

COMPLAINTS

Should there be evidence that a landlord or letting agent's practice does not comply with the Code of Standards, then tenants can contact the Accreditation Scheme to lodge a complaint. Full details of the complaints procedure can be found in the Edinburgh Accreditation Scheme's Policy and Procedures.

Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation will consider a complaint once the complainant has tried to resolve the issue through the members own complaints procedure.

HOW WILL COMPLAINTS BE DEALT WITH?

Complaints sent to the scheme must be in writing and clearly state:

- What breach of the standards has been made
- Any steps taken to bring this breach to the landlord or letting agent's attention

- An indication of the time scale involved concerning the particular problem
- A contact address and telephone number for the person making the complaint.

Following the investigation, where reasonable recommendations to rectify an apparent breach have been made, the landlord or letting agent will comply with these recommendations or be removed from the Scheme.

BREACHES OF THE CODE

The main types of breaches of the Code of Standards fall into two categories:

- Persistent problems or minor breaches
- Serious management problems

Any action taken will be reported in an open and transparent way to demonstrate the Scheme is being enforced.



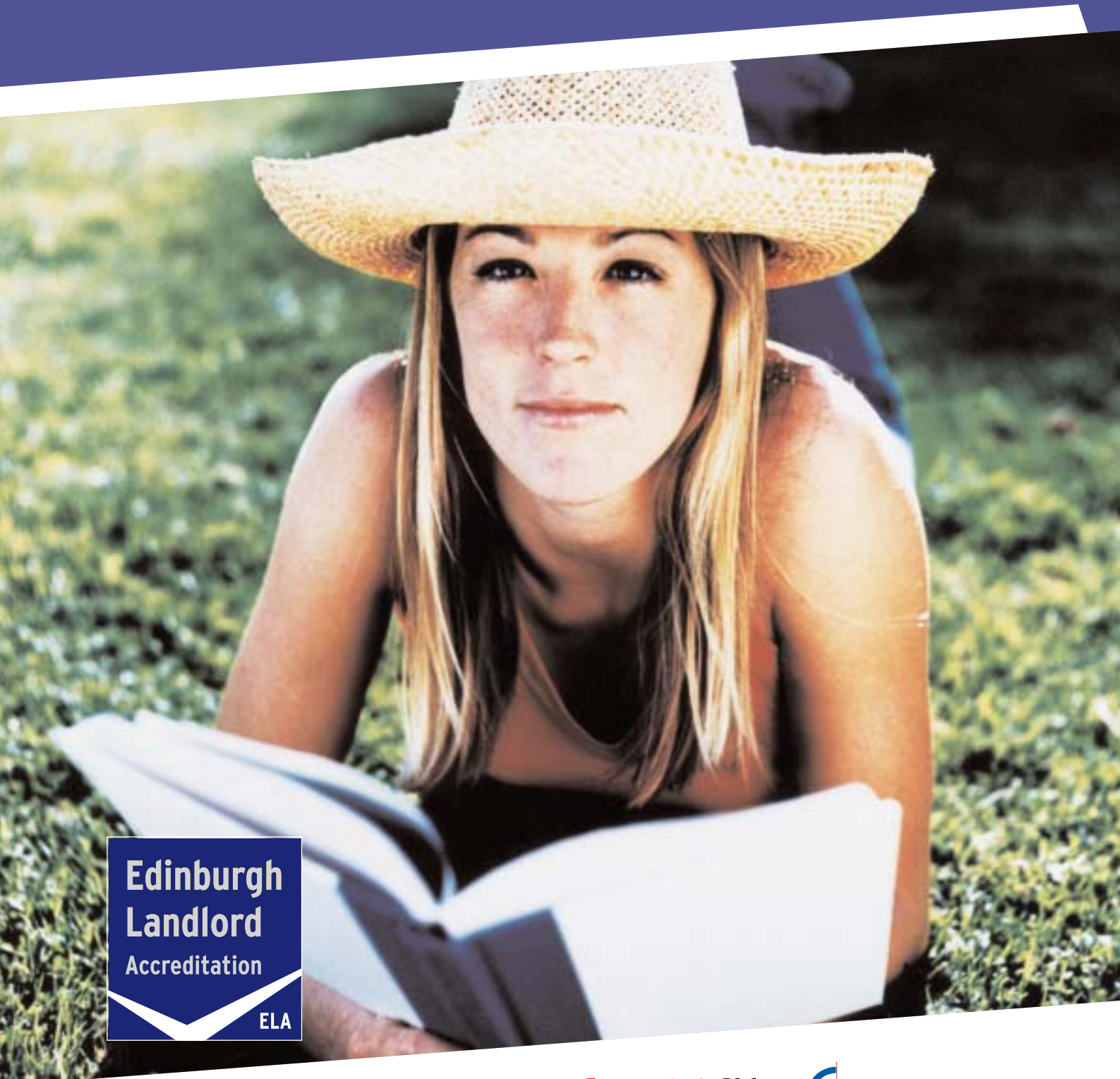
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation

Promoting good standards in private renting



**Edinburgh
Landlord
Accreditation**
ELA



What is Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation?

Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation is a joint initiative between the Scottish Association of Landlords and The City of Edinburgh Council to raise standards and recognise good practice in the private rented market. Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation has been developed in consultation with a wide range of landlords and letting agents.

