

**The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011**

**(SI 2011/1736)**

**Report by the Social Security Advisory Committee under Section 174 (1)  
of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 and the statement by the  
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in accordance with Section  
174(2) of that Act**



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*Presented to Parliament pursuant to  
Section 174(2) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992*

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## **Statement by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in accordance with section 174 (2) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992**

### **Introduction**

1. The Government referred the draft Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011 to the Social Security Advisory Committee on 4 May 2011 in accordance with Section 172 (1) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992.

2. These proposed regulations were to give effect to the Government's announcement in the October 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review that it would extend the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate to people under the age of 35. The shared accommodation rate currently applies to people under the age of 25 living in the private rented sector. These proposed regulations are referred to in this document as "the shared accommodation rate changes".

3. This change follows reforms to the Housing Benefit Local Housing Allowance rules, announced in the 2010 Emergency Budget and introduced from 1 April 2011, which include:

- removing the five bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate so that the maximum level is for a four bedroom property;
- introducing weekly Local Housing Allowance caps to the level of payments for different sized properties; and
- setting Local Housing Allowance rates at the 30th percentile of rents in each Broad Rental Market Area rather than the median.

4. Proposals for regulations to implement the 2010 Emergency Budget were referred to the Social Security Advisory Committee in July 2010. The Committee invited comments on the proposals and then reported to the Secretary of State for Work on Pensions in October 2010. In its response<sup>1</sup> to the Committee's report the Government confirmed that it would give existing claimants up to nine months transitional protection from the date the Housing Benefit claim is reviewed by the local authority to help them adjust to any reduction in entitlement as a result of the reforms. Regulations to implement the 2010 Emergency Budget were made in November<sup>2</sup>. As a result of the nine months transitional protection these regulations will start to affect existing claims from January 2012.

5. Some claimants who have been claiming since before April 2011 will be affected by both the Local Housing Allowance changes and, once implemented, the shared accommodation rate changes. The Government announced on 28 March 2011 that it intended to bring forward the shared accommodation rate changes by three months to take effect from January 2012, rather than April 2012 as had originally been announced.

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<sup>1</sup> Published 30 November 2010:

<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/other/9780108509551/9780108509551.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2010 No 2835 and the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Amendment Order 2010 No 2836 laid before Parliament on 30 November 2010.

This ensures that those claimants experience only a single reduction in their Housing Benefit. Single people aged at least 25 but under the age of 35 reaching the end of their transitional protection period will avoid having two separate reductions in quick succession.

6. The shared accommodation rate changes are an integral part of our Housing Benefit reforms designed to help reduce Government expenditure and secure a more sustainable Housing Benefit system in the future. Housing Benefit is a significant part of overall social security expenditure. It has doubled in cash terms from £11bn in 2000/01 to over £21.5 billion in 2010/11. If unreformed, expenditure on Housing Benefit would reach nearly £25 billion in cash terms by 2014 -15. So it is absolutely essential that we bring this spending under control.

7. The change to Housing Benefit for people under the age of 35 will produce a fairer system of support that reflects the housing expectations of people of a similar age who are not on benefits.

8. The Government is very grateful to the Committee for its report and to those who submitted views on the proposals. The issues raised by the Committee on the extension of the shared accommodation rate have been considered carefully. While the Government recognises that the Committee has significant concerns about this change it has decided to proceed with the change. However, the Government has accepted some of the Committee's recommendations in full or in part as indicated below.

9. This statement sets out, in accordance with section 174(2) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992, the reasons why the Government has not felt it appropriate to accept the Committee's recommendations in full on this occasion.

## The Committee's Report

10. The Committee's report recommends that the Government should not go ahead with the proposals in their current form. The Committee raised a number of concerns about the supply and availability of shared accommodation. It also commented on the impact of this change on a wide variety of individuals with very different needs and the level of financial loss that some would experience. The report noted that there was little scope for those affected by these changes currently living in self-contained accommodation to renegotiate their rents and that many would have to seek alternative accommodation.

