

# Bury Landlord Forum

## Thursday 15 May 2008

### 6pm - 8.30pm

Peel Room, Elizabethan Suite, Knowsley St, Bury

Light refreshments from 6pm, meeting starts at 6.30pm

*Agenda includes:*

- Energy Performance Certificates
- Warm Front Grants
- Landlord Training & Development

The forum is open to all landlords owning or managing properties in the Borough and is an excellent opportunity to network, gather information and discuss issues affecting the private rented sector.

For more information contact Babette Howard on 0161 723 6448 or email [babette.howard@greatplaces.org.uk](mailto:babette.howard@greatplaces.org.uk)

## Landlords: don't lose the benefits of being accredited by letting your membership lapse

Renewing your scheme membership is easy. Either post or fax a copy of your current gas safety certificate for each accredited property to the BLAS address/number below and your membership will automatically be renewed.

Remember too to tell us about any major changes you may have made to a property, for example if you've sold or substantially remodelled any of your portfolio.

Don't forget, we're here to provide help and advice if there's anything you're not sure about.



### Get in touch:

If you need any advice or information, we're only a stamp, click or call away!

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# accreditation news

May 2008



the newsletter for private landlords in the Bury area, produced by the Bury Landlord Accreditation Scheme



## Accreditation up 40%

*It's been a busy year for the accreditation team with an increase of over 40% in scheme members during the past 12 months.*

To date 72 landlords have applied to join BLAS we now have 60 scheme members across the Borough, with varying portfolios of over 50 properties to landlords with one or two properties rented out.

This means that there are 270 properties in Bury that have been inspected and given the scheme's seal of approval.

We've also sent out four editions of Accreditation News and organised four Landlord Forum meetings covering topics including Local Housing Allowance, tenancy deposit protection, getting the most out of

inventories and basic rent accounting. Accreditation grants assistance in East Bury has totalled almost £90,000 over the past year, with landlords benefitting from improvements to their properties as well as incentives such as free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Customer satisfaction with BLAS remains high, with more and more landlords wanting the benefits of the support and advice that the scheme offers, particularly in response to changes in legislation aimed at the private rented sector.

By building on the success of the last 12 months and steadily increasing membership, we are ensuring that good standards of property management and maintenance remain high on the agenda.

For more information about the benefits of landlord accreditation and how to join, contact Babette Howard, Accreditation Co-ordinator on 0161 723 6448 or email [babette.howard@greatplaces.org.uk](mailto:babette.howard@greatplaces.org.uk)



## Local Housing Allowance rates finalised

The Local Housing Allowance rates have now been finalised by the Rent Service as shown in the table to the right.

The Bolton and Bury rates relate to the area to the north of the M60/M62 boundary, and the Central Manchester rates are payable in the area to south of the M60/M62 boundary.

The Local Housing Allowance used to work out your tenant's benefit will depend on how many people are in their household. Your tenant will be entitled to one bedroom for:

- every adult couple (married or unmarried)
- Any other adult aged 16 or over
- Any two children aged under 10
- Any two children of the same sex aged under 16
- Any other child

Please contact the Benefits Service on 0161 253 5008 or visit our website at [www.bury.gov.uk](http://www.bury.gov.uk) for further information about the Local Housing Allowance.

	Bolton & Bury	Central Manchester
1 bed shared	£45	£60
1 bed self-contained	£69	£94.81
2 bedrooms	£95.77	£109.62
3 bedrooms	£114.23	£126.92
4 bedrooms	£144.23	£184.62
5 bedrooms	£173.08	£230.77

# Get to grips with EPCs



Home Survey Reports are a thriving local company privately owned and operated by Gary Cleary who are currently helping local landlords get to grips with the new Energy Performance Certificates required on all rented accommodation in October this year.

To fall in line with the rest of Europe in cutting carbon dioxide levels over the coming years, all residential properties will fall under the "Energy Performance in Buildings Directive" by October 2008.

