

Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme



**OPERATIONS
MANAGER'S**

ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 29 years of
'HELPING TO PREVENT HOMLESSNESS'

2024-2025



Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme,
The HUB, Easton Street, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1NJ

Tel: 01494 528557 Email: info@wycrent.org.uk Web: wrdds.org.uk

ABOUT THE CHARITY



WRDGS

The Office

2nd Floor,

The Hub,

Easton Street,

High Wycombe,

Buckinghamshire, HP11 1NJ

Email: info@wycrent.org.uk

Tel: 01494 528557

WEB: wrdgs.org.uk

The Hub & the Union Baptist Church are next to Easton Street Multi-storey Car Park.

Exit at the side of the Multi-storey Car Park on level 1 & WRDGS entrance is 20 m down the path. Press the intercom & we'll come & let you in.

- Access by appointment only



The early planning stages of the Scheme were started in 1995 by a partnership between the members of The Wycombe District Council Housing Forum and The Source Group - a lay ecumenical Christian covenant community based in High Wycombe.

The Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme is a charity set up to help people in Buckinghamshire, who are on a low income and homeless or in housing need, access rented accommodation in the private sector. The main purpose of the Scheme is to provide an alternative to the cash deposit normally required by a landlord, in the form of a Guarantee which can be claimed against instead of making deductions from a pre-paid deposit. This can help those who are able to pay rent, for example if they qualify for Universal Credit Housing Costs, but who cannot afford a deposit.

The Scheme is financed by Buckinghamshire Council, The Guinness Partnership Limited, funds raised by the churches of Wycombe, grants from external organisations and from private donations

In 2024/25 we celebrated 29 years of helping to prevent homelessness in Wycombe District and more recently Buckinghamshire.

This year we have provided highly specialised advice via 338 meetings with clients, some in person and some remotely. Some of our clients have only contacted us once, whilst we speak to others on a weekly basis.

We have housed 58 households with 8 different landlords. Utilising our tenancy support service, most of our clients have renewed their tenancies without a guarantee being required, indicating our landlords consider them to be reliable tenants.

We have helped 13 households rescue their tenancies and 57 households to sustain their tenancies thus preventing them from becoming homeless. Thanks must go to Buckinghamshire Council Housing Benefit Department for providing advice & Discretionary Housing Payments & also to the Wycombe Homeless Connection Housing Legal Clinic. We have provided specialist benefit & housing advice for this project for many years.

VISION & MISSION

Vision

“

*Helping to
prevent
homelessness*

”

Mission

“

- To recruit more accommodation providers
- To secure permanent long-term funding and put us in a more secure financial position.
- To improve the conditions in private rented accommodation, especially Houses in Multiple Occupation, by ensuring that reasonable standards are met.
- To recognise that, when seeking accommodation, certain groups and individuals are discriminated against and to oppose such discrimination.
- Through good management to maintain our low claim rate.
- To strive to improve our service.

”

OUR TEAM



PHIL THOMAS

Operations Manager

TRACEY THOMAS

Client Officer



CHALLENGES IN 2023-2024

"Over the past year, the number of people who died while homeless in the UK rose by 9%, reaching a record high of 1,611 deaths."

Also, in the past year, residential property rental prices in our area have increased by approximately 9.6%. Consequently, the gap between Local Housing Allowance and market rates has grown even wider. Combined with the rising cost of living, this has made it increasingly difficult for our clients to find affordable accommodation. Despite these challenges, we successfully helped to house 57 households. However, we've seen a notable increase in our tenancy sustainment and rescue work as more people struggle to keep their homes.

We're actively supporting Buckinghamshire Council in delivering the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Our Operations Manager chairs the Rough Sleepers Core Group—a multi-agency team that meets fortnightly to help rough sleepers access suitable housing. Through funding from the Rough Sleepers Initiative, we support individuals on their journey out of homelessness by covering rent in advance or clearing previous arrears, enabling them to enter local hostels. Once they've achieved a period of stability, we assist them in securing affordable private rental properties by paying rent in advance and alongside offering ongoing support to help them sustain their tenancies.

Additionally, we continue to provide expert housing and benefits advice at Wycombe Homeless Connection's weekly Legal Housing Clinic.

