https://swapmyfactor.com/swap-factor/

Qualifications and Suitability

Choosing the right property factor is an important decision for any development. Your factor is responsible for managing communal areas, arranging repairs and maintenance, dealing with contractors, administering communal finances and communicating with homeowners.

It is therefore important to establish that the factor you appoint is suitably qualified, experienced and capable of managing your development.

However, qualifications are only one part of the picture. A good factor should also have a strong reputation, appropriate systems, experienced staff and a proven track record of providing a reliable service to homeowners.

Is your factor properly qualified?

When considering a property factor, ask about their qualifications, registrations, professional memberships and experience.

In Scotland, property factors are subject to legal requirements and must comply with the relevant regulatory framework. You should establish that any factor you are considering is properly registered and able to provide the services required by your development.

You should also ask about the experience of the people who will actually be managing your property. A company may have impressive credentials, but it is equally important to understand who will be responsible for your development on a day-to-day basis.

Look at their reputation

The internet provides homeowners with a useful opportunity to research a prospective factor before making a decision.

Search for the company's name on Google and look at its Google reviews and overall reputation.

Don't simply look at the number of stars. Read the reviews themselves.

Look for recurring comments about:

- Communication
- Response times
- Repairs
- Billing
- Staff
- Contractor management
- Insurance
- Complaint handling
- General customer service

It is also worth looking at how the company responds to negative reviews. A professional response to a complaint can tell you a great deal about how a company deals with criticism and difficult situations.

Remember that online reviews are only one source of information. They should be considered alongside other evidence before you make your decision.

Ask for references

One of the best ways to assess a prospective factor is to ask for references from existing developments that they manage.

A good factor should be able to provide suitable references, subject to data protection and the agreement of its existing clients.

If possible, speak directly to an owner or committee member rather than relying solely on testimonials provided by the factor.

Ask them:

Are you happy with your factor?

How good is communication?

Are repairs dealt with promptly?

Are you satisfied with the costs?

How well are contractors managed?

Does the factor attend the development?

How does the factor deal with complaints?

Would you recommend them to another development?

These conversations can provide valuable insight into what it is actually like to work with the factor.

Ask who will manage your development

Don't just choose a company — understand the service you are actually going to receive.

Ask who will be your main point of contact and whether there is a dedicated property manager or site manager.

You should also establish how often the development will be inspected, how emergencies are dealt with and what happens when your usual contact is unavailable.

A good relationship with your factor depends heavily on communication, so you should feel comfortable with the people who will be looking after your development.

Look beyond the price

Cost is obviously important, but the cheapest factor isn't necessarily the best factor.

A low management fee can become much less attractive if communication is poor, repairs take too long, contractors are not properly managed or additional charges are regularly incurred.

When comparing factors, look at the whole service and overall value, not simply the headline monthly or annual management fee.

Ask prospective factors for a clear breakdown of their charges and what is included within their management fee.

Establish expectations from the beginning

The best factor relationships are built on clear expectations.

Before appointing a factor, homeowners should understand:

- **What services are included**
- **What additional charges may apply**
- **How repairs are reported**
- **How emergencies are dealt with**
- **How frequently inspections are undertaken**
- **How contractors are appointed**
- **How insurance is arranged**
- **How homeowners are kept informed**
- **How complaints are handled**
- **How communal finances are administered**

Putting these expectations into a clear agreement helps both homeowners and the factor understand their respective responsibilities.

A good relationship works both ways

Property factoring works best when homeowners and their factor have a professional and constructive relationship.

Homeowners should expect their factor to provide a reliable, transparent and responsive service. At the same time, owners should engage with the factor, report problems, pay properly incurred charges and take an interest in the management of their development.

The right factor should be willing to communicate openly and work with homeowners to maintain and improve the property.

Choosing your factor

Don't choose a property factor based solely on a glossy brochure or the lowest quotation.

Check their credentials. Search their Google reviews. Speak to existing customers. Ask for references. Find out who will manage your development. Compare the services being offered.

Taking a little time to investigate a prospective factor before making a decision can help you avoid problems later.

SwapMyFactor can help you understand what questions to ask and what to look for when choosing a property factor.

Because ultimately, you're not just appointing a company — you're choosing the people you trust to manage your home and your community.

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