

Rent Deposit Scheme – Single People & Couples

The purpose of Rent Deposit Scheme is scheme is to prevent homelessness by offering rent deposit bond assistance to homeless single people and couples who have a local connection to the borough.

The scheme can assist with either a cash deposit or a bond up to the value of the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for single people or couple.

The LHA weekly rates for 2019/20 are:

B.R.M.A.	Room in shared accommodation	Studio/1 bedroom self-contained flat
Outer South West London (152)	£116.91 per week	£241.64 per week
Outer South London (153)	£103.56 per week	£201.37 per week

Under the scheme you will normally only be considered for a deposit for the following property sizes in accordance with the welfare benefit system.

Single people under 35	Room in shared accommodation
Single people over 35	Studio / 1 bedroom property
Couples	Studio / 1 bedroom property

Before you can be considered you must first have a Housing Options interview. We must be satisfied that you can manage a tenancy, both financially and how the property will be looked after.

You must have a local connection with the borough. However the accommodation can be located either in or outside the borough.

If accepted for the scheme you will be issued with a deposit bond offer letter, which will be valid for three months. This can be given to prospective landlords to inform them about the scheme.

You will be responsible for finding your own private rented accommodation. The Rent Deposit Officer will give advice and guidance, assist with setting up the tenancy and issuing the bond or cash deposit, however the scheme cannot assist with on-going tenancy sustainment other than general housing advice.

When a property or room is found, you should advise the Rent Deposit Officer of the property address, rent and deposit, the name, address and contact details of the landlord or letting agent and other relevant details.

The Rent Deposit Officer will then:

- Assess the suitability of the property
- Once satisfied that the letting is going ahead the Rent Deposit Officer will formally confirm the deposit/ bond with the landlord/agent and ensure all

relevant documentation is completed.

- Where you are likely to receive assistance with your rent through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, the Rent Deposit Officer will inform you and the landlord/agent of the local LHA rates. If necessary, they will assist you to complete the relevant applications or direct you to another agency who can do so.
- All tenancies must have a check in / out inventory inspection

You will need to sign the council's charter and bond agreement. This set out the basis we are agreeing to a bond or deposit and how we expect you to manage your tenancy.

If a cash deposit is issued it must be registered with a government approved Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme with EEBC registered as a 3rd party. Cash deposits must be returned to the council at the end of the tenancy.

Generally the scheme does not cover rent in advance, however if you are eligible for Housing Benefit/Universal Credit you may also be eligible for help with DHP to cover rent in advance.

Any accommodation must be of a good physical condition, as required under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Landlords must provide:

- Proof of property ownership
- Gas Safety Certificates (if applicable)
- An electrical safety certificate
- An Energy Performance Certificate
- Permission to let from the mortgage lender
- Smoke Alarms / carbon monoxide detectors
- A written tenancy or licence agreement
- HMO licence (if applicable)

The Rent Deposit Officer can assist the landlord with the Right to Rent Checks. Should the landlord need to claim against the bond, they must claim within 10 days of the end of the tenancy using the council's Rent Deposit Scheme claim form.

Applying to go on the Housing Needs Register

Once you have moved into the property you must ensure that you have either completed an on-line application to join the Housing Needs Register or updated your existing application.

You would **not** be entitled to any additional priority on the Housing Needs Register as a rent deposit household.