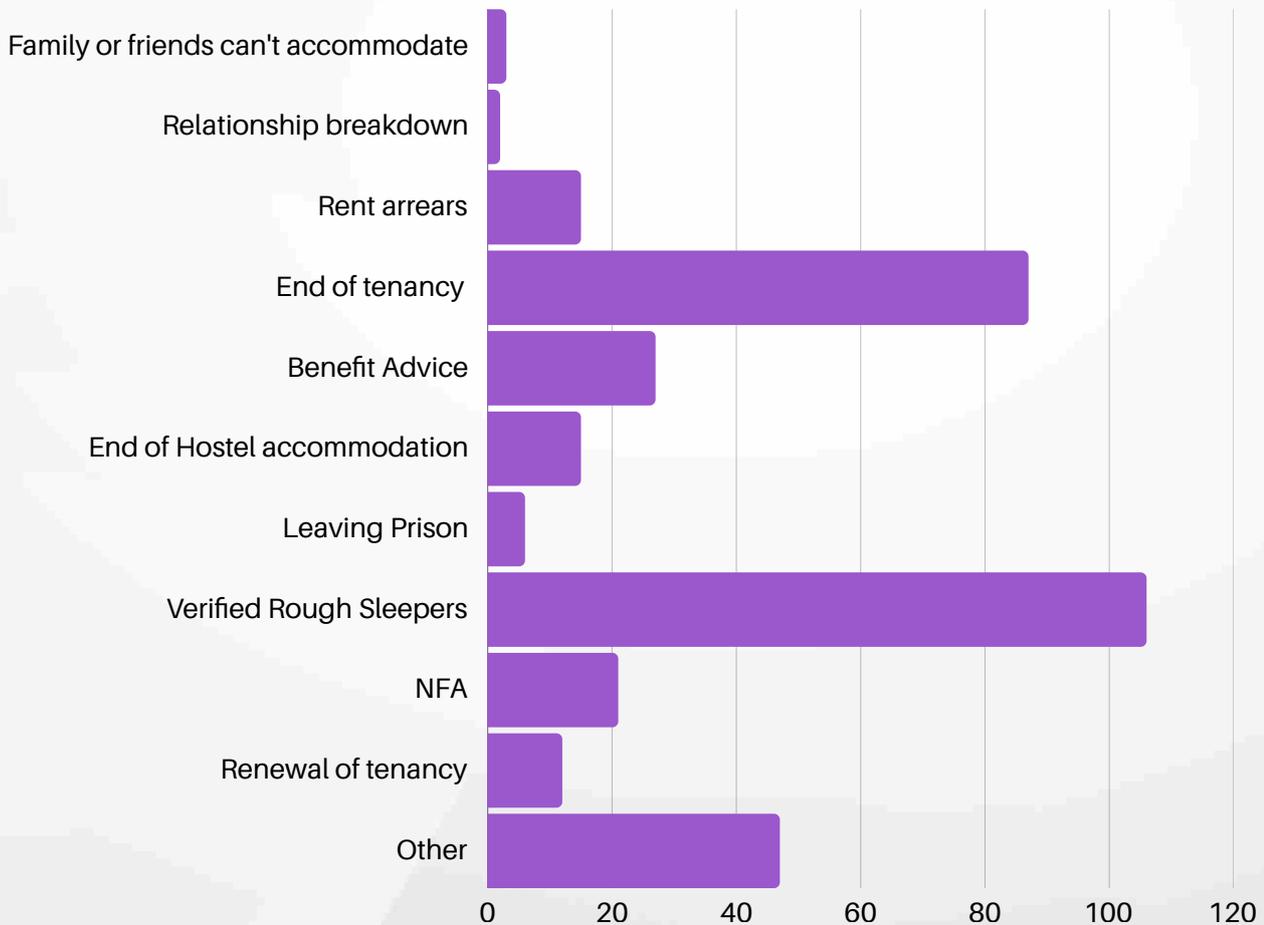
GUARANTEED FUNDS

In the 2024/25 financial year the total value of new guarantees written by the scheme was £7,360.00. By the end of 2024/25 the total value of Guarantees written by the Scheme since its inception was £ 447,954.48 with a total claim pay out of £4,863.26.