11. In the report's introduction the Committee reiterates that the concerns that it first expressed when the shared accommodation rate was introduced in 1996 have remained broadly unchanged. The availability and suitability of shared accommodation for everyone in the target group and the lack of evidence on the likely impacts of this measure remain a concern.

12. The Committee questioned the rationale put forward by the Department for Work and Pensions for this change that it will ensure that Housing Benefit rules reflect the housing expectations of people of a similar age not on benefits. In their view the circumstances of the claimant group to be affected do not necessarily reflect those of people of a similar age who are not on benefits.

13. In its comments on the Department's impact assessment the Committee notes that the Department can say very little about the characteristics of older sharers. The Committee concludes that it is reasonable to assume that the majority will be older students and younger professionals who choose to share for a mixture of social and financial reasons, are generally not in the Housing Benefit claimant group, and who are attractive to the commercial landlords who specialise in 'group' lets.

14. The Committee notes that provision for dealing with both individual hard cases and groups that by definition are likely to have special needs has been left to the discretionary housing payment scheme, which is only likely to be able to provide time-limited support to a small proportion of the affected individuals. It is concerned about the extent to which the discretionary housing payment scheme may need to be used at a time when it is likely to be under considerable pressure from the April 2011 Housing Benefit reforms.

15. Concerns were highlighted about those for whom shared accommodation would present particular problems. The Committee referred to a number of groups including those moving on from supported accommodation to independent living; non-resident parents who are trying to maintain contact with their children; people with certain mental and physical health conditions; ex-offenders, and people with substance abuse issues.

16. The Committee noted from the equality impact assessment completed by the Department for Work and Pensions that 16% of those affected by the change are in work and questioned whether reducing levels of Housing Benefit would increase work incentives. It cited evidence which suggests that a lack of resources can act as a barrier to accessing support and services, thus impacting on a claimant's progression to work.

17. The Committee concludes that the proposals are essentially cuts to the Housing Benefit budget and that the rationale is neither compelling nor convincing when set against

the potential negative impacts. It states that the evidence it has seen points to this being a high risk approach to cutting costs that does not take account of potentially negative impacts on other areas of public policy and potential increases in other areas of public expenditure.

18. A wide range of organisations and individuals responded to the Committee's consultation exercise and several presented information about the market for and availability of shared accommodation. None of the respondents supported the proposed changes and the majority questioned the rationale for them.

19. Respondents commented on the patchy availability of shared accommodation with particular problems in rural areas and large cities. Some mentioned that supply is reducing in some areas as a result of the increased regulation of houses in multiple occupation intended to improve standards, a measure that the Committee welcomes. None of the respondents suggested that there might be a market response to increased demand for shared accommodation.

20. Many respondents working with disadvantaged and excluded groups commented that most of the clients they work with, including offenders, people with substance abuse problems, mental and other health problems could not and should not be housed in shared accommodation. Respondents cited security and personal safety issues, and the risks of mixing people who are ill-equipped to manage the stresses and conflicts that can arise in shared living space. They mentioned concerns about their clients ending up homeless, which would place pressure on other services. Some respondents pointed to other areas of public policy that appear to be at odds with the proposals and the difficulty that some organisations might have in meeting their programme or policy objectives.



## **The Government's response to the Committee**

21. The Government recognises that the extension of the shared accommodation rate builds on a policy that has attracted some criticism since its introduction in 1996. The Committee comments that when it first reported on the original proposals for restricting Housing Benefit for younger people the rationale for those changes was similar to those presented for the current proposals. The Committee also notes that its concerns expressed at the time about the availability and suitability of shared accommodation and the reduced levels of Housing Benefit for individuals remain broadly the same.

22. Whilst the Government acknowledges the Committee's concerns, there is little evidence to show that the current provision for the under 25s has resulted in increased rough sleeping. The Government believes that the current exemptions for this age group from the shared accommodation rate, which will apply to the extended age group, and the discretionary housing payments scheme offer sufficient safeguards.

