DERBY CITY COUNCIL

one Derby one council

Housing Options in the Private Rented Sector

The Housing Options Centre offers comprehensive assistance and advice for people with a local connection to Derby who are trying to secure a home in the private rented sector.

As the demand for properties in the private sector increases, Housing Options have introduced a number of schemes and new ways of working to source these properties and help people secure tenancies. These include;

The Bond Assurance Scheme

Where a tenant does not have the money to lodge a bond or deposit with the landlord, Housing Options provides a written assurance to the landlord that, if damage is caused by a tenant to the property within the first 12 months, the landlord can claim for this to be paid by Derby City Council. The maximum amount paid out is equivalent to one months rent and any monies paid out will be recoverable from the tenant.

Since starting the Bond Assurance Scheme in 2007, Housing Options have assisted **628 households** to secure a home in the private sector.

Households using the bond scheme will have any housing benefit they are entitled to **paid direct to the landlord**.

The Rent in Advance Scheme

If a tenant will be entitled to housing benefit, Housing Options can make the first months rent payment direct to the landlord at the start of the tenancy. This amount will then be recovered from the first housing benefit payment once the claim is assessed.

Homeless Prevention

Housing Options staff are constantly looking at innovative ways to prevent households from becoming homeless. These have included;

- Early intervention and contact to mediate between families
- Contacting landlords where eviction may have been threatened
- Financial assistance for agency fees
- Small short term loans for cash bonds
- Payment toward minor works and repairs in properties
- Money/benefits advice

Housing Benefit Liaison

At the Housing Options Centre, we have a dedicated Housing Benefit Liaison Officer, able to assist tenants claim their benefit or follow up any queries.

Private Sector Advice

Staff at HOC are on hand to offer a wide range of advice including the following;

- Changes in benefit legislation affecting tenants
- Responsibilities of landlords and tenants
- Property standards required inline with the Housing Health & Safety Rating System

For information about any of the above, please contact Rebecca Goddard, Dean Lineker or Keely Hedley at The Housing Options Centre 01332 256483