

## **The Letting Agent and Property Management Redress Scheme**

**Hertsmere Borough Council is aware of this new legislation and currently studying the legislative framework and the possible impact.**

Letting agents and property management companies have until 1st October 2014 to register with one of three Government approved redress schemes. These schemes will ensure private rented sector tenants or landlords have a straightforward route to complain about their agents.

The three Government approved schemes are:

- The Property Ombudsman - on the TPOS website
- Ombudsman Services: Property - on the Ombudsman Services website
- Property Redress Scheme - on the PRS website

Each scheme will have its own rules and processes but some requirements, such as providing relevant information about the redress scheme when signing a tenancy agreement, will be common to all the schemes. If you feel you are not being treated fairly by your letting agent or property manager you will be able to approach their scheme, and your complaints should be addressed quickly and effectively, and you could also receive compensation.

Who does this apply to?

### **Lettings**

- Any individual or company who in the course of their business responds to instructions from a private rented sector landlord who wants to find a tenant to rent a property under a domestic tenancy (assured or assured shorthold).
- Any individual or company who in the course of their business responds to instructions from a tenant who wants to find a property to rent under a domestic tenancy (assured or assured shorthold).
- It does not apply to tied accommodation, student accommodation provided by higher and further education establishments and Registered Social Landlords.

### **Property Management**

- A person or company who engages in property management work by responding to instructions from another person who wants to arrange services, repairs, maintenance, improvement, insurance or deal with any other aspect of the management of premises.
- The properties can be let under a long lease (leasehold), and assured tenancy or a protected tenancy.

- It does not apply to land registered as common hold land, premises which are wholly or mainly for the accommodation of students, Council Housing, Registered Social Landlords (There are other exceptions relating to public bodies).

What scheme does my agent belong to?

All applicable organisations or businesses must be registered with a redress scheme by 1 October 2014 but, depending on circumstances, the Councils will consider a grace period of up to 2 months for agents to find and join a suitable scheme. We will over the next few weeks be writing to all agents and property managers asking which scheme they are a member of. When this information is collated we will be publishing it on our website.

In the meantime, you can request this information directly from your letting agent and they should provide you with details of the scheme they belong to and how to contact them if you wish to make a complaint.

**You can find more information on the redress scheme on the DFW website and the latest press release from the government on the scheme on the gov.uk website.**