

Rent & Deposit Guarantee Scheme (RDGS)



What is the RDGS?

The Scheme was set up in Colchester to provide single homeless people with a deposit bond to enable them to secure accommodation in the private sector. It aims to provide resources to offer applicants increased opportunities and choice.



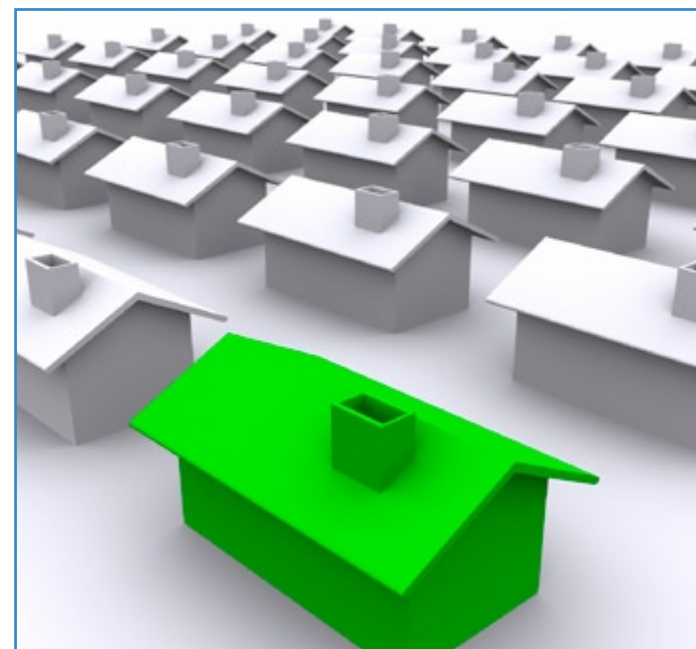
Working in Partnership with
Colchester Borough Council & The National Probation Service



How does it work?

Anyone wishing to be accepted for the RDGS must be assessed by Colchester Borough Council's housing options team situated in the Homechoice shop on the High street. As part of the assessment the council will check that they do not have a duty to offer you accommodation and that you are not suitable for any other accommodation.

- Stage 1:** assessment by Colchester Borough Council
- Stage 2:** provide suitable references
- Stage 3:** approved application is sent to the April Centre
- Stage 4:** your application is put on a waiting list
- Stage 5:** you are contacted by the April Centre to discuss your needs and matched to suitable accommodation
- Stage 6:** you view the property and meet the landlord / you will only be offered one property
- Stage 7:** upon receipt of your administration fee you sign up for the property



Eligibility

Not everyone is suitable for the Schemes and every application is assessed on an individual basis. In order to be assessed as suitable for the schemes each applicant must satisfy the following criteria:

- **You must be homeless**
- **You must be 25 years of age or over**
- **You must have a local connection with the borough of Colchester**
- **You should be able to maintain a tenancy, and be able to live independently**
- **You are not owed a housing duty under the homelessness law**

In addition to the above, satisfactory references must be provided along with any other relevant additional information.

What does the April Centre do?

The April Centre administers the scheme on behalf of Colchester's Housing Forum. We also explore the needs of each applicant in order to maximise the future success of the relationship between the landlord and tenant. Our primary aim is to provide applicants with appropriate and manageable accommodation in order to minimise the risk of an unsuccessful tenancy. By doing this we are not only safeguarding the tenants future but also the landlords property along with the scheme funds to allow us to continue to provide privately rented accommodation to those in need. Our input does not stop once we have found a suitable tenant. We are also able to:

- Issue tenancy agreements
- Provide initial support once accommodation has been taken up
- Complete housing benefit forms and liaise with the council



- Refer to appropriate agencies for ongoing or specialist support
- Advise both tenants and landlords in dispute
- A tenant advocacy service
- Assist tenants to maximise their income

What type of accommodation do the schemes have to offer?

We currently have a wide range of accommodation which includes

- Bedsits
- Lodgings
- House shares
- Studio flats
- 1 bed flats/bed houses

Most of our accommodation is to be found in and around the Colchester area, all of the bedsit accommodation is in the town centre.

What costs are involved?

All applicants are charged an administration fee which is payable on the day on which you sign up for your accommodation. The fee is;

- £30 for Bedsit/Lodgings/House share accommodation
- £50 for self contained accommodation
- £20 is for people moving from bedsits into self contained accommodation

All fees collected by the April Centre are paid back into the RDGS fund and reissued as guarantees.

No Fee No tenancy



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