

## New guide highlights electrical safety



*A new guide aimed at improving electrical safety in privately rented homes has been published by the Electrical Safety Council (ESC).*

'The Landlords Guide to Electrical Safety' has been created to help landlords understand their legal responsibilities and offers practical advice on any actions needed, to keep residents safe in their homes.

The booklet also includes information on electrical certification, when it is required and who can carry out electrical work.

Dave Buckle, director general of the Electrical Safety Council said: "The ESC receives a lot of queries from landlords who are confused about the legal requirements for electrical safety in rented properties. So we've put together the Landlords' Guide to Electrical Safety with the aim of providing landlords with straightforward and comprehensive advice. We hope that this will help to answer their questions, clear up any confusion and ultimately improve electrical safety in the privately

rented sector",

The guide, supported by the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), highlights important legislation to make sure landlords' rental properties are within the law including:

- Landlords and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 2004
- Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) regulations 2006 and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Wales) regulations 2006
- Part P of the Building Regulations
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

There are also guidance notes in the booklet about maintaining the electrical installation and any electrical appliances supplied in a property, plus any key activities a responsible landlord should do on a regular basis including:

### Visual checks

The guide recommends landlords should check wires, sockets, switches, fuse boxes, light fittings and

highlight what to look for that may indicate a safety issue.

### Periodic inspection testing

The ESC guide recommends that this test should be done on change of tenancy, or at least every five years. A landlord should also explain to their tenants how to read a periodic inspection report.

### Portable appliances

Appliance safety is covered in the booklet and recommends that landlords should check to make sure that all portable appliances are safe to use and know how to conduct visual safety checks, as well as detailed guidance about recommended frequency of inspection and portable appliance testing for different types of appliances.

### Fire Alarms and Emergency Lighting

The booklet covers system selection, testing and maintenance, including recommendations for lighting of escape routes for various categories of residential premises.

The Landlords Guide to Electrical Safety is available to download from [www.esc.org.uk](http://www.esc.org.uk) or for a hard copy, contact Babette Howard on 0161 723 6448 or email [babette.howard@greatplaces.org.uk](mailto:babette.howard@greatplaces.org.uk)

This newsletter is produced and supported by:



# More money for energy grants

Bury's energy show house



Landlords can make sure their tenant's home is warm and cosy during the winter months by applying for the government's Warm Front grant.

Managed by Eaga partnership the grant has been increased to up to £3500, to help provide energy efficiency improvements such draught proofing, loft and cavity wall insulation and installation of central heating (Repair or placement of central heating boilers is the responsibility of the landlord).

Your tenant may qualify for a grant if they receive any of the benefits listed below:

Householders aged 60 +:

- Income Support
- Council Tax Benefit
- Housing Benefit
- Job Seekers Allowance (income-based)
- Pension Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Householders with a child under 16, or pregnant women with maternity certificate MAT-B1, receiving one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Council Tax Benefit
- Housing Benefit
- Job Seekers Allowance (income-based)
- Pension Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Householders who claim one or more of the following benefits:

- Working Tax Credit (with an income of less than £16,040, which must include a disability element)
- Disability Living Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (with an income of less than £16,040)
- Housing Benefit (which must include a disability premium)
- Income Support (which must include a disability premium)

- Council Tax Benefit (which must include a disability premium)
- War Disablement Pension (which must include a mobility supplement or Constant Attendance Allowance)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (which must include Constant Attendance Allowance)
- Attendance Allowance

These grants have already helped thousands of people improve the comfort of their homes and reduce fuel bills. So apply now to avoid the autumn rush and be prepared for what could be another very cold winter.

If your tenant doesn't qualify for Warm Front there are other grants available from the major energy companies. To find out if your tenant qualifies and how to help them apply, contact the Bury Council energy team on 0161 253 6366 / 6367.



# Accreditation update

The accreditation team has been hard at work over 2009, inspecting over 330 properties and increasing the number of scheme members to 84.

New landlords are getting in touch all the time due to the current climate, hoping to rent their house while they wait for the property market to improve before they put their house up for sale.

By using the Landlord Accreditation Scheme, new landlords can access housing law, plus advice and support to make renting their homes as straight forward as possible.

There has also been an increase in landlords using choice based lettings service, Pinpoint and Bury's home options to advertise their accredited properties.

The landlord forum has gone from strength to strength recently with over 50 people coming to the last meeting. Feedback on the new



meeting has been very positive, with landlords enjoying the time to network and socialise.

The team are always keen to hear your views on how to improve the service you receive, what you would like to see in the next edition of Accreditation News, or new topics for

the forum.

Remember, don't let your membership lapse by forgetting to send your current annual gas safety certificates!

For more information on membership contact accreditation co-ordinator, Babette Howard on 0161 723 6448

## Help to avoid cowboy builders

The Bury Registered Tradesmen scheme has been set up by the council, to give residents and landlords a list of reputable traders and avoid cowboys.

If a trader is successful in their application, their details are added to the list, which is sent to consumers and put on the council's website.

The scheme is open to traders who work in the Bury area and has proved

popular to both tradesmen and residents.

The list is can be found on Bury Council's website, along with a downloadable application form.

<http://www.bury.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ConsumerAdviceAndProtection/TradesmanScheme.htm>

<http://www.bury.gov.uk/business/tradingstandards/jointheburyregradescheme>



# Bury Landlord Forum

## Thursday 17 September 2009

### 6.15pm - 8.45pm

*Peel Room, Elizabethan Suite, Knowsley St, Bury*

#### AGENDA TO INCLUDE:

Housing benefit and LHA update  
Top tips for staying out of trouble with the Council (Tom Reynolds, NLA)  
Financing Investment Properties/Property Investment Fundamentals

The forum is open to all landlords owning or managing properties in the area. It is an excellent opportunity to network, gather information and discuss current 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)*

## Free advertising with Bury Council

As part of the council's drive to encourage the residents of Bury to make better use of private rentals in the borough, Landlord Accreditation Scheme members can advertise properties free of charge in the town hall's homeless reception and also on the council website.

New adverts will go up every Wednesday and there is no limit to how many properties you can advertise. The scheme will give you greater access to potential tenants,

who will be able to contact you directly if they are interested.

The council will not be responsible for vetting potential tenants or control who sees the advert. As soon as a property is let, please contact the council, who will update their database.

If you are interested please contact Tom Houghton at the council on 0161 253 5099, alternatively you can email: [T.L.Houghton@bury.gov.uk](mailto:T.L.Houghton@bury.gov.uk) to

receive the advertising template.



### Get in touch:

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

#### **Babette Howard (Tuesday - Friday)**

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#### **Lisa Schofield (Monday - Thursday)**

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