23. The Government does not accept the Committee's view that the proposals are driven solely by the need to reduce the Housing Benefit budget. As we have made clear the shared accommodation rate changes are designed to ensure greater fairness and remove a potential work disincentive, as well as help reduce costs. Claimants receiving Housing Benefit should not be able to access accommodation that people who are not on benefit are unable to afford. Fairness is at the heart of our Housing Benefit reforms as demonstrated by our changes to the Local Housing Allowance rules earlier this year. It was clearly necessary to change a system where people in some areas were receiving rates of benefit to rent property that would be unaffordable to many people in work.

24. The Committee questions the rationale and evidence base for the proposals and notes that the Department for Work and Pensions, in its impact assessment, is able to say very little about the characteristics of older sharers. But it concludes that it is reasonable to assume that the majority will be older students and younger professionals who are attractive to the commercial landlords who specialise in 'group' lets. The Government disagrees with the Committee's assumptions. The Department's impact assessment contains information on the accommodation arrangements of single people, which shows student sharers as a separate category. It also estimates that around 40% of single, childless, non-student private renters aged 25 to 34 are in shared accommodation. The Department has also shown in its impact assessment that many people aged 25 or over are currently claiming Housing Benefit at the shared accommodation rate. Over one third of the single 25 to 34 year olds potentially affected by this measure are already living in shared accommodation.

25. The Committee also comments that the Department's approach in disaggregating the Housing Benefit claimant group by age fails to recognise the diversity of this age group or take account of the potential adverse impacts on people whose circumstances make shared accommodation either unsuitable or unsafe for them. The Government notes the Committee's views. However, the Department's equality impact assessment includes an assessment of the impact of this change on a range of protected characteristics including gender, disability and age.

26. The Government notes the Committee's view that provision for dealing with both individual hard cases and groups that by definition are likely to have special needs, has been left to the discretionary housing payment scheme, which is only likely to be able to provide time-limited support to a small proportion of the affected individuals. The Committee also comments that the discretionary housing payment scheme will not receive any additional funding to cope with the consequences of the proposed changes and it is already likely to be under considerable pressure from the Housing Benefit changes introduced this year.

27. The Government's view is that discretionary housing payments are the right approach to supporting those in more vulnerable situations who do not meet the qualifying conditions for the existing exemptions from the shared accommodation rate. And as the Committee itself acknowledges, local decision making that is based on a well-informed understanding of local conditions and the circumstances of individual claimants can be an effective way of allocating additional support.

28. The Committee is concerned about the cash limited nature of the discretionary housing payments. However, the Government's trebling of the discretionary housing payment budget is intended to give local authorities greater flexibility to sustain certain tenancies where more support is needed. The Government will continue to work closely with local authorities as these changes are implemented, including sharing good practice on the allocation of discretionary housing payments. The Government has also provided an additional £50 million to support the implementation of Local Housing Allowance measures.

29. The Committee states that there is a risk that the changes will result in homelessness and loss of employment for some as well as placing downstream pressures on other agencies that will have to assist and support the most vulnerable. The Government is committed to preventing and tackling homelessness and has established a cross-government Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness, which brings together eight departments to tackle the complex causes – not only housing, but just as importantly health, work and training.

30. We have maintained homelessness grant funding, which includes funding for local authorities to carry out homelessness prevention work, making £400 million available over the spending review period as well as providing over £37 million under the homelessness change programme over the three years from April 2012 to improve hostels for rough sleepers and ensure that those coming off the streets get the support they need. In addition a further £10 million has been made available to fund the voluntary sector to help vulnerable people access and sustain private rented sector accommodation. Local authorities have an excellent track record in preventing homelessness, and helped 165,000 households avoid homelessness last year, a service that the Government is confident that local authorities will continue to deliver effectively.

31. On work incentives the Committee contends that the impact of the changes for Housing Benefit claimants already in work could result in a move to a location some

distance from their place of work, making it difficult for them to stay in employment. The Department for Work and Pensions notes the Committee's view. On work related issues more generally, the Department's impact assessment showed that many of those affected by the proposals are claiming jobseeker's allowance and are on housing benefit for relatively short periods of time. In March 2010 over half the claimants the Department estimated would be affected would have been on Housing Benefit for nine months or less, which suggests that claimants do not tend to spend long periods out of work.

