

Welcome to the latest edition of the ANUK Newsletter.

Newsletters will from now on come in e-format, although we will still offer a printed version to delegates at the 10th National Conference, this year being held in Leeds on Friday 26th November 2010 (more information is within this alert).



It is clear to see that there is much important work being done in the world of Accreditation across the United Kingdom, and we want to keep members up to date so we can learn and develop off each other.

The Accreditation Network UK (ANUK) provides a strategic oversight and networking opportunities for members who are involved in running, developing or thinking about accreditation and its role in improving property standard and housing management.

The whole housing agenda is shifting to enhance localism, share services and make the best use of contracting resources. Landlord Accreditation has been a tried and tested tool over the last 10 years to cost-effectively improve both housing management and physical standards within the private rented sector across the country.

The ANUK Network and Executive continue to strive for recognition of the value of Landlord Accreditation Schemes and the need for a consistent standard to be applied across the board, providing clarity of function for both landlords and tenants alike as well as to those involved within the field of private sector housing.

I am in no doubt that it will be an exciting and rewarding year to come.

Caren Green – ANUK Chair.

Principal Officer, Housing Market Support Team, Salford City Council

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10th Anniversary Conference of the Accreditation Network UK



Accreditation in the Private Rented Sector and Cost Efficiency: Getting More for Less

Friday 26th November 2010

The Unipol Board Room, 155/157 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 3ED

<http://www.unipol.org.uk/National/Training/Events/443/>

Accreditation has been a tried and tested tool over the last 10 years to cost-effectively improve both housing management and physical standards. In these days where we all have to do more with less, accreditation can be shown to be cost effective and to complement the existing regulatory system. Landlord engagement is the key and no better tool than accreditation has been found.

The conference looks at both the theory and development of accreditation but more importantly it draws on the hands-on experience of housing practitioners actively engaged in developing and running schemes. The conference provides examples from developments throughout the UK: from well established schemes to those just setting up and from large schemes to smaller niche initiatives.

Mindful of cost constraints the cost of the day has been reduced to only **£85** for ANUK members and £125 for non ANUK members. This has been made possible because of support and sponsorship from the Residential Landlords Association, to whom we continue to be grateful.

The day is certain to provide plenty of opportunity for delegate involvement with a choice of workshops and provides an important and active forum for examining where accreditation is of most use and how can it be developed further to meet today's agenda.

To find out more information or to book your place be go to the Unipol website at <http://www.unipol.org.uk/National/Training/Events/443/>

Meet the Executives

The ANUK Executive was formed to take responsibility for running ANUK and is authorised to make decisions in furtherance of ANUK's aims and objectives including to:

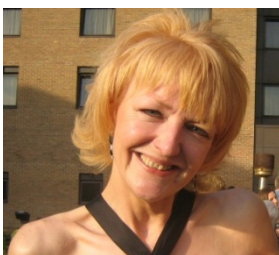
- ✓ maintain and develop the National Model Schemes.
- ✓ organise the national conference.
- ✓ set an annual budget and undertake regular monitoring
- ✓ recruit members and maintain a membership database and website
- ✓ develop regional representation within ANUK
- ✓ promote training and develop core training materials
- ✓ be represented on all Governance systems for the Approved Codes Under Section 233 of the Housing Act 2004.

The group meets a minimum of twice a year, and can invite observers and visitors. Additionally it can, as necessary, make changes to the constitution (subject to the consent of the members) and is empowered to set up Groups, as required, to discuss particular issues and initiatives.

In the first instalment of 'meet the executive', we introduce you to some of the new regional representatives

North West - Jan Colgan

jancolgan@wirral.gov.uk



Jan has been the Manager of Wirral's Landlord Accreditation Scheme since it was initially set up in December 2003.

The scheme is now one of the largest in the country and is supported by a dedicated body of landlords, evidenced by active focus group membership and well attended forums.

Jan has developed many innovative incentives for the scheme, regularly shares her experience and assists other local authorities to set up new schemes.

She established Wirral's Managing Agent Accreditation Scheme in 2004 which has been vital in establishing a strong working relationship with Agents across the Borough. An advantage of this Scheme is the increase in the number of properties submitted for accreditation from out-of-borough Landlords. These properties would never have been accredited without the involvement of the Agents.

