

Briefing Note

Tenancy Deposits

The council last took tenancy deposits back in the early 1980's.

The principle of taking deposits had become unworkable as the council had and still has statutory responsibilities to rehouse through homelessness legislation and through the statutory allocations scheme where we have to give reasonable preference to specified households in housing need. We could not refuse to house someone because they could not pay a tenancy deposit.

As a registered provider of social housing we are not alone in this situation, and the Principal Housing Manager has done some investigation as to see what other registered providers are doing. The "housing associations" seem to be looking at introducing tenancy deposits in the "affordable housing" sector that is now being created but not in their social rented stock. They are also running deposit schemes on their "market rent" "intermediate rent" "affordable rent" schemes held in a recognised deposit scheme. Tenancy/rent deposits are a regulated area.

The council actually currently plays a role in providing "tenancy deposits" to support people getting a "private rented" property through a local Deposit Guarantee Scheme via the YMCA.

Currently the council incentivises out-going tenants through a "reward scheme" where if a tenancy is left in a clean and tidy condition, with no rechargeable repairs or debts that we award £75 to the tenant. This is something that could be revisited to offer a greater incentive.

Over the forthcoming year we are looking at the issues of re-chargeable repairs and also putting voids under scrutiny again and undertaking a reality audit with our "tenant inspectors" - this process will come up with issues and recommendations.

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Principal Housing Manager
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