

What are the benefits of PLAN to tenants?

- Easier to identify good quality accommodation – recognition of the PLAN stamp of approval.
- Assurance that an agreed code of management standards and conduct is in place
- Confidence that your landlord demonstrates compliance with relevant legislation
- Safety and security measures incorporated as part of the accreditation standard
- Energy efficiency improvements can lead to lower fuel bills
- Access to a Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (in applicable cases)

How do I apply for PLAN?

To apply you just need to complete a simple online application form found at:

www.northumberland.gov.uk

You will then be assigned to a dedicated officer who will help guide you through the rest of the process.

The three main stages of PLAN application are:

- Stage 1** Review of application form and completion of a Fit and Proper Person Check
- Stage 2** Inspection of property
- Stage 3** Advertising, finding a tenant and referencing

For further information, or to join the scheme, contact the Private Sector Housing Team on:

Phone: 0345 600 6400

Email:
privatesectorhousing@northumberland.gov.uk



What is PLAN?

PLAN – Property and Landlord Accreditation Northumberland - is the new relaunched Private Rented Sector Accreditation Scheme that aims to support landlords who offer good quality housing in Northumberland. The scheme is voluntary, free and recognises the valuable role that the private rented sector plays by delivering good quality, much needed housing to the residents of Northumberland.

What are the main objectives of PLAN?

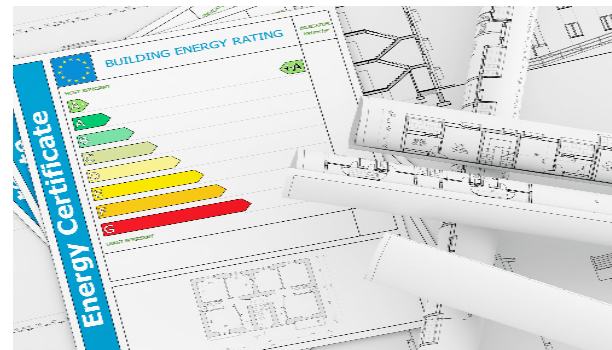
- Improve the condition, safety and energy efficiency of homes in the private rented sector
- Ensure advice and support is available to landlords and tenants regarding their rights and obligations
- Ensure tenants have access to support in the private rented sector
- To recognise and encourage landlords who are prepared to provide good quality accommodation at a fair rent and a commitment to working in partnership with Northumberland County Council
- To improve and promote the positive image of the private rented sector
- To improve liaison and communication between landlords and Northumberland County Council
- To promote good practice in the private rented sector
- To provide tenants with confidence in the quality and management of the accommodation they are renting from accredited landlords

What are the Standards for PLAN?

All landlords will be required to pass the Fit and Proper Person checks. This will include a signed declaration to certify that they have not been involved in certain criminal activity.

As part of the scheme requirements each property will be required to have a property inspection by a Private Sector Housing Officer. To pass accreditation properties need to meet a certain standard. The property standards take account of:

- Gas, electrical and fire safety
- Portable appliance testing (PAT)
- Provision of amenities: kitchen, bathrooms and WC's
- Security
- Furniture and furnishings
- Energy efficiency
- Condensation, mould and dampness
- Safety standards (window locks and restrictors, handrails etc)
- Property condition and decoration (external and internal)
- Outside space/gardens - clear of rubbish, not overgrown and of decent appearance



What are the benefits of joining PLAN?

- Single point of contact from the Private Sector Housing Team
- One-year free membership with the National Residential Landlord Association (NRLA)
- Free training place on NRLA's 'Landlord Fundamentals' training and access to many other valuable training opportunities
- Access to an enhanced tenant vetting service which includes criminal and anti-social behaviour considerations through Northumbria Police
- A potential discount on Selective Licensing Fees should a Scheme be declared in Northumberland
- Advice and assistance for property and tenancy related issues
- Market advantage when attracting new tenants and recognition that they are a good landlord providing a high standard of accommodation
- 4 weeks free advertising for accredited properties on Northumberland Homefinder, Northumberland County Council's allocation service for housing
- Recognition that they are a good landlord providing a high standard of accommodation
- Up-to-date information on regeneration/ improvement schemes and initiatives in Northumberland including energy efficiency grants
- Positive publicity for their business use – PLAN members are provided with a membership certificate and stickers to display and increase public awareness of the scheme
- Briefing sessions and regular newsletters to update on relevant issues