This makes the Scheme's average claim rate 1.09%
A copy of the Scheme's accounts is available on request

SCHEME APPLICANTS

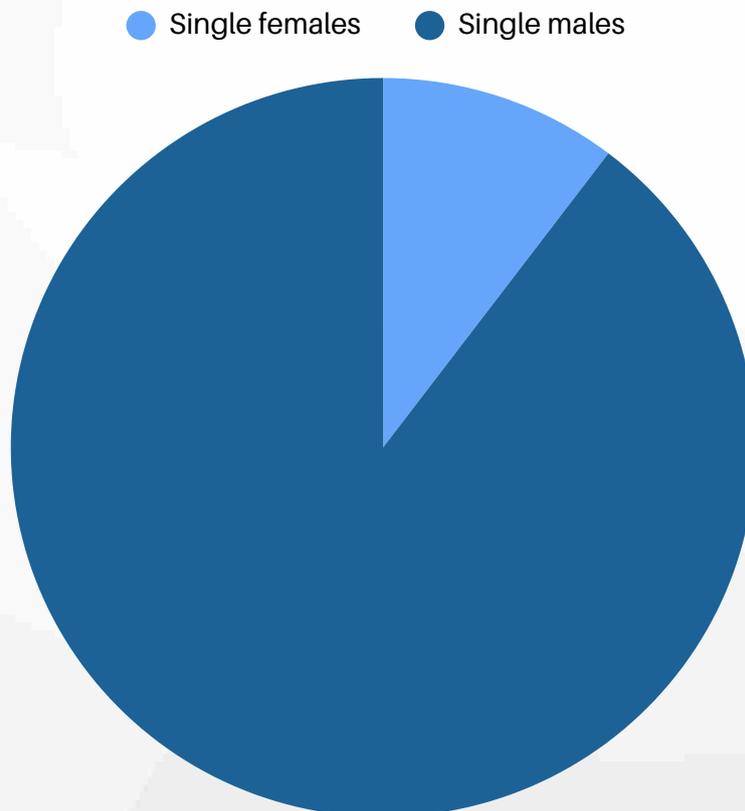
The following chart shows the reason why contact was made in 2024 - 2025



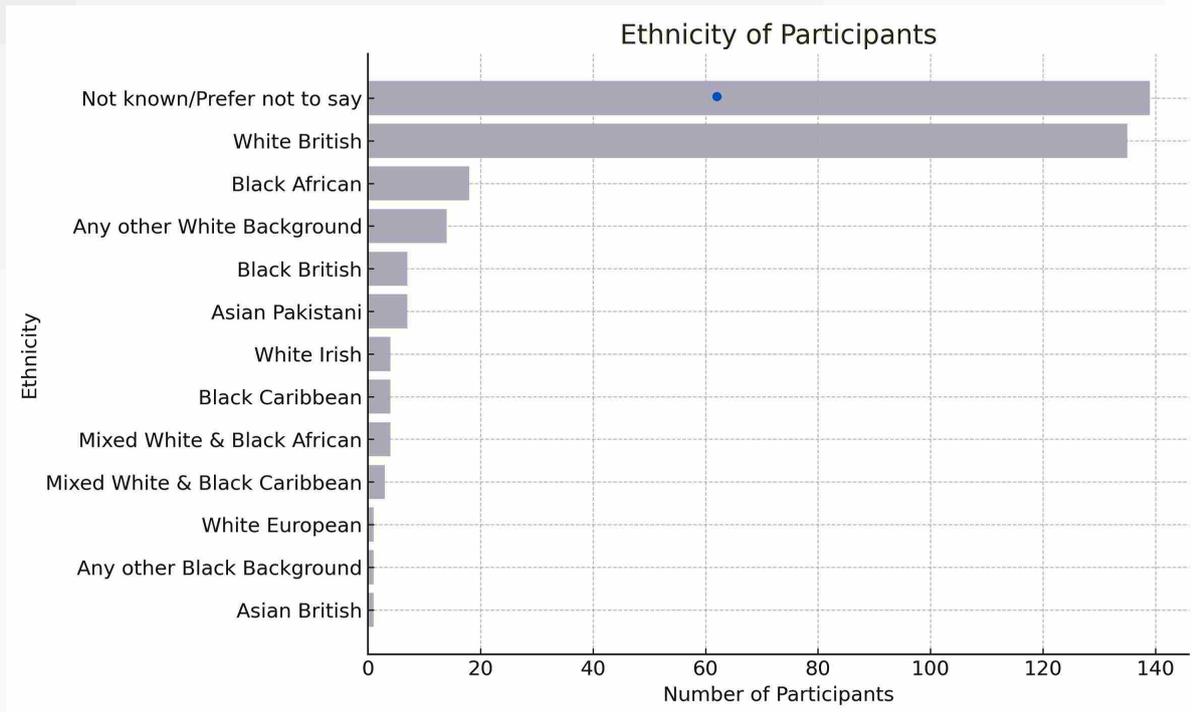
PEOPLE HELPED BY THE SCHEME IN 2024-2025

By the end of 2024-2025, the Scheme had HOUSED 1850 households, a total of 2023 adults and 757 children housed. Of these, 58 households (58 Adults and 0 child) were new to the Scheme and 7 households (7 Adults and 0 child) renewed their tenancies with the help of the Scheme. By the end 2024-2025, the Scheme had RESCUED 719 clients' tenancies. Of these 13 were new in 2024-2025. We have also helped to SUSTAIN 528 tenancies in order to keep clients in their accommodation who would have been at risk of becoming homeless. Of these 57 were new in 2024-2025

The graph below shows the breakdown by household type of people housed by the Scheme this year



The graph shows the ethnic breakdown of clients who approached the Scheme in 2024 -2025



In 2024–2025, the Scheme successfully supported both landlords and tenants in renewing 7 Assured Shorthold Tenancies. Once again, there were no claims made against any of our deposits—clear evidence that, with our guidance, tenants are proving to be reliable and financially responsible.

Our landlords continue to value the free, expert support offered by our Operations Manager, a Fellow of the National Association of Estate Agents, whose professional oversight ensures smooth tenancy renewals and encourages long-term, positive landlord-tenant relationships.

Clients have been referred to us by the following organisations:

Buckinghamshire Council Housing Team
Buckinghamshire Council Customer Service Center
Buckinghamshire Adult Social Care
Citizens Advice Bureau
Connection Support and RESET
Chiltern Adult Mental Health Team
GP Surgeries - Social Prescribers
HM Prison & Probation Service
Job Centre Plus
One Recovery Bucks
Old Tea Warehouse
One YMCA
Private Sector Landlords
Saunderton Lodge Hostel
Thames Valley Police
Wycombe Homeless Connection
Wycombe Women's Aid
Youth Enquiry Service

CASE STUDIES

SECURING FOUR TENANCIES SIMULTANEOUSLY

A landlord approached us with a four-bedroom property, seeking potential clients for occupancy. After discussions with a local hostel, they referred three refugees who had been found sleeping rough after being granted indefinite leave to remain. The fourth client was also a refugee experiencing homelessness and residing in emergency accommodation. Utilizing funds from the Rough Sleepers Initiative, we provided rent in advance, a landlord incentive, and financial assistance for purchasing furniture and bedding. Within a few weeks of securing their new tenancies, all four clients successfully found employment.

FROM HOMELESSNESS TO STABILITY

We also assisted two separate clients who had been found sleeping rough and placed into emergency accommodation. Both were housed in a local hostel, where we contributed a modest amount to cover their initial expenses. Both clients were older than the typical residents at this hostel. Subsequently, we were approached by a landlord, who was developing two new flats so we recommended these clients for consideration. Following interviews, both clients were successfully placed in the new accommodation, thereby freeing up space at the hostel for additional potential clients.

A DIFFICULT TRANSITION; TENANTS AFFECTED BY SALE OF THEIR HOME

A long-standing landlord decided to sell two of his properties. Although the new landlord initially indicated his intention to retain the tenants, eviction notices were served to all the residents. Many of these tenants sought assistance from our scheme to facilitate this transition. We helped some apply to local hostels while we rehoused others into affordable private sector accommodation. Additionally, several were referred to the Buckinghamshire Council housing team for further support.

