



Arun Housing Services

## A Guide to Arun District Council's Deposit Bond Scheme



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The Council's Housing Options Team works to resolve the housing issues of local people. The Deposit Bond Scheme is one way in which we can help. The Deposit Bond Scheme can assist people who wish to rent privately, but do not have access to the up front deposit payments required by most private landlords and letting agents.

## What is a Deposit Bond?

Landlords and letting agents often require a deposit to cover damage and any rent arrears outstanding at the end of a tenancy. We can provide the landlord or agent with a legal document called a bond which guarantees a sum of money to landlords should they prove a claim when you leave.

## Can you provide fees and rent in advance?

Arun District Council is unable to assist with rent in advance or any fees. Some agencies will ask for reference fees, admin fees or holding fees. You will need to find any fee monies from your own resources. Assistance with rent in advance can be provided via a crisis or budgeting loan from the Department of Work and Pensions. You have to apply directly, forms are available online [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) or via the Job Centre.

## Who qualifies for deposit bond assistance?

Only those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and fall into a priority category and have a local connection with Arun District Council, will be eligible. You must be unable to meet the costs from your own funds. We will ask for proof of your income, savings and identity.

If you are unsure if you are eligible, please telephone the Housing Options Team and arrange to meet a Housing Options officer.

At the meeting, all your housing options can be discussed. The officer will also advise you if you are eligible for assistance via a bond.

## Can I get assistance for any property I like?

In order to receive assistance we will have to be satisfied the property is suitable and affordable. We will check the rent and any shortfall in the Local Housing Allowance where applicable. We will ask you to complete a personal budget sheet so we can assess affordability. We will also check if you have any outstanding debts to Arun District Council including any previous rent deposit loans or housing benefit overpayments.

## How the scheme works

You will need to meet a Housing Options Officer, you can do this at Bognor Regis Town Hall or Arun Civic Centre or you can call **01903 737767**, to assess your current situation and eligibility for the scheme.

The Housing Options Officer will advise you on the Local Housing Allowance and you will be given details of local agents and landlords to contact directly from your housing options pack provided when you made the options appointment. You will need to contact the Housing Options Officer when you have identified a property and the landlord or agent is willing to consider you as a tenant.

## What happens next?

Once we confirm the prospective tenancy you will need to make the first payment before we sign the bond. We will ask you to sign a payment agreement. You will need to agree to pay us a monthly payment based on your income. The money goes into an account and will be used towards any claim made by the landlord when you leave the property.

Once you have saved the sum equal to the value of the bond, the monies will be passed over to your landlord or agent, who will register the money with an appropriate deposit scheme, from this point Arun District Council will have no part in this agreement.

We will ask the landlord or agent to sign a bond agreement and at the same time ask you to sign a payment agreement.

We will also ask the landlord to provide us with a property inventory, and a copy of the tenancy agreement after the tenancy has commenced for our records.