32. The Committee also commented that they can foresee particular problems for those living in rural areas and smaller towns where sustained local employment may be in short supply, and where there appears to be no alternative shared accommodation available. The Government acknowledges that the supply of accommodation will vary across the country but points to the additional evidence provided by the Department for Work and Pension to the Committee that shows that most of those affected by this proposal live in urban areas. Young people in rural areas, regardless of their benefit status have very constrained choices with regard to housing. The Department's own and external research confirms that shared accommodation is very sparse in rural areas, along with a large proportion of the private rented sector that is available/affordable to tenants claiming housing benefit, which is most often found only in the larger settlements in rural areas.

33. The Government is investing a huge amount in welfare reform with one of the key aims being to end benefit dependency and empower people to make a change for themselves. At the heart of Universal Credit is the simple goal that work should always pay. And our new Work Programme, which will provide tailored back to work support for the unemployed, was launched last month. The Government is clear that work should be people's first choice, which is why in the context of these proposals it believes that it is reasonable and fair for the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate to be extended to slightly older working age claimants.

34. The Committee raises concerns about the availability of and market for shared accommodation and comments that they have seen no evidence to suggest that there is widespread availability of shared accommodation at moderate rates that would be available to all those targeted by the proposed changes. The Government notes the Committee's concerns in this area and that a number of respondents have provided the Committee with information on the availability of shared accommodation.

35. A report on the two year review of the local housing allowance<sup>3</sup> by the Department for Work and Pensions included some limited information on the shared accommodation rate. It stated that rent officers had reported a shortage of shared accommodation in some areas, such as rural or small market town locations, when collecting rents to inform the local housing allowance rates. Rent officers also reported that in relation to the shared accommodation market many rooms were let by word of mouth by small resident

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<sup>3</sup> a copy of the review published in February 2011 can be found at:  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-review-feb-2011.pdf>

landlords. The impact assessment found that a large proportion of those currently claiming Local Housing Allowance at the shared accommodation rate are 25 or over, suggesting that concerns about availability and lack of accommodation options for Housing Benefit claimants could be overstated.

36. While the Government acknowledges that the availability of shared accommodation is likely to vary across the country it is uncertain what the practical impact of these changes will be. Much will depend on whether claimants are able to make up any shortfalls through work and on the choices available to them in response to a lower rate of Housing Benefit. The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to monitoring the impact of the Housing Benefit changes and has commissioned independent external research that has already begun to monitor the 2011 Local Housing Allowance measures. This research will also look at the impact of the shared accommodation rate changes.

37. The Committee comments that recent research suggested that whether a household is receiving Housing Benefit is not statistically significant in explaining the differences in rents paid by recipients and non-recipients among low-income working households in the private rented sector. More recent research<sup>4</sup> was carried out in 2009 after the introduction of the local housing allowance and published last year by the Department for Work and Pensions. This found that most low income working households pay a rent which is, on average, less than the local housing allowance rate set for the property they occupy, although the amount paid is usually 90% or more of that rate (except for large properties).

38. The Government notes the Committee's concerns that there will be relatively little time for claimants and landlords to adapt to the new arrangements. However, claimants will not see a reduction in their Housing Benefit until January 2012 at the very earliest. And those who have been claiming since before April 2011 will be affected gradually over the course of the next calendar year with transitional protection lasting until December 2012 in some cases.

39. The Department for Work and Pensions already has a comprehensive communications and implementation strategy in place to support local authorities with the implementation of the Local Housing Allowance measures and will build on this as changes start to affect existing customers from January 2012, including for those people affected by the shared accommodation rate measure. The Department has already started to help local authorities publicise these proposed changes to make sure that people know about them in advance. The Department will also do all it can to help local authorities identify the claimants directly affected by these changes, so that they can be given appropriate advice and support.