Jan has recently re-vamped Wirral's Schemes to clarify the accreditation process and its values to landlords, agents and tenants.

Jan is also an active member of A-LIST and was instrumental in setting up the Merseyside Accreditation Network, a sub-regional group for Accreditation Teams in the Merseyside area.

North East - Claire Mc Mullen

claire.mcmullen@newcastle.gov.uk

Claire is manager of the Newcastle Private Rented Service in Newcastle upon Tyne. She has worked with the private rented sector for 10 years, having previously worked in housing management in the social housing sector. As an

ANUK member, Claire was part of the consultative committee which helped to develop the original Landlord Development Manual in association with the IDeA and LACORs (now LGA).

Yorkshire and Humber - Dennis Tester

dennis.testersheffield@sheffield.gov.uk



Dennis Tester is a Senior Housing Officer for Sheffield City Council.

He works in Private Sector Housing, and has been running the Sheffield Responsible Landlord Scheme (RLS) since 2006.

The RLS was set up in 2003 and currently has around 460 members covering over 1400 properties in Sheffield.

South West - Charles Garrett

Charles.Garrett@BATHNES.GOV.UK

Charles has worked for Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) for ten years, prior to which his career was in the construction industry, culminating in construction project management and lecturing on the National Certificate and City and Guilds courses at Trowbridge College.

As Property Partnership Officer he leads on the B&NES Property Accreditation Scheme. In addition he heads the Homefinder Scheme, which helps to house homeless and priority needs clients in the private rented sector. Furthermore he leads the Council's Home Energy work, covered by the Home Energy Conservation Act.

The Property Accreditation scheme in B&NES was launched in 1994 with some early success, but had started to stagnate at around 200 accredited properties. After a re-launch in early 2002 the scheme was celebrating having broken the 500 barrier by October 2003. Today the total number of properties which have been inspected and accredited by the scheme stands at 1865.

Charles is always keen to offer advice to Councils who are considering starting Accreditation schemes in their areas. He has given talks to Landlords Associations as far a field as Milton Keynes, and presented a workshop on Accreditation to the Local Government Association South West Regional Housing Forum.

London/South East - Jessica Alomankeh

jessica.alomankeh@camden.gov.uk

Jessica started work with the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme in June 2005. Prior to that she was a Grants Officer within the Private Sector Housing Team in Camden Council.



As the LLAS Projects Coordinator she has the responsibility of managing all LLAS activities, assisted by an Accreditation Officer. This involves producing and updating clear and easy to follow procedural documents specific to LLAS financial and

administrative functions. She also liases, builds and manages relationships with a range of stakeholders; provides regular monitoring and progress reports to the partnership and affiliated members as required, and ensures that all projects and activities developed and taken forward in the name of the Partnership are done so in accordance with stated policy objectives and compliance with the relevant policies and procedures.

The LLAS was launched in August 2004 and has accredited 7215 landlords and agents

LLAS also manages other accreditation Schemes for:

- HLAS (Hampshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme): Launched June 2007; have 239 accredited landlords
- SHLAS (Surreyheath Landlord Accreditation Scheme): Launched December 2008; have 36 Accredited landlords
- The KLAS (Kent Landlord Accreditation Scheme): Launched April 2009; have 770 accredited landlords and agents.
- SLAS (Sussex Landlord Accreditation Scheme): Launched June 2009; have 230 accredited landlords and agents.
- TGSE (Thames Gateway South Essex Landlord Accreditation Scheme): Launched April 2010; have 233 accredited landlords and agents.

Next time we will introduce you to the rest of the regional representatives, and other members of the Executive, including:

Wales	Mark Thomas
Scotland	Elspeth Boyle
East Midlands	Fiona Knight
West Midlands	Will Knight
East England	Emma Barker
Secretary	Tom Toumazou
Conference and Events	Dave Princep

NLA Property Women Awards 2010



The National Landlords Association Property Woman Awards 2010 took place in London at the end of June to celebrate the work of women in property across the UK. The prestigious event was hosted by TV personality Melissa Porter.

