

# Housing Advice In North Ayrshire



## How do I keep their property for their return?

Find out who their landlord is and contact the landlord to discuss this. Depending on the landlord there can be options available i.e., subletting, transfer of tenancy.

It is important that the landlord is made aware if a person is not living in the property as it is normally a condition of the tenancy agreement. Otherwise, the landlord may take action to end the tenancy and also because the property requires to be secure, and any damage avoided.

It is important to keep in regular contact with the landlord and to provide any updates in respect of the tenant and when they will be able to return to the property.

If they are unable to provide details of their landlord and it is a private rented property details can be found at Scottish Landlord Register website <https://www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk> or if the tenancy is within North Ayrshire you can contact North Ayrshire Council's Housing Advice Team, Tel: 01294 314600, Email: [Housing-info-advice@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Housing-info-advice@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## Can I access the property if I do not have keys?

The landlord would normally require the written consent of the tenant before they can allow you to access the property. Written consent for you to discuss any tenancy matters can be arranged by the Housing Advice Officer based in the prison. If you don't have the keys and are unable to get them from the tenant this will need to be discussed with the landlord and there is likely to be a charge if a lock change is authorised.

## How can I financially support the property for them?

Depending on whether they are on remand or have received a sentence and the length of sentence will determine eligibility for assistance with housing costs i.e., rent.

You should tell your friend or relative within prison to contact the landlord to discuss the rent. They can do this by visiting the link centre within the prison. You can do this for them if they have given permission to the landlord. They can give permission via the link centre.

Your friend or relative within prison can at any time make an appointment with the Prison Housing Advice Worker within the Link Centre who can check entitlement to Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Element and can help set up payment arrangements, negotiate with landlords and check for grant entitlement.

## Do I need to maintain the property in their absence?

Maintaining the property is normally a condition of a tenant's tenancy agreement and it is important to ensure there is no damage to the property if it is empty.

You should contact the landlord to inform them at the very earliest opportunity and to discuss arrangements to maintain the property. This is particularly important during freezing weather when the heating should be turned on low to avoid burst pipes

## What should I do if they can't live with me when they are released from prison?

You should encourage your friend/relative to contact the Prison Housing Advice Worker within the Link Centre at the earliest opportunity which could avoid them having to go into temporary accommodation and present as homeless.

## Other Services Available

- In HMP Kilmarnock there is a North Ayrshire Council Prison Housing Advisor based in the Link Centre who the person in prison can also contact to provide general advice and with permission can discuss personal situations with other members of the family. Our officer can also assist prisoners who are threatened with homelessness on liberation.
- In North Ayrshire, Community Housing Advocacy Service (CHAP), CHAP provides free, confidential, independent advice, information and advocacy support on housing and housing related issues. The service is available to all residents of North Ayrshire. CHAP, The Michael Lynch Centre for Enterprise, 71 Princes Street, Ardrossan. Tel 0300 002 0002 Email: [adviceandinfo.chap@gmail.com](mailto:adviceandinfo.chap@gmail.com)
- In South Ayrshire, Ayr Housing Aid Centre SCIO, 7 York Street, Ayr, KA8 8AN, Tel: 01292 288111 / Text Advice: 07549 603895 provide free, accredited, independent Housing Information, Advice and Advocacy and Engagement Services including help with Housing related benefits such as Housing Benefits, Universal Credit Housing Element, DHP, Council Tax Reductions, discounts and exemptions and do a full benefit check. They can also help set up affordable payment arrangements, negotiate with Landlords and check for grant entitlements. They have a Prison Housing Advice Service based in HMP Kilmarnock and support those in Crisis through Tenure Sustainment.
- In East Ayrshire, Citizens Advice Bureau, 3 Foregate Square, Kilmarnock, KA1 1LN Tel: 01563 544744 / Fax: 01563 574416 provide independent housing information and advice including Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and can assist with any tenancy related matters.

## Housing Options Services

- North Ayrshire Council Housing Options Telephone: 01294 314600  
Website: <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk>
- South Ayrshire Council Housing Options Telephone: 0300 123 0900  
Website: <https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk>
- East Ayrshire Council Housing Options Telephone: 01563 554400, Option 5  
Website: <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk>