

- 1) Does your Local Authority operate a Rent Deposit Scheme (financial support to residents to help them access accommodation in the private rented sector)?
- Wigan Council has operated a Deposit Assistance Scheme since August 2020, whereby we provide a non-cash deposit (or bond) to the landlord on behalf of the tenant, to be claimed against in the event of any damage, or losses to, the property. The bond does not cover rental arrears.
- Financial support i.e. cash deposits are only considered for vulnerable persons/specific cohorts such as care leavers, ex-offenders, persons fleeing domestic abuse and move-on's from temporary accommodation (this list is not exhaustive), when the standard bond offer is not acceptable or suitable.
- 2) If so, is your scheme operated as:
- a) a loan (expectation of repayment),
 b) a grant (no expectation of repayment) or
 c) a combination of the two.
- b) When financial support is provided, there is no expectation of repayment from the tenant. Provisions have been made however to ensure that the rental deposit returns to the Council upon the end of the tenancy (minus any deductions/claimed sums).
- As above, the Council's lead offer is the non-cash bond.
- 3) What was the total value of loans and/or grants paid under the scheme in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22
- There were no loans/grants paid under the scheme from 2018-2022, as cash deposits have only been available from this financial year 2022/23.
- Total value of bond claims:
 2020/21: £252
 2021/22: £2,744
- 4) How many loans and/or grants were awarded in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22
- As above, no loans/grants were awarded from 2018-22.
- Non-cash deposits/bonds issued:
 2020/21: 6
 2021/22: 28
- 5) If your scheme requires repayment from residents, what was the outstanding debt owed to the Council in relation to the scheme in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22?
- The scheme does not require repayment from tenants, as above.
- 6) Excluding payments detailed in question 3, what is the annual cost of operating the scheme (staffing, administration costs) including debt recovery undertaken by council staff if applicable.
- In the region of £15,000 per annum – please note this is an approximate estimate, based on staff time.
- (Note: If you do not have the means to calculate an exact cost or if doing to will exceed the time limit for FOI responses, please provide an estimate)*
- 7) Has the Council commenced legal proceedings against residents to recover debt owed in relation to this scheme in the past four years.
- No
- 8) If so, please advise how many residents have been subject to proceedings during this time?
- N/A