

**REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING  
13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2007**

**REPORT BY: ALAN CUFLEY – HEAD OF COMMUNITY HOUSING.**

**WRITTEN BY: BRUCE LOMAX – HOUSING STANDARDS MANAGER.**

**SUBJECT: VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR PRIVATE  
RENTED PROPERTIES.**

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT.**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval from the Executive Member for Housing for the development of an Accreditation scheme for all privately rented properties within Portsmouth which do not fall within the mandatory licensing regime.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS.**

1. The Executive Member for Housing agrees to the development and implementation of a voluntary Accreditation scheme.
2. The Executive Member for Housing delegates authority to the Head of Community Housing to form partnerships with other local bodies and local authorities as part of the Accreditation scheme development and implementation for the benefit of local landlords and tenants.

## **3. BACKGROUND:**

### **3.1 Accreditation;**

Accreditation involves private landlords using and developing good standards in their relationship with tenants as well as in the condition and management of their properties. The scheme must be tailored to the local private rented sector market, local landlords and/or properties.

The majority of landlords within the private rented sector provide a good quality rented accommodation for all needs. The use of an accreditation scheme acknowledges and encourages this type of landlord, and because the scheme would be tailored to the local private rented sector market, local landlords and properties, it would in turn improve and strengthen the private rented sector within Portsmouth.

A wide range of private rented sector stakeholders including the Government, national landlord associations, local authorities, Shelter, the National Union of Students and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, supports accreditation.

### **3.2: Scheme Types:**

There are many different types of schemes that have been used across the country to great effect. Some schemes just look at the property others will accredit the landlord and the property. A few schemes look at the conduct of the tenant who, through the accreditation scheme, become “accredited tenants” rather than the accommodation, which they live in.

It is imperative therefore we ensure that the right scheme for Portsmouth is developed using partnership linkage and key stakeholder consultation.

### **4. PARTNERSHIP WORKING:**

The key to any successful accreditation scheme is to ensure the correct partnerships are formed and maintained.

As part of the development of the scheme we will endeavour to link with external groups such as Hampshire Police, Hampshire Fire and Rescue, Portsmouth and District Landlords Association and the University of Portsmouth.

Within Portsmouth City Council, services who have an interest in the private sector housing market would be identified, liaison reinforced and, if necessary, partnerships formed.

It is also hoped that the scheme would be developed and implemented with another local authority. This would not only help in reducing the overall costs for the development and implementation of the scheme, it would provide a uniformed approach for landlords who own and manage properties that are within different local authority areas.

### **5. CONSULTATION:**

It is appreciated that consultation with key stakeholders must be undertaken for the scheme to be a success. We will ensure that key working groups within Portsmouth are created and maintained throughout the development of the scheme.

The main areas of the scheme would be put forward for consultation with the interested stakeholders.

### **6. CONCLUSION.**

Accreditation schemes throughout the country have a proven track record of enhancing the reputation of the private rented sector. The city has an established private rented sector market and with greater numbers of students coming into the city and more families potentially looking to the sector for long term housing solutions it very important that accredited accommodation is available that will not compromise their health, safety and welfare. The introduction of an accreditation scheme would maintain a

prosperous private rented sector that provides the right choice of accommodation in the right areas.

This report has been considered by the City Solicitor for legal issues.

**7. SIGNING OFF THE DOCUMENT**

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Alan Cufley - Head of Community Housing

Dated.....

**APPROVAL TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS.**

The recommendations set out above was approved / approved as amended / deferred / rejected by the Executive Member for Housing.  
on.....

Signed .....  
Councillor Hugh Mason  
Executive Member for Housing.