## What does this mean to landlords?

From October 2008 all rented accommodation in England & Wales will require an Energy Performance Assessment carrying out on the premises prior to being let out and all perspective new tenants will have the right to see the report. These certificates will last for 10 years.

## What is an Energy performance Certificate?

The visual inspection which should normally take less than an hour will be focusing on:

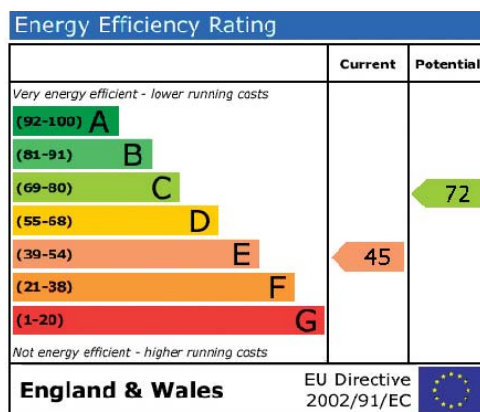
- **Insulation** – Walls, windows, roof space and floors
- **Heating systems** – Type & age, and whether thermostat-controlled
- **Hot water systems** – Type & age and the quality of the insulation
- **Fixed lighting** – Are energy efficient light bulbs being used
- **Windows** – How many and what type
- **Fuels** – What fuel is used? Coal fires, oil, electric, or gas etc.

The Domestic Energy Assessor (DEA) will also want to confirm with you the approximate age of the property. Once all this information has been compiled the DEA will be preparing an Energy Performance Certificate. This will calculate two energy ratings for the property.

1. Energy Efficiency Rating – a measure of the overall energy efficiency of your home. The higher the rating the more energy efficient you property

2. Environmental (CO<sub>2</sub>) Impact – a measure of the property's impact on the environment. The higher the rating, the less the impact on the environment.

These two ratings are also displayed in coloured bands much in the same way as the band used on fridges and washing machines.



In addition to this, the Energy Performance Certificate will indicate what actions could be taken to improve the energy efficiency rating and give clear guidance on the annual savings that would result.

The graphs above show in the 'potential' column the rating that can be achieved; the 'current' column show how far away the house is currently. There is a big difference on the above example.

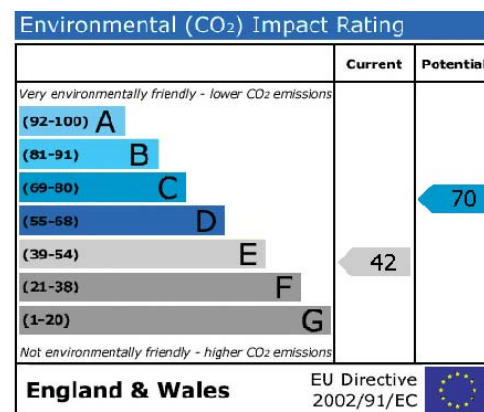
## What can be done?

Home Survey Reports are keen to point out the potential grants that are available to tenants (with their landlords support) via the 'Energy Savings Trust' and 'Warm Front', of which both are government led initiatives to offer grants funded by utility companies to provide improved insulation and advice on further energy cutting measures.

Gary Cleary the managing director of Home Survey Reports says 'now is a crucial time to take advantage of these grants which should offer a win - win situation as follows

- Tenants will benefit from lower fuel bills
- Landlords will benefit from increased property value
- The government will achieve its targets for reducing carbon dioxide levels
- The landlord will get a better result in his EPC when his property becomes vacant from October 2008, for the next ten years!

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) also shows (based on average) behavioural patterns the cost breakdowns of the potential vs. current cost of the following: Lighting - Heating - Hot water



On an average terraced property bills can be reduced by up to 50% by taking only the most basic improvements;

This information will give your customers a greater insight into the cost of running the home. With ever increasing energy costs your tenants will be better informed. We anticipate that the more energy efficient homes will become the most desirable to rent.

