



Borderwise: Housing

This factsheet aims to provide information for people living in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) who want to move to Northern Ireland (NI) to live.



Finding somewhere to live

The Department for Social Development has overall responsibility for social housing policy in Northern Ireland. Social housing is designed for households who cannot afford to provide suitable and adequate housing.



Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) has responsibility for drawing up programmes to meet social housing needs and for house improvements. You can download the General Housing application form from the NIHE website: www.nihe.gov.uk or you can obtain the form from your local Housing Executive district office.



Housing Selection Scheme

The Housing Selection scheme is the scheme which determines the order in which applicants for housing are allocated houses. When you apply for housing, you are visited by the NIHE and assessed. The assessment takes into account your present housing conditions, insecurity of tenure, intimidation and your health and social wellbeing. Further information on the selection scheme is available on the NIHE website: www.nihe.gov.uk

Homelessness

The NIHE has responsibility for providing for homeless people. They provide advice and assistance and may be able to provide temporary accommodation. Contact: 028 9056 5444

Housing Grants

The NIHE may provide grants for the improvement and repair of domestic private property. These grants are not available to NIHE tenants. For more information Telephone 028 9024 0588

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit is a Social Security Benefit intended to assist individuals or families on a low income with their housing costs. Both Housing Executive and private tenants may apply. The benefit granted is usually deducted from rent or rates paid to the Housing Executive or Land and Property Services and paid directly to those in private rented accommodation. Further information is available at any local Housing Executive district office, or from the Land and Property Services Helpline: 0845 300 6360

Going
North

Private Rented Accommodation

As a private rented tenant will be asked to sign a document which will set out the details of the agreement called a tenancy agreement. All private rented tenants have basic rights. These include;

- A rent book – this should include information about your landlord, the rent payable, whether you have to pay rates and any other charges. The amount and purpose of any deposit and the conditions for repayment, the length of the tenancy and who is responsible for carrying out repairs.
- Tenancy statement - you are entitled to a tenancy statement. This should be provided to you as well as your rent book and tenancy agreement. The details of the tenancy statement should set out clearly the rights and responsibilities of your landlord and you.
- Safety Issues- Your Landlord must ensure that your accommodation is suitable when you move in. Landlords must have a valid gas certificate for each appliance in your accommodation and any furniture provided by your landlord must be fire resistant.
- Repairs – a landlord is usually responsible for keeping the structure and outside of the accommodation in good condition. A tenant is responsible for decorations and day-to-day maintenance.
- Notice to Quit – your landlord is required to give you at least 28 days written notice to quit. Once the 28 days have ended the landlord must go to court to obtain an order to evict you.
- Freedom from Harassment and Illegal Eviction - includes any action designed to stop you carrying out one of your rights as a tenant. If you feel you are being harassed you should contact the Environmental Health Department of your local District Council.

Further Information: www.northernireland.shelter.org.uk

Buying a Private House

Most people in Northern Ireland own their own home. However the process of buying and selling can be complex and expensive. It is advisable to consider your options carefully. For further information contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau in Northern Ireland Tel: 028 9023 1120 or Citizens Information Board if you reside in the Republic of Ireland Tel: 1890 777 121

Co-ownership

The Northern Ireland Co-Ownership Housing Association (NICHA) runs a co-ownership scheme which allows you to buy a house by part buying and part renting at the start. The scheme does not apply to NIHE or housing association houses. It is aimed mainly at first time buyers and people on low incomes. For further information telephone: 0800 333 644 or visit the website: www.co-ownership.org

Contact Details

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