

# Gateshead Private Sector Housing Team

## Vetting Service



The Private Sector Housing Team, within Gateshead Council offers a vetting service, this is to help and support landlords determine the suitability of future tenants. The vetting service is available for the use of licence holders and landlords who manage and rent out properties within the designated selective landlord licensing areas. We check the history of tenants using a range of methods so landlords have the information they need when obtaining tenants. The vetting service is available to all landlords and licence holders renting out properties within the selective landlord licensing areas.

### How we Vet Tenants

To enable the team to carry-out a vetting, the potential tenant must complete the application form correctly and submit it with two forms of identification (one containing a photograph). By signing the consent form permission is given to the Council to retrieve information on potential tenants with other agencies such as:

- Previous landlords
- Gateshead Housing Company
- Probation
- Police
- Social services

We will check tenants housing history for rent arrears, property management, anti-social behaviour and criminal offences. The information obtained will help the team determine the outcome of the application. Any information we receive from the relevant agencies will be held in the strictest confidence. We will only share information if it is subject to required disclosure or if we need to share information with other organisations for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud and protecting public funds.

Furthermore, landlords and licence holders can also carry-out vetting checks on potential tenants by independent private companies or from agencies.

**Good referencing and vetting is not a guarantee that a tenant will look after the property and pay the rent on time. There is no substitution for good management of a property once the tenancy has commenced.**

### Data Protection

The information that is provided to the Private Sector Housing Team at Gateshead Council to process your application and determine an outcome is carried out in accordance with the vetting procedure and legislation. All persons are reminded that the information provided on the application form will be held in the strictest confidence by the Council and is required by the Council from relevant agencies in connection with the vetting application.

All applications are subject to required disclosure or sharing of information with other organisations that handle public funds for the purposes of preventing and detecting fraud and protecting public funds. The information you have provided will be held safe and securely on both computerised and manual files. On completion of the application you are required to sign the declaration to confirm an understanding with the application process.

## Reporting the outcome

The landlord will be notified of the outcome once the vetting checks have been completed and the outcome will be graded into the following categories:

Category	Examples of suitability
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where the previous tenancies have been successful and there are no reasons to deem it unsatisfactory</li><li>• Good housing history</li></ul>
<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where the tenant has previously lived with family and there is no previous housing history available</li><li>• Previously the applicant has been an owner occupier</li><li>• Potential applicant has previously lived abroad</li><li>• The information received is inconclusive</li></ul>
<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Short-term rent arrears due to unforeseen circumstances (temporary situation that has or is being addressed)</li><li>• There has been a dispute between the former landlord and tenant and the evidence is not provided by either party to substantiate a claim</li></ul>
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Applicants will not meet the criteria where:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any unspent convictions</li><li>• Persistent rent arrears</li><li>• Unsatisfactory landlord references</li><li>• Poor previous property condition/abandoned property</li></ul> <p><b>Where the applicant has been known to be involved in incidents anti-social or criminal behaviour, which is/maybe likely to cause nuisance or annoyance to neighbours and the surrounding community including but not limited to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rowdy drunken/ drug fuelled behaviour</li><li>• intimidation or harassment</li><li>• Street drinking</li><li>• Noise/other nuisance</li><li>• Assault of neighbours, council staff or landlords</li></ul>