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<sup>4</sup> "Low income working households in the private rented sector" - [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report\\_abstracts/rr\\_abstracts/rra\\_698.asp](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report_abstracts/rr_abstracts/rra_698.asp)

## **The Committee's recommendations**

**We recommend that the proposals do not go ahead in their current form.**

**Response:** The Government does not accept the Committee's recommendation and plans to proceed with the changes as planned apart from the modifications set out below. These changes will produce a fairer system of support that reflects the housing expectations of people of a similar age who are not on benefits. They will also contribute significantly to reducing overall Housing Benefit expenditure, which is why it is essential that we bring in these changes.

**If the proposals do go ahead, before taking the proposals any further, the Department should:**

- **be proactive in filling the information gaps by working with local authorities and other stakeholders, paying particular attention to the supply and availability of shared accommodation; and**
- **work with stakeholders to understand the impacts on specific groups of vulnerable people and define some further specific exemptions to prevent them being pushed towards discretionary housing payment scheme and/or reserve part of the discretionary fund these groups or increase overall scheme budget**

**Response:** The Government does not accept that it should delay implementing the changes to gather additional information on the supply and availability of shared accommodation. The Department is committed to monitoring and evaluating the impacts of this measure and the independent review of Housing Benefit that it has commissioned will include work on these specific areas. DWP has set up an advisory group to help monitor and evaluate the Housing Benefit changes, which is comprised of a number of local authority representatives, landlord and customer representative groups as well as other government departments. The aim of the advisory group is to explore the impacts of the Housing Benefit reforms in detail, including the changes to the shared accommodation rate, to gain a full understanding of potential or emerging issues resulting from the changes. We will continue to engage routinely with key stakeholders as now.

The Department has listened to concerns from stakeholders through its discussions and correspondence with stakeholders and notes the Committee's comments. The Government acknowledges that not all claimants will be affected by these changes in the same way due to the differing nature of their circumstances and that some are more likely to require additional support than others. Current exemptions from the shared accommodation rate support this principle and are designed to meet the particular circumstances of clearly defined groups who most need help. The Government believes that discretionary housing payments are the right approach to supporting people in vulnerable situations as they offer flexibility and are based on local decisions which can be targeted as needed.

However, the Government has looked carefully at the arguments presented by a number of commentators, the Committee and other Government departments on the potential effect of these changes on specific groups and has decided to introduce two additional exemptions which will apply to the extended age group only. The first is for a small but clearly defined group of ex-offenders who are subject to management by more than one agency under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA<sup>5</sup>) and who are most likely to pose a risk of serious harm to others if they share accommodation. Offenders subject to MAPPA arrangements are in the main 25 years or over. In Scotland, MAPPA legislation is not yet fully in force in relation to violent and certain other offenders and so local authorities will be responsible for applying the exemption where it is considered that a claimant would present a risk of causing serious harm to the public. The Government is keen to avoid a situation that potentially risks putting members of the public in danger.

The second exemption is for people who have spent three months or more in a homeless hostel, or more than one hostel, specialising in rehabilitating and resettling this group within the community. To benefit from this exemption claimants would need to have been offered and to have accepted support services to enable them to be rehabilitated or resettled in the community. The three month qualifying condition is designed to target the exemption at people receiving a sustained programme of rehabilitation rather than people who have sporadic, short term stays. This exemption addresses the concerns raised by a number of commentators about the impact of these changes on rough sleepers, and in particular the silting up of hostel accommodation. The Government accepts that without this it will be difficult to secure suitable move-on accommodation for this group to help them in to a more settled way of life, which could undermine the Government's ambition to end rough sleeping. This exemption has been targeted at people aged 25 and over who are at greater risk of rough sleeping.

The Government considered the appropriateness of exemptions for other groups including people with disabilities, mental health problems, a history of substance misuse and those seeking to maintain contact arrangements with their children. It also recognises that some people may have multiple problems. In considering any exemption the Government has to take account of the cost of providing these and ensure that limited resources are targeted in the most effective way possible. Providing a number of different exemptions for these groups would not be a cost effective way in which to address their needs given the wide variation in people's circumstances. While sharing accommodation may be unsuitable for some it is not the case that it would be unsuitable for everyone in a particular group. Such exemptions would not be administratively straight forward, making them expensive to administer and more likely to generate fraud and error. The Government has therefore decided not to introduce any further exemptions other than the two set out above.

The Government does not agree that any changes to the discretionary housing payments scheme are necessary. Reserving part of the discretionary housing payment budget for these groups would add complexity and require primary legislation. It could also result in fewer discretionary housing payments being made to other claimants not subject to the shared accommodation rate rules. The Government has put in place a substantial

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<sup>5</sup> MAPPA are the statutory arrangements for managing sexual and violent offenders. It is a mechanism through which agencies discharge their statutory responsibilities and protect the public in a co-ordinated manner.

package of financial and practical support worth £190 million over the spending review period to help ease the transition for the Housing Benefit reforms, some of which will assist those affected by the shared accommodation rate changes.

**If the new evidence gathered justifies the introduction of changes then we recommend a one year pathfinder scheme in rural and urban locations and the following modifications to the current proposals:**

**Response:** The Government does not accept the Committee's recommendation. Trialling this proposal is not appropriate as it simply extends the age group for an existing policy that has been in place since 1996. Any delay in implementing the changes would reduce the level of savings from this measure, which is unaffordable. Delaying the measure by a year would cost around £200m over the Spending Review period.

**For people leaving paid employment, there should be provisions permitting Housing Benefit payable to continue to be paid at the same level for 26 weeks, reflecting the period of most shorthold tenancies. This would have the added benefit of not capturing within the changes people who are out of work for only short periods of time;**

**Response:** The Government accepts the importance of providing protection to people to avoid them moving during short spells of unemployment or to give time to consider their future housing options. Existing rules provide for new claimants to have their rent met in full for 13 weeks where they have not claimed Housing Benefit in the last year and where they could afford their rent at the time they entered into their tenancy. The Government believes this provides adequate protection.

- **the extension to age 35 should be introduced gradually, with a first move to age 30 trialled and evaluated over one year;**

**Response:** Deferring the extension of the shared accommodation rate would reduce the savings and result in some claimants who have been claiming since before April 2011 experiencing two reductions in their Housing Benefit, which the Government is keen to avoid. Extending the shared accommodation rate threshold to 30 instead of 35 would nearly halve the annual savings. These proposals will contribute significantly to reducing overall Housing Benefit expenditure and are expected to deliver annual savings of around £215 million by 2014/15. The Government cannot therefore agree to delay the implementation of this measure or, for the reasons mentioned above, to trial the proposal.

- **the budget of the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme should be further increased to cover the additional costs likely to be generated by these proposals.**

**Response:** The Government does not agree that the discretionary housing budget, which has been trebled, should be increased further.

**Ensure that the independent review of Housing Benefit pays particular attention to this sector of the housing market.**

**Response:** The independent review and monitoring commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions will examine the early impacts of the extension of the shared accommodation rate to the under 35s from January 2012. It will also look at the availability of and access to shared accommodation across different regions and rural areas, including houses in multiple occupation, through work with both claimants and landlords. The local authority perspective will be examined through case study work and the local authority omnibus survey<sup>6</sup>, again with a focus on the availability of shared accommodation and the impact of increases/changes of use to houses in multiple occupation. Subject to available research funding, the evaluation and monitoring exercise will be extended beyond 2013. This will enable an assessment to be made of the long term impacts on local authorities, claimant and landlord behaviour of the extension of the shared accommodation rate to the under 35s, availability of shared housing in the case study areas and any increase in houses in multiple occupation.

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<sup>6</sup> The Local Authority Omnibus Survey is carried out twice yearly and can contain questions on any Housing Benefit policy related area depending on issues of interest to DWP at the time of development. A questionnaire is sent to HB Managers in every Local Authority in Britain with completion being optional.



**From the Chairman**

**The Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP  
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions  
Caxton House  
London SW1H 9DA**

**6 July 2011**

Dear Secretary of State,

**REPORT OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MADE UNDER SECTION 174(2) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION ACT 1992 ON:**

**THE HOUSING BENEFIT (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2011**

**1. Background**

1.1 At the Committee's meeting on 4 May 2011, officials from the Department for Work and Pensions presented proposals for The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011 for our consideration. A detailed Explanatory Memorandum of the Department's position accompanied these proposed draft regulations (Appendix 2).

