Welfare Reform Practical Support Team

Landlord Forum
Tuesday 19 February 2013
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Private Sector Lettings Team Leader
Welfare Reform Practical Support Team

- Multi agency team
- Based at Apex House
- Learning from the successful LHA Practical Support Hub
  - 68% prevention rate
- 2 main areas of work:
  - Validating the DWP scan/information
  - Working with identified households
The team

- Financial Advisers
- Support Workers
- Co-location with Job Centre Plus staff
- Close links to Housing Benefit Service
- Children’s Social Care input
  - Safeguarding
  - Haringey Families First
- Health
- Keep under review – other services committed to co-locate as needed
Work with affected households

- Establishing the situation
  - Is there any reason for exemption, should they be on the list etc

- Checking income, likely level of loss and affordability

- Options available – case by case:
  - Job Centre Plus - advice on employment options, training schemes, removing barriers to work
  - Support to apply for exempting benefits
  - For TA – permanent accommodation – support to bid?
  - Options for downsizing e.g. Income Project
  - Negotiations with landlords
  - Support with DHP applications
  - If need to move, resettlement and tenancy support

- Consideration of vulnerability issues
Approach

- Trying to reach households before the cap is applied
  - Visited potentially affected households in TA
  - Visits to private sector tenants:
    - Households facing the largest reductions
    - Homefinder cases
    - Haringey Families First

- HB will notify us when households appear on the list for capping so we can contact anyone who we aren’t already working with
Introduction of the cap

- Letters have been sent to affected residents by the DWP
- From 15 April 2013 the cap will be introduced for new and existing claimants via a deduction from Housing Benefit
- DWP will send a list of cases to be capped to the Housing Benefit Service – case will be capped and household written to
- HB will notify the team and the household will be contacted
What we know

- Approximately 442 private sector tenancies affected by the cap
  - 6 where the cap is over £500
  - 4 between £400 and £500
  - 22 between £300 and £400
  - 49 between £200 and £300
  - 110 between £100 and £200
  - 148 between £30 and £100
  - 103 between £0 and £30
What we are doing

- We know the tenants
- We know the landlords
- We have started at the biggest caps and are working our way through all of them.
- Affects mostly 3 bed or bigger properties
Local Housing Allowance

• 3 bed
  £300 per week
  £1200 - 4 weekly
  £1300 pcm

• 4 bed
  £369.23 per week
  £1476.92 - 4 weekly
  £1600 pcm
Landlord advice Line

020 8489 1010

Tenant advice line

020 8489 8600
Home Finder Scheme

What we offer

• £2000 incentive for a two year fixed term tenancy
• £1250 incentive for a one year fixed term tenancy
• Tenancy training
• 6 month floating support
• Direct housing benefit payments
Home Finder Scheme

What we need

• All safety certificates – gas, epc, electric
• Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)
• Hard wired smoke detectors
• Carbon monoxide alarms
• Fit and proper landlord checks