Melissa Porter was apparently “blown away” by the quality of this year’s entrants and commented: “The calibre of entries has been amazing. All those that have been

shortlisted should be extremely proud. Their determination and desire to succeed despite adversity is an inspiration to us all.”

This year’s ceremony included a new category of NLA Local Authority Property Woman Award to highlight female local authority officers who show a creative engagement with their local private-rented sectors. The finalists for these awards were: ANUKs very own Jan Colgan and also Kim Waugh and Nicola White.

The awards were an enjoyable night out, and Anne Rowland and Jessica Alomankeh (Welsh and London Landlord Accreditation Scheme Managers respectively) were also in attendance supporting nominated accredited landlords in their regional categories.



Left: Jan Colgan enjoying the awards ceremony



Right: Anne Rowland with Landlord Accreditation Wales Accredited Landlord Jane James (and NLA Welsh Property Woman of the Year) and Julie Woolfenden, North Wales & Shropshire NLA Representative

Landlords Accreditation Wales

The only way to go?

Anne Rowland, Landlord Accreditation Wales scheme manager explains why she has been pleasantly surprised since signing the scheme up to Twitter!

If you didn’t already know, Twitter is not just a website your children or even your grandchildren should be into, companies and professional people are also heralding it the new way to promote, connect and brand a company.

I strive to give the scheme a professional edge and to make it stand out in a competitive world. But for a novice like me, I didn’t know what to expect. However I have found using twitter actually rather interesting! Not least it has given me a number of leads on useful news



articles and products which I might not have heard about otherwise.

Don't get me wrong, you could end of following the wrong people and reading endless tweets about people's love lives and what they have just had for breakfast. But as with all websites, once you become savvy to it you can easily pick between the wheat and the chaff.

So far I am really enjoying following the organisations and government agencies such as Communities and Local Government, Shelter and the Charter Institute of Housing and also other Councils in Wales such as Monmouthshire and Powys. And if it wasn't for work purposes, I think I'd definitely be following Stephen Fry too!

So I'd hope if you are already on twitter you'll start following me [@welshlandlords](#) and if you are not already on it – sign up today and start following.

Also in the next few months once new CPD courses for landlords in Wales are launched, as a way to advertise them I will be tweeting a couple of discount codes, so it could be well worth landlords following me!

New Look for Wirral's Accreditation Schemes

Wirral's Landlord and Managing Agent Accreditation Scheme have received a face lift !!

Until recently, Wirral Council administered a Landlord Accreditation Scheme which, despite its name, actually assessed and accredited individual properties submitted to the Scheme.

The term "Accredited Landlord" has always given the impression that the landlord's entire portfolio meets the Scheme requirements. Inherently, one of the problems with Accreditation Schemes is that the Scheme Operator relies on landlords submitting individual properties without knowing what percentage of their entire portfolio it equates to. Landlords will obviously therefore cherry pick and submit their better properties, while withholding those that do not meet accreditation standards.

In order to address this, the Landlord Accreditation Scheme in Wirral will now be known as the Property Accreditation Scheme. A certificate of accreditation is issued for each property meeting the standards. Part of the process the landlord must agree to comply with the prescribed Property and Management Code of Standards.

Wirral's Managing Agent Accreditation Scheme has been renamed the Management Accreditation Scheme. The Agent agrees to comply with both the Property and Management Code of Standards and consents to an assessment of their Management practices. A condition of the Accreditation status is that they regularly submit properties to the Property Accreditation Scheme.

For further information on these Schemes contact Jan Colgan, Senior Housing Standards Officer on 0151 691 8132 or email lat@wirral.gov.uk



Accredited Home and Accredited Home of Excellence schemes within East Riding of Yorkshire

The East Riding of Yorkshire Council has recently launched the 'Accredited Homes' and 'Accredited Homes of Excellence' schemes which have been developed in partnership with private landlords and letting agents across the county.



East Riding of Yorkshire Council

**Accredited
Home**

Landlords who successfully apply for accreditation receive a package of benefits, including access to a free advice hotline, a 'shop and save' scheme that entitles them to discounts from certain retailers, a membership certificate and the right to use the accreditation scheme logo on their letterheads and publicity material.



