

Benefits Update September 2011

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LHA Changes

Current LHA Rates

- Inner North & West London
- 1st – 31st October 2011
- Direct Gov - LHA

1 Room Shared Facilities	£89.50	(£387.83)
1 Bedroom Rate	£250.00	(£1083.33)
2 Bedroom Rate	£290.00	(£1256.67)
3 Bedroom Rate	£340.00	(£1473.33)
4 Bedroom Rate	£400.00	(£1733.33)

Current LHA Rates

- Outer North
- 1st – 31st October 2011
- Direct Gov - LHA

1 Room Shared Facilities	£80.77	(£350.00)
1 Bedroom Rate	£173.08	(£750.01)
2 Bedroom Rate	£230.00	(£996.67)
3 Bedroom Rate	£288.46	(£1249.99)
4 Bedroom Rate	£350.00	(£1516.67)

Existing Claims from before April 2011 – no break in claim

- All have been subject to lower LHA rates since they claimed but transitionally protected for 9 months as long as there is no significant change to their claim
- From January 2012:
 - Transitional Protection begins to be removed when 9 months TP is up
 - 25-35 Year olds will be subject to Shared Room Rate from when 9 months TP is up
 - Sooner if they break their claim or have a change of address
- Removal of £15 excess from first anniversary after April 2011

New Claims since April 2011

- All have been subject to lower LHA rates since they claimed
- From January 2012:
 - 25-35 Year olds will be subject to Shared Room Rate from next Anniversary Date
 - Sooner if they break their claim or have a change of address

Customer Communications

- Initial Claimant mail shot explaining the main changes
- Initial Landlord mail shot
- Briefed at landlord forum
- Updated Haringey Website
- Include links to LHA Direct, DWP and Direct Gov sites, BACS take up and opening bank accts.
- Rolling Programme of Claimant Notifications of Transitional Protection ending

Staff Awareness

- Training Package for Staff has been developed
- Delivered to Customer Services and Housing
- Policy/procedure/briefings for HB staff.

Money Management / Direct Payment safeguards

- New Safeguard Policy
- Encourage claimants to change to BACs
- Advise on how to open bank accounts
- Homefinder links

DHP

- DHP fast-tracking
- DHP Appeals
- Review DHP spend on an ongoing basis.
- Agree spend profile

Partnership Working

- Identify vulnerable customers
- Close working with Housing
- Keep advice agencies updated with the main changes
- Provide support to Advice Agencies

North London Partnership

- DWP Funded to provide tenant Advice and Support – referrals taken from boroughs
- Landlord Support & Negotiation
- Barnet, Enfield, Waltham Forest, Islington, Westminster, Camden
- Staff Based at Islington Peoples Rights
- 3 Staff on site at IPR
- 3 Staff floating Support – likely 1 day per week at Haringey