## Don't get left behind this year and get insulated!

Home Survey Reports Ltd are available to give advice and can carry out the Energy Assessments and offering the most competitive rates in the region.

We expect to see a significant rise in demand from October onwards, now is the time to save money BOOK your Energy Performance Certificate NOW for a better deal!

Other services include:

- Home Information Packs
- Domestic & Commercial Energy Assessments
- Building Surveys
- Property Searches
- 360 degree photography / virtual tours

*Discounted rates are available to BLAS members*

## Contact:

Home Survey Reports 0800 112 3426  
[www.homesurveyreports.co.uk](http://www.homesurveyreports.co.uk)  
[enquiries@homesurveyreports.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@homesurveyreports.co.uk)  
 Puma House, Lower Woodhill Road,  
 Bury. BL8 1AA

# BLAS Bond Board update...

*2007-08 was an incredibly busy year at The Bond Board.*

We have been working closely with a number of new landlords in Bury, and keenly monitoring the impact of new legislation that introduced Tenancy Deposit Protection Schemes and more recently the Local Housing Allowance.

Currently in Bury we have:

- 72 live bonds in place with 47 landlords
- 43 Bonds for single persons/couples
- 29 Bonds for families
- 136 people are accommodated by private landlords using the scheme across Bury
- 6 further households, without Bonds, receive tenancy-related support from our project workers.

Of these households,

- Nearly 70% of the tenants have been in their properties over 6 months
- 60% of the tenants have been in their properties over 12 months
- 28% have tenancies that started prior to April 2006

This is because the scheme has placed a great emphasis on working with landlords and tenants alike to maintain their tenancies.

In 2008-09 we have been faced with the challenge of adapting the scheme to work in line with the LHA, and to assist landlords with new tenants to make this transition.

We have made a commitment to deliver Bury's Accredited Tenant Scheme, in partnership with BLAS and Bury MBC, and when in place will sign all new clients up to its Tenant's Charter.



We have also undertaken a consultation program which will run throughout the spring/summer 2008 to investigate the experiences of our clients living in the private rented sectors in Bolton, Bury and Rochdale. These consultation exercises will be officially launched to stakeholders at events in April and May and we would be interested in hearing from any landlords who would like to attend.

For further information on The Bond Board Ltd, Bury Accredited Tenant Scheme or the consultation events please contact The Bond Board, Bury on 0161 761 6166, or email [info@thebondboard.org.uk](mailto:info@thebondboard.org.uk)

# Jewson provides discount for A&List members

*Jewson, the UK's leading builders' merchant, has announced that it will now provide a range of discounts for A&List-NW members through a unique discount card.*

The discounts, which were previously only available to trade customers, are now accessible to over 30 Local Authorities throughout the North West of England and range from 10 to 50 per cent on selected products including building materials, kitchens, doors, joinery and decorating materials. The card can be used at any of the 500 branches across England, Scotland and Wales, as well as

any of the UK's 230 Graham branches, where landlords can purchase all their plumbing, heating and bathroom requirements.

On Jewson's decision to provide landlords on the A&List-NW scheme with significant discount across a wide range of products, Richard Lander, National Account Manager, says: "The move reflects Jewson's aim of building long-term relationships with members of Landlord Accreditation Schemes and the A&List-NW. Jewson is pleased to be able to offer such significant savings and we believe that the depth and breadth of

products, combined with our knowledgeable teams across the country, will provide members of the scheme with all their building materials needs."

To apply for your Accredited Landlords Discount Card, simply contact your Landlord Accreditation Scheme Operator. For your nearest branch, call 0800 539766 or visit [www.jewson.co.uk](http://www.jewson.co.uk) or [www.graham-group.co.uk](http://www.graham-group.co.uk).



## Would you like to contribute?

*Is there something you think all BLAS members should know about? Have you got anything to share with other readers? If you have any suggestions for future editions of Accreditation News or would like to contribute contact Babette Howard - details are on the back page.*