East Riding of Yorkshire Council

**Accredited Home
of Excellence**

To become an 'Accredited Home,' a property must meet a basic level of repair, maintenance and management, whilst 'Accredited Homes of Excellence' are expected to

provide a much higher standard of accommodation, with better fittings and fixtures. Membership is free, optional and lasts for five years.

Landlord Jayne Knaggs has recently received accreditation on several of her properties.

"The Accredited Homes and Accredited Homes of Excellence schemes will enable the council to work with responsible and professional landlords to provide good quality accommodation with a high standard of safety in the private-rented sector.

The schemes will ensure that prospective tenants have certified confirmation of a safe and sound property in addition to the commitment of a good standard of service from a conscientious landlord."

Sarah Horner, landlord liaison officer, said: "We've been working closely with landlords and letting agents to develop the accreditation schemes as part of our commitment to raising the standard of private sector housing. It's very much about rewarding and promoting those landlords who maintain their properties to a high standard and let them out responsibly. It will also help to build confidence in private rented accommodation among new and existing tenants." If you would like to find out more please contact Sarah Horner on 01482 396301 or email private.sector.housing@eastriding.gov.uk

Liverpool City Council's CLASS Scheme

Liverpool City Council's voluntary landlord accreditation scheme has been up and running for 6 years.



Sheila Kirk, the Accreditation Officer

tells us why she has enjoyed working closely with the 240 landlords who have joined the scheme and is looking forward to another year ahead, with an expectation of an increase in membership.

The scheme known as CLASS is a property accreditation scheme and the Council has accredited 1300 private rented sector properties to date. The CLASS scheme sets out minimum safety, contractual and service delivery standards that tenants can expect when they rent accommodation. Landlords have to provide electrical and gas safety certificates and where applicable, an energy performance certificate.

CLASS is a member of A&LIST (Authorities and Landlords Improving Standards Together) an accreditation and private rented housing partnership consisting of 36 Local Authorities from the North West, Landlord Associations and Support Agencies.

CLASS works closely with the 3 Universities and colleges to promote accreditation and accredited landlords as well as supporting the Liverpool Student Landlords Code of Practice.

The Council is very keen to provide quality landlords operating within Liverpool with the recognition and support they deserve, so there is no charge to join CLASS and once a landlord becomes a member they can benefit from the following:

- The status of being publicly recognised as a good landlord.
- Free seminars and advice by request on housing related matters.
- Access to a dedicated landlord accreditation officer who is available as a single point of contact for queries.
- HMO Licensing Discounts for properties accredited under CLASS*.
- A&LIST scheme benefits and incentives

*A Landlord may only obtain the licensing discount if they apply for accreditation concurrently with their licence application and the property meets accreditation standards at the time of our verification inspection.

This year, the scheme has run a Landlord Development Course to bring landlords up to date with issues/regulations that affect their business. Topics have included: HHSRS; HMO's and HMO Licensing; Tenancy Deposits; Council Tax; Possession – Understanding the court system and preparing paperwork.

Attendees received a certificate and copy of ANUK's Landlord Handbook.

Myself and Terry, my assistant are "having a go" at the NLA training for Landlords on line course. We are both finding it a very useful resource.

If you want to know more about CLASS please contact:
Sheila Kirk on 0151 225 4814,
Email class@liverpool.gov.uk
www.liverpool.gov.uk/class

The Bath and North East Somerset Property Accreditation Scheme.

A personal perspective by **Charles Garrett**, Property Partnership Officer.

Of the 71,000 households in Bath and North East Somerset, (B&NES), over 60,000 are in the private sector, including an extremely buoyant private sector renting market. This has been driven in part by the expansion of the two Universities and the City of Bath College.

Surveys estimate the number of HMOs to be around 3,000, one of the largest concentrations outside London. These consist primarily of houses converted into self-contained flats and student shared houses. Around 300 of these HMOs are considered licensable under the mandatory scheme and most have already been licensed and are undergoing inspection by our Standards team.

