

Letting Agent Plus: Improving access to, and sustainability of, tenancies within the private rented sector in Scotland



Letting Agent Plus Project

Background

- **15% of households live in the PRS in Scotland**
- **Increasing numbers looking to the sector as a long term housing option**
- **More tenants with one off or ongoing support needs**
- **Letting agents often find it difficult to help tenants get the right support to access or sustain tenancies**
- **Social landlords perceived to have better access to essential advice services**
- **Capacity and limited resources**

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Barriers to accessing/sustaining tenancies in the PRS

- **Perceived tenant risk**
- **Deposit guarantee schemes**
- **Benefit caps and the roll out of UC**
- **Competition**
- **Prejudices**

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Aims and Objectives

- **Develop a letting agent plus service**
- **Identify barriers**
- **No additional costs to agents' businesses**
- **Develop a 'how to' guide**

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How we seek to overcome barriers

- **Education – training courses**
- **Knowledge – sharing of best practice & resources**
- **Relationships – improve advisory networks**



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What we can offer letting agents

- **Immediate access to advice**
- **Free training**
- **Improved referral routes**
- **‘Letting Agent Plus’ logo**
- **Opportunity to influence the whole PRS in Scotland**

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Case Study 1: Proactive intervention can prevent homelessness

- **Tenant received NTQ after repeated incidences of rent arrears**
- **Landlord unwilling to revoke NTQ**
- **Agent referral for additional help**
- **Tenant engaged with local support service for families**
- **Landlord agreed to revoke the NTQ and homelessness avoided**



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Case Study 2: Proactive intervention can prevent homelessness



- **Agent unable to complete annual gas safety check**
- **Suspected mental health issues**
- **Referral made to S.S's 'Advice Plus' service**
- **Specialist help for hoarding, depression & social isolation**
- **Tenancy sustained**
- **Agent's referral may have saved tenant's life**

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Project update

- **14 partner agents signed up**
- **35 project referrals**
- **Development of streamlined referral pathways into local and national advice and support organisations**
- **Conflict resolution training with Scottish Mediation**
- **Online forum and monthly newsletter**
- **Tenant consent & ‘universal’ referral forms**
- **Service “offering” linked to project logo**

Letting Agent Plus Project

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Until there's a home for everyone



Shelter
Scotland