1.2 Following discussions with officials, we decided to take these regulations on formal referral for the preparation of this report. On 17 May 2011 we published a press release inviting comments on the proposals to reach us by 17 June 2011.

1.3 We received 57 responses. Details of the respondents are at Appendix 1. We are grateful to those who responded and to officials of the Department for Work and Pensions for their assistance.

**2. The Proposals**

2.1 These proposals would change the definition of a 'young individual' for Housing Benefit purposes, so that it would in future cover people under the age of 35, rather than 25 as now. The effect would be to limit the award of Housing Benefit for most<sup>1</sup> single people aged under 35 who are living in the private rented sector to the shared accommodation rate. This rate reflects the cost of renting property where the tenant has sole use of a bedroom but has shared use of other rooms such as a kitchen or bathroom.

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<sup>1</sup> the exceptions are listed in paragraph 14 of the Department's explanatory memorandum

### 3. Summary of the Department's Position

3.1 The Department has stated in its Explanatory Memorandum that the proposed extension of the shared accommodation rate will ensure that Housing Benefit rules reflect the housing expectations of people in the relevant age group who are not on benefits. Officials estimated that 16% of private renters aged 25 – 34 and not in receipt of Housing Benefit have shared accommodation arrangements, and that a further 32% live with their parents. They also estimated that over 36% of those on Housing Benefit who would potentially be affected are already assessed at the shared accommodation rate.

3.2 The Government believes that work should be people's first choice and that the receipt of large amounts of Housing Benefit may reduce work incentives. It also believes that the taxpayer should not be expected to pay the full cost of self-contained accommodation through Housing Benefit for single people aged under 35 when many of their contemporaries in work would be living in shared accommodation. In view of this it is believed that it is reasonable and fair that those working age individuals aged between 25 and 34 who have recourse to public funds should have their Housing Benefit limited to the shared accommodation rate.

3.3 These changes are also presented as being in step with the Government's wider welfare reforms and the drive to contain rising Housing Benefit expenditure. Overall Housing Benefit expenditure has roughly doubled in *cash* terms from £11bn to £21.7bn over the ten years to 2010/11 and the shared accommodation rate changes are expected to deliver savings to the Exchequer of around £215m by 2014/15.

3.4 The proposed changes follow the reduction of Housing Benefit payable to private tenants from the 50 to the 30 percentile rent level. We understand that for those also likely to be affected by the current proposals, both reductions would be introduced at the same time. While this means that some people will face very large falls in their Housing Benefit this will avoid the undesirable situation where they would have had to consider moving home twice within a short period of time.

## 4. The Committee's View

### Introduction

4.1 A shared accommodation rate for single claimants (aged up to 25) was first introduced in 1996. When we reported on the original proposals<sup>2</sup> for restricting Housing Benefit for younger people to the costs of accommodation in shared property, the Department's rationale for the changes was similar to the one presented in support of the current proposals, focusing on ensuring that Housing Benefit matches the housing expectations for people of around the same age who are not receiving Housing Benefit; creating a work incentive; and reducing costs. The concerns we expressed at the time – in particular about the availability and suitability of shared accommodation for everyone in the target group, the level of financial losses that individual claimants might sustain, and the lack of evidence to support the Department's assertions about the likely impacts of the measures – are also similar to those that led us to take the current proposals on formal referral for the preparation of this report.

4.2 We have also been aware of the sustained and widespread criticism of the shared accommodation provisions that has been expressed since 1996 by members of both Houses of Parliament, the Social Security Select Committee and others<sup>3</sup>. The substantial response to our consultation on the current proposals indicates that there remains a high level of concern about this particular aspect of the Housing Benefit scheme. These proposals have been put forward at a time when the scheme is already going through major changes<sup>4</sup> that may result in substantial cash reductions for many Housing Benefit claimants in the private rented sector and particularly for those living in high-cost areas such as London and the South East of England. There is also evidence of a sustained high level of demand for privately rented property<sup>5</sup> of all types that shows no signs of moderating.