The voluntary Property Accreditation Scheme was launched in 1994 as an alternative to use alongside enforcement to improve the standards in HMOs. To date our records show that we have inspected and Accredited 1865 properties. Around 1600 of these are still live Accreditations. In addition to HMOs we use the scheme as a standard to Accredite properties used in our Homefinder Scheme (housing the homeless in the private rented sector) and in our Supported Lodgings Scheme. We will also advise and Accredite properties where the owner privately lets a room in their house.

In general we require re-Accreditation annually (but not re-inspection). However, with landlords that we know are well organised and reliable, we extend this period to relate to the anniversary date of the Electrical Periodic Inspection Report, up to a maximum of five years.

We have very limited resources on the scheme, in particular on the administration side. We have one half-post admin officer, and when you consider an average of 100 re-Accreditations to be handled each month, including checking re-Accreditation application forms and gas certificates, printing out and laminating the new Accreditation certificates, etc., that in itself amounts to a lot of work.

The next challenge we are addressing is the 600 non-accredited private rented properties which the two universities offer on their accommodation lists. We have been pushing for the universities to insist on Accreditation for these lists for a long time. We now have a tentative agreement that they will go down this route within the next three years. This will be a significant increase in our work load and we are currently considering how we will deal with this.

Using accreditation to deal with the specific issue of crime...

About six years ago we started a combined landlord/student crime forum initiative with the police, which has become 'The Student Crime Reduction Forum and Accreditation Working Group'. The group meets approximately four times a year to discuss "town and gown" issues; crimes against students and student properties and the development of the Accreditation Scheme. This group variously comprises of



interested Councillors, the police and fire brigade, Accreditation and Standards team staff, Council Waste staff, students and student union representatives, landlords, local letting agents, the National Landlords Association and the two Universities Accommodation teams.

This July 'The Student Crime Reduction Forum and Accreditation Working Group' was entertained at

lunch in the Mayor's Parlour in recognition of its contributions to "town and gown" issues.

Portsmouth City Council - Landlord Accreditation Scheme

Seal of approval for good landlords



The standard of private rented accommodation in Portsmouth has been boosted with some 50 landlords joining a scheme this year that promotes and recognises good landlords.

The Council's landlord accreditation scheme, which is also open to agents, was launched in February

2010. It centres on a website which is the main portal for information sharing and includes a fully searchable database listing approved landlords and properties. Web statistics have shows several hundred hits per week.

Landlords who qualify benefit from official recognition and expert help. It is not necessary to have a perfect property at the start of the process; it is the aim of the scheme to improve the private rental stock to a high standard by working with landlords.

Portsmouth Landlord Alwin Oliver, who became one of the first few accredited landlords said: "When I first looked at the requirements for membership they looked quite daunting, particularly as I have several properties that date to the Victorian era, but actually most of the requirements are either common sense or legally required anyway".

Speaking of joining the scheme he continued: "It feels good to have the accreditation seal of approval, which I have used in advertising. I would recommend other landlords to join without hesitation".

Landlords can join the scheme if the council are happy with the condition of their property and the amenities it provides, and if they meet the fit and proper person criteria.

Advantages to landlords and agents including:

- expert advice on issues such as grants and tenancy issues
- energy-saving tips and advice
- a free energy certificate worth about £60 for up to 50 accredited properties
- a listing on the scheme website
- free advertising and promotion of accredited properties on the website
- use of LAS & PCC logos on personal stationery/advertising materials
- free landlord training events:
 - HHSRS training
 - Legal side to Managing your Property
 - Fire safety
 - Running a small business
- as numbers grow, discounts from local suppliers will be sought


Membership is for a three year period. It does attract a small annual admin fee which is dependent on the number of properties owned, starting from £50.

Advantages for tenants include:

- reassurance that quality standards apply
- confidence that facilities and furniture meet set standards for health, safety and comfort
- knowing what services and standards they can expect
- clearly written tenancy agreements with no catches and no hidden costs
- repairs completed quickly and efficiently
- rules for returning bonds at the end of a tenancy
- proper notice for gaining access to do maintenance work
- a courteous service free from sexism or prejudice
- a fair approach to dealing with complaints and disputes

For more information on the scheme:

 www.las.portsmouth.gov.uk

 (023) 9284 1659

 las@portsmouthcc.gov.uk