LANDLORDS

The Scheme incentivises Private Landlords by offering them a monetary reward to accommodate clients who have faced difficulties in finding housing due to a chaotic lifestyle and a background of homelessness.

SUPPORT

Clients referred for on-going support to:

Buckinghamshire Council (buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Central Aid Society (central-aid.org.uk)

Wycombe Homeless Connection (www.wyhoc.org.uk)

Connection Support (connectionsupport.org.uk)

Vicars Relief Fund - St Martin-in-the-Fields | Supporting people away from homelessness (smitfc.org)

One Recovery Bucks (onerecoverybucks.org)

One YMCA High Wycombe Hostel (oneymca.org.uk)

Old Tea Warehouse (riverside.org.uk)

Financial support was gratefully received this year from various organisations, to include:



Union Baptist Church
High Wycombe



YOU TOO CAN HELP US

WE ALWAYS NEED MORE ACCOMMODATION - If you have anything from a room to a 4-bedroom house available to let please get in touch and we will try to find you a suitable tenant FREE OF CHARGE.

WE ALWAYS NEED MORE FUNDS as we are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, so please remember us when you are fundraising. We are always grateful for one-off or regular donations so please consider making a quarterly or monthly donation by Standing Order. You could make your donation even more valuable by completing a Gift Aid declaration. If you are a U.K. taxpayer WRDGS can then claim back 25p in the pound from the Tax Office. Please contact our office on 01494 528557 for further details or a gift aid declaration form.

TO MAKE A DONATION

Donations can be paid into our bank:

Account Name: Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme

Account Number: 00033669

Sort Code: 40-52-40



Donate by scanning the QR code

Making a donation via

<https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/wycomberentdepositguaranteescheme>

Registering with <https://www.giveasyoulive.com/> ,
choosing charity “Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee
Scheme” with charity number 1171222 and using this
whenever you shop or book holidays online

For further information please refer to the Schemes
web site at <http://www.wrdgs.org.uk>

Thank
YOU!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Phil Thomas, the Scheme's Operations Manager, would like to express his sincere thanks and appreciation to the following for their help and support during the past year:

THE SCHEME'S STEERING COMMITTEE: -

Catriona Plummer Trustee nominated by Wycombe Churches Together (Chair of Trustees)

Cllr. Paul Turner Trustee nominated by Buckinghamshire Council

Nancy Bradshaw Trustee (Fundraising)

Clive Bradshaw Trustee (Secretary)

Eddie Maguire Trustee (Treasurer)

THANKS ALSO TO: -

Anthony Pearmain Web site design & I.T. Consultant @ StratMetrix

Sharon Marshall Keeping Books 4 U for running our payroll

Steve Potts Independently examining our Accounts

All the Landlords and Landladies who have housed our clients.

Buckinghamshire Council for different grants throughout the year including our Annual Revenue Grant

Connection Support, Hillingdon Law Centre , One YMCA, The Old Tea Warehouse, Wycombe Homeless Connection, Everyone at Union Baptist Church & The HUB, Buckinghamshire Council Housing Team and Tracey Thomas for all her inspiration & hard work. Last but especially not least: Tracey, Iain, Robert & everyone at Buckinghamshire Council Housing Benefit Team.

OUR GENEROUS DONORS

St Augustine's Church, R. Balacanta, E. Ball, J. Briggs, C. and W. Bunting, S. Connolly, G & H Dodgson, N. Hanbury, P. Hogwood, St John Henry Newman Parish, St Peters Church Loudwater, Deacon P. Priestley, W.& C. Plummer, K. Russell, P. Webb.

To all those who donated at our Tombola @ Downley Day

To all those who donated at our Swan Theatre collection bucket

A special thank you to West Wycombe Chamber Choir for their generous donation and continued support.

Together with all the donors who have wished to remain anonymous.



Thank You for your continued support

**WYCOMBE RENT
DEPOSIT GUARANTEE
SCHEME**



Charitable Incorporated Organisation - No. 1171222
(Previously Charitable Trust – No. 1054725)