RENT DEPOSIT SCHEME FOR HOUSING OPTIONS CUSTOMERS

The Rent Deposit Scheme is a discretionary scheme designed to assist people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. It enables people without financial means to pay a deposit to secure good standard accommodation in the private sector. The amount of assistance available is determined on a case-by-case basis.

WHO CAN APPLY?

You can apply for assistance from the Rent Deposit Scheme if:

You are homeless or threatened with homelessness (you have no permanent or self-contained accommodation or you have no accommodation that you are entitled to occupy or that it would be reasonable to continue to occupy) and;

You have a local connection to the Copeland District/Borough. (This means you have lived in Copeland for at least the past six months or you have family – mother, father, brother, sister or adult son or daughter - who have lived in Copeland for the past 5 years) and;

You haven’t accessed the scheme before or

You have accessed the scheme previously and have complied with the terms and conditions of the scheme or any previous scheme.

HOW TO APPLY

Contact the Housing Options Team initially on 01946 598300 to make an appointment to discuss your situation. A Housing Options Advisor will go through an application with you to confirm your circumstances and decide whether you are eligible for financial assistance.

The Housing Options Advisor will ask you a number of questions and then make further enquiries. You will also be asked to provide certain evidence and information supporting your application. An affordability exercise will also be carried out with you and again you will be asked to provide evidence in support of your application.
WHAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN LOOKING FOR A PRIVATE LET.

When you are looking for a home, you need to be able to afford it. We will carry out an affordability check with you but you will need to know what the weekly rent is and whether or not you are entitled to any Benefit to help you with the rent. Remember that any Benefit you are entitled to may not cover all of the rent due so you would be responsible for paying any shortfall.

Is it suitable?

The property must be suitable for your needs. For example, we would not be able to provide a rent deposit for a single person to move into a three or four bedroom property.

Is it safe and free from disrepair?

We can only provide a rent deposit if the property passes safety and condition requirements.

WHAT TO DO NEXT IF YOU FIND A SUITABLE PRIVATE LET

Do not move in, pay any fees or sign a tenancy agreement until you have had confirmation that your application for a rent deposit has been successful. Contact your Housing Options Advisor who will require the following from you:

1. The address of the property
2. Contact details of the landlord or landlord’s agent
3. The weekly or monthly rent amount
4. The amount required by the landlord to secure the property for you

We will then carry out the affordability interview with you. We will then assess whether the property is both affordable and suitable for you and then arrange for a safety inspection to be carried out.

MOVING IN

Before you move in, you will be required to sign an agreement with Copeland Borough Council that any monetary claim made by the landlord at the end of the tenancy form the rent deposit will be claimed back by us directly from you as the tenant. This means that if the landlord keeps any of the deposit you will have to pay that amount back to us. The landlord will also be required to sign an agreement with us agreeing to meet certain requirements regarding the deposit.

Once one of our inspectors has checked the property, and it has passed the safety requirements, your Housing Options Advisor will arrange to pay the rent deposit directly to the landlord/landlords agent. They must then make arrangements for it to be secured in a recognised Deposit Protection Scheme.
Important. Do not pay any holding/agency fees or sign a tenancy agreement until we confirm in writing that the deposit will be paid. If you do, we will not be able to proceed with your application.