Don't know

26. Have you ever visited the Accreditation Scheme website? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 27
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 32

27. Did you look at the property shop pages of the Accreditation Scheme website? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 28
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 29

28. How useful did you find the property shop page of the Accreditation Scheme website? (tick one box only)

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not useful

29. Would you use the Accreditation Scheme website again? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

30. Overall, how useful did you find the Accreditation Scheme website? (tick one box only)

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not useful

31. How could the website be improved?

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32. Have you ever spoken to an officer from the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 33
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 34

33. How helpful did you find them? (tick one box only)

- Helpful
- Neither helpful or unhelpful
- Unhelpful

34. How easy is it to get in touch with someone from the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- Easy
- Neither easy or difficult
- Difficult

35. Do you think that the Accreditation Scheme provides an important service? (tick one box only)

- Yes, it provides a very important service
- Yes, it provides a fairly important service
- No, it does not provide an important service
- Don't know

36. Is it important to you to live in a property that is owned by a landlord who is accredited? (tick one box only)

- Yes, this is very important
- Yes, this is fairly important
- No, this is not important
- Don't know

37. Do you think that the service provided by accredited landlords is better than that provided by landlords who are not accredited? (tick one box only)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

38. Do you think that the properties provided by accredited landlords are better than those provided by landlords who are not accredited? (tick one box only)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

39. Would you rent a property from a landlord who is not a member of the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

40. Do you think that the standard of private rented properties and the service provided by landlords has improved in this area over the last five years? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 41
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 42
- Don't know NOW GO TO QUESTION 42

41. To what extent do you think the Accreditation Scheme is behind this improvement? (tick one box only)

- To a large extent
- To some extent
- Not all

42. Do you think that the Scheme should do more for private rented tenants? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 43
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 44
- Don't know NOW GO TO QUESTION 44

43. What additional services do you think it should provide? (tick all that apply)

- More information about the legal rights of private rented tenants
- More information about the legal obligations and duties of landlords
- More information about properties to let in the area
- Provide an opportunity for private rented tenants to get together on a regular basis
- Other (please specify)

44. Ideally, how would you like to communicate with the Accreditation Scheme? (tick one box only)

- In person face-to-face
- By email
- Telephone

Section C: Your Future Plans

45. Do you think you will move from this property within the next year? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 46
- No NOW GO TO SECTION D
- Don't know NOW GO TO SECTION D

46. Do you think you will move into another private rented property? (tick one box only)

- Yes NOW GO TO QUESTION 47
- No NOW GO TO QUESTION 48
- Don't know NOW GO TO QUESTION 48

47. Do you think you will move into a property owned by an accredited landlord? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Section D: You and Your Household

48. Are you?

- Male
- Female

49. How old were you on your last birthday?

- 16-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-64 years old
- 65 or older

50. Which of these best describes your household? (tick one box only)

- A single person
- A single parent
- A couple with children living at home
- A couple with no children living at home
- Adults/ other family members sharing
- Another situation, please specify

51. What is your work status? (tick one box only)

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Self employed
- Unemployed/ seeking work
- Not working: long term sick or disabled
- Not working: at home looking after the family
- Not working: retired

52. How would you describe your ethnicity? (tick one box only)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British- Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British- Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British- African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White and Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British- Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White and Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Somali |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Yemeni |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British- Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Traveller |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British- Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group (please state)
..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British- Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused to say |

Section E: Your Final Thoughts

53. Finally, if you have any other comments about any of the issues raised in this survey, please write them in the space below.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

Please return this questionnaire by Tuesday December 8th 2009.

If you would like to have the chance of winning a £100 High Street Shopping Voucher, please complete the Prize Draw Entry form and return it with your completed questionnaire.

For further information about the North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme please visit the Scheme’s website (www.landlordaccreditation.co.uk) or contact William Knight on 01782 234019 or william.knight@stoke.gov.uk.