

'Crisis' Partners with Private Landlords in Effort to reduce homelessness

A new partnership to unlock access to the private rented sector for homeless people across the city has been launched with national homelessness charity, Crisis.

Help to Rent Edinburgh will provide a range of services for tenants who the Council have assessed as homeless to widen their rental options beyond social housing, which often has long waiting lists. This will allow people to move on from temporary accommodation more quickly.

Support will include advice in navigating properties available for rent and entitlement to local housing allowance. The service will also provide help with budgeting, leases, inventories, arranging viewings and finding flatmates where necessary.

The scheme will also include a deposit guarantee provision for landlords so that people who would struggle to pay this expense up front are not excluded from renting. Similar to a cash deposit, this gives landlords peace of mind by providing protection against any damage or arrears and is guaranteed to be paid by the scheme if problems arise.

Councillor Kate Campbell, Housing and Economy Convener, said: "Because of the pressures on social housing in Edinburgh homeless households are having to spend too long in temporary accommodation while waiting for a permanent home. We have to help people find ways out of homelessness that don't just rely on social housing and that has to include the private sector.

“Crisis have a wealth of experience in housing and homelessness, so it’s good to have them working in partnership with us to deliver what will be a transformative project. This is about the public and third sectors working with private sector landlords who understand that they can play an important role helping us to tackle homelessness.

“And it will also make it easier for many households and families at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, to find a permanent, settled home. If you are a landlord in Edinburgh I would encourage you to find out more about Help to Rent as, if you do, you will absolutely play a part in improving people’s lives in our city.”

Grant Campbell, Skylight Director for Crisis in Edinburgh, said: “We are delighted to be working with the Council to provide this much-needed service. So many people across the city are currently struggling to leave homelessness behind, in part because the costs of renting can make finding a stable home hugely challenging.

“Landlords who agree to let their properties to homeless individuals, couples or families are playing their part in supporting people into settled housing and allowing them to move on with their lives more quickly.

“I would encourage any landlord with a property to think about joining Help to Rent, not only will it genuinely help more people out of homelessness but you will also get the security of a named contact for the duration of the tenancy and support in finding new tenants making the process easier for you to manage.”