To be an accredited landlord, private landlords and letting agents must agree to abide by Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation's Code of Standards for letting property to tenants. The Code of Standards covers recognised good practice in both the management of the tenancy and the quality of the property let by landlords.

Landlords who fail to meet the requirements in the Code of Standards can have their accredited status removed. Accredited landlords will in future be in a better position to attract tenants than landlords who are not accredited.

WHY WAS EDINBURGH LANDLORD ACCREDITATION DEVELOPED?

The Scottish Executive and Communities Scotland are promoting Accreditation Schemes as an effective means of improving the private rented market.

While many landlords do provide safe and good quality accommodation to their customers, poor housing remains concentrated in the private rented market. Like many industries the private rented market is facing the challenge of modernisation and of improving customer services and are under increased public scrutiny.

Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation provides recognition to landlords and letting agents who take a responsible approach to letting their properties. It will offer a systematic way of identifying landlords and letting agents who meet the Code of Standards.

HOW WAS EDINBURGH LANDLORD ACCREDITATION DEVELOPED?

Consultation is critical to the development of a successful accreditation scheme.

The Council set up a project board of key stakeholders who assisted in the development of the Accreditation Scheme. A wider reference group was also consulted; this group was drawn from representatives of letting agents, landlords and universities.

The group discussions have produced the Scheme's Code of Standards, and Policies and Procedures.

OBJECTIVES OF EDINBURGH LANDLORD ACCREDITATION

- Establish and promote credible standards on private renting which are accepted and widely recognised by both the industry and consumers alike.
- Provide a coherent industry led response to the need to improve the reputation and standards in the private rented market.
- Promote more effective partnership between the industry, public bodies and consumer groups.
- Ensure landlords have access to advice and help to improve standards.
- Encourage responsible and respectful behaviour by tenants towards their neighbours.
- Ensure that accreditation is understood and widely recognised by current and future customers.

INFORMATION FOR TENANTS

Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation can help tenants that are looking for private rented housing.

If you are looking for private rented accommodation, you can ask landlords or letting agents if they are part of the Scheme. You can also check with the Landlord Accreditation team to see that their membership is still current.

To become a member of the Scheme, landlords sign an undertaking that states that the tenancy and property management meets the Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation Code of Standards.

BENEFITS TO TENANTS:

- CONFIDENCE THAT YOUR LANDLORD IS PROFESSIONAL AND REPUTABLE
- ASSURANCE THAT THE ACCREDITATION SCHEME CODE OF STANDARDS WILL BE FOLLOWED
- PROVISION OF A TENANTS INFORMATION BOOKLET
- ALLOWS TENANTS TO MAKE MORE INFORMED CHOICES



HOW WILL THE SCHEME WORK?

The Accreditation Scheme relies on self-certification by landlords and letting agents and encompasses all private rented property in the Edinburgh area. Private landlords and letting agents will agree to meet the Code of Standards set out by the Accreditation Scheme. The Code sets out standards which it is expected that accredited landlords and letting agents will comply with.

Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation may consider any evidence which suggests that a landlord does not currently comply with the Code at the point of application. The decision to accept an application is the responsibility of the Scheme.

The Accreditation Scheme may inspect a sample of properties and interview tenants at any point to ensure that landlords are complying with the Code of Standards.

Landlords may be removed from accreditation if they fail to meet the requirements of the Code of Standards.

WHAT DOES THE CODE OF STANDARDS COVER?

Edinburgh Landlord Accreditation's Code of Standards is largely based on the National Core Standards and Good Practice Guidance For Private Landlords and Local Accreditation Schemes by Communities Scotland. The Code of Standards covers ten categories of standards and is backed up by guidance on good practice.

These include undertakings by landlords on:

- **COMMUNICATION WITH TENANTS** - accredited landlords must ensure that they have effective communication with the tenant including clear statements of rights and responsibilities and complaints procedures.
- **EQUALITY ISSUES, COMPLAINTS, DISPUTES** - accredited landlords ensure that they treat all tenants in a fair and equitable way and do not discriminate against certain groups of tenants.

- **MANAGEMENT OF THE TENANCY** - accredited landlords must ensure that they provide tenancy agreements that comply with the law and adopt the Accreditation Scheme's Code of Standards.
- **MINIMUM PROPERTY CONDITION** - accredited landlords must meet the minimum property conditions set out in the Code of Standards.
- **STRUCTURE AND FABRIC** - accredited landlords must ensure that their property is wind and watertight and in good tenable condition for the duration of the tenancy.
- **REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE** - accredited landlords must ensure they meet their repairing obligations by responding to tenant's requests for repairs.
- **FACILITIES AND FITTINGS** - accredited landlords should ensure that the fixtures and fittings supplied are kept in good working order and fit for purpose.

- **FURNISHINGS AND WHITE GOODS** - accredited landlord should ensure that furnishings and white goods are clean and in good working order.
- **HEATING, INSULATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY** - accredited landlords should consider how they could improve the energy efficiency of the property.
- **HEALTH, SAFETY AND HOME SECURITY FEATURES** - accredited landlords should ensure that they comply with the regulations regarding health and safety of tenants, and to take appropriate measures to ensure the security of the property.

Further details of the standards can be found in the booklet Code of Standards for Private Renting in Edinburgh.