



Decision with Statement of Reasons of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) arising from a tenancy under Section 1 Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016

Chamber Ref: FTS/HPC/CV/22/1674

Re: Property at 16 Orangefield Drive, Prestwick, KA9 1HG (“the Property”)

Parties:

Mr Chris Johnston, 4 Pardovan Crescent, Philpstoun, West Lothian, EH49 6RG (“the Applicant”)

Mr Peter Kevin known as Kevin Shields, formerly c/o 3 Alderston Avenue, KA8 9BD current address Unknown, Unknown (“the Respondent”)

Tribunal Members:

Susan Christie (Legal Member)

Decision (in absence of the Respondent)

The First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) (“the Tribunal”) determined that an order for payment by the Respondent to the Applicant of Six Hundred Pounds (£600) be granted.

Background

1. The Applicant applied for an Order for return of a tenancy deposit. The application was accepted by the tribunal on 7 June 2022.
2. Sheriff Officer’s attempted unsuccessfully to serve paperwork on the Respondent at his given care of address of 3 Alderston Avenue, KA8 9BD.
3. A Certificate of Service by Advertisement is dated 27 July 2022 for an advertisement from 27 June 2022.
4. Mr Johnston participated in the Case Management Discussion (CMD) on 27 July 2022 at 10am. The Respondent did not participate.
5. I proceeded with the CMD, the procedure having been fair, and service having been carried out by Advertisement as detailed in the Certificate of Service by Advertisement given to me. I also noted that Sheriff Officer’s attempted unsuccessfully to serve paperwork on the Respondent at his given care of address of 3 Alderston Avenue, KA8 9BD. It was reported to the tribunal that

Sheriff Officer's had been given a telephone number for the Respondent by an occupier at the block and that the officer had spoken to Mr Shields who confirmed that he lived in Denmark but declined to give an address. A copy of the tribunal letter for one of the applications had been sent to him by text message. The Applicant had no new address for the Respondent.

6. The detail of the application was discussed with the Applicant along with the paperwork produced.
7. The Applicant sought an order.

Findings in Fact

- I. A private residential tenancy between the Parties over the Property commenced on 23 May 2018, which was also the date of entry.
- II. A deposit for the tenancy was paid of £600 into a private bank account nominated by the Respondent, around 20 April 2018.
- III. The Applicant's tenancy deposit was not paid into a tenancy deposit approved scheme.
- IV. The tenancy deposit was unprotected for the duration of the tenancy.
- V. The tenancy ended on 22 February 2022.
- VI. The tenancy deposit sum of £600 was never returned to the Applicant.
- VII. The Respondent as the landlord did not comply with Regulation 3 of the Tenancy Deposit Schemes (Scotland) Regulations 2011 and is in breach of the Regulations. As such the Parties did not arbitrate through an approved scheme at the end of the tenancy.
- VIII. The Applicant is entitled to return of the tenancy deposit.
- IX. An order is made for the Respondent to pay the Applicant the sum of £600.

Reasons for Decision

The Application is well founded. A deposit was clearly paid at the outset of the tenancy and not deposited in an approved scheme. Page 12 of the tenancy agreement which is headed 'Short Assured Tenancy Agreement' acknowledges in writing that that the deposit of £600 was paid into a specific numbered account on 20 April 2018 by the Applicant and says, 'this will be kept in a secure account.' There is no mention of the Tenancy Deposit Schemes (Scotland) Regulations 2011 or an approved scheme in the tenancy agreement. The Regulations came into force on 7 March 2011.

The Applicant stated that he became aware near to the end of the tenancy that the Respondent did not appear to be a registered landlord for the Property. He had checked the Landlord Registration website and there was no information for the Property. He had spoken to the local authority. They said there was little they could do at that point. The Respondent had intimated to the Applicant that he intended to sell the Property. The Applicant had called around the approved tenancy deposit scheme providers and none held his deposit. When he had moved out, he sought his deposit back from the Respondent. The communication between them was mostly by WhatsApp. The Respondent said he would look at the Property and if it was okay, he would return the deposit. He then said that some plant pots in the garden had rotted and there was a mark where cooking oil had seeped onto a shelf in the kitchen. The Applicant did not accept responsibility for those items and other minor points

raised by the Respondent. In particular, he stated that the cooking oil bottle had been in the cupboard when he took entry and he had tried to remove the stain. The Respondent did not engage further, did not return any of the deposit to the Applicant and blocked the Applicant from social media channels. The Applicant was unable to contact him on either of the two Danish numbers he had for him. The Applicant was unable to utilise the tenancy deposit protections as the deposit was never placed in an approved scheme.

The Applicant is entitled to return of the tenancy deposit. I make an order for the Respondent pay to the Applicant £600.

Right of Appeal

In terms of Section 46 of the Tribunal (Scotland) Act 2014, a party aggrieved by the decision of the Tribunal may appeal to the Upper Tribunal for Scotland on a point of law only. Before an appeal can be made to the Upper Tribunal, the party must first seek permission to appeal from the First-tier Tribunal. That party must seek permission to appeal within 30 days of the date the decision was sent to them.

Susan Christie

Legal Member/Chair

27 July 2022

Date