### Evidence Supporting the Rationale for Change

4.3 Our starting point for our consideration of the proposed extension of the restriction of Housing Benefit up the age scale to age 35 is the evidence presented to support the rationale for change.

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<sup>2</sup> Our report on the introduction of a Single Room Rate was published by the Secretary of State as Cm 3225 in April 1996

<sup>3</sup> The Select Committee's sixth report 1999-2000, HC 385, recommended the abolition of the shared accommodation provisions.

<sup>4</sup> Changes introduced by The Housing Benefit Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 2010/2836 and The Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Amendment Order 2010 (S.I. No. 2010/2836 that we reported on in November 2010.

<sup>5</sup> We monitor the market reports issued by a number of organisations such as LettingFocus, Countrywide and Dauntons.

4.4 The Explanatory memorandum indicates that 62,500 people aged between 25 and 34 are likely to be affected by the changes. We note, however, that several of the responses to our consultation indicated that this might well be an underestimate.

4.5 The Department's Explanatory Memorandum states that the intention of the proposed change is to ensure that: '...the Housing Benefit rules reflect the housing expectations of people of a similar age not on benefits'. However, it is important to remember that the circumstances of the claimant group to be affected almost certainly do not reflect those of people of a similar age who are not on benefits.

4.6 The Department's impact assessment tells us that around 40% of the 18-34 year olds who rent privately and do not receive HB are living in some kind of shared accommodation. However, the figure for all single 25-34 year olds who share drops significantly to 16%, including an un-quantified number of students. This compares with 36% of existing Housing Benefit claimants of this age who already receive the shared accommodation rate. The Department can tell us very little about the characteristics of older sharers but it is reasonable to assume that the majority will be older students and younger professionals who choose to share for a mixture of social and financial reasons, are generally not in the Housing Benefit claimant group, and who are attractive to the commercial landlords who specialise in 'group' lets.

4.7 The Department has decided to disaggregate the Housing Benefit claimant group by age – an approach that does not recognise the diversity of this age group or, we believe, take account of the potential adverse impacts on people whose circumstances make shared accommodation either unsuitable or unsafe for them. The group to be adversely affected will consist of an extremely wide variety of individuals with very different needs. Among those for whom shared accommodation would present particular problems are:

- disabled people who would not be covered by the current exemptions for the shared accommodation provisions and who moving on from supported accommodation to independent living, or living in accommodation that has been adapted to meet their needs;
- absent parents who are trying to maintain contact with their children;
- people with certain mental health conditions;
- people with physical health conditions;
- people who are HIV positive;
- pregnant women;
- women escaping domestic violence
- ex-offenders,
- and people with substance abuse problems.

4.8 We are also concerned about the position of other groups for whom shared accommodation is not an appropriate option. These include people being resettled after a period of homelessness and people with a history of offending and/or substance abuse. Frequently the people concerned face more than one of these situations. This does not make them attractive to other sharers, narrowing the options open to them. This increases

the likelihood of them sharing with other ex-offenders or with substance abusers and progress towards their rehabilitation being undermined. In this context, we note that homelessness is above-average among people aged between 25 and 34.

4.9 We are concerned that provision for dealing with both individual hardship cases and groups that, by definition, are likely to have special needs, has been left to the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme, which is only likely to be able to provide time-limited support to a small proportion of the affected individuals. We expand on this point below.

4.10 We also note the point raised in the response from the British Property Federation that many landlords have already ceased offering self-contained accommodation to people who are in receipt of Housing Benefit or in insecure work and that this has considerable implications for the figures given in the Explanatory Memorandum and accompanying impact assessment.

4.11 We would also point out that recent research modelling rent levels with data from the Family Resources Survey<sup>6</sup> suggested that whether a household is receiving Housing Benefit is not statistically significant in explaining the differences in rates paid by recipients and non-recipients among low-income working households in the private rented sector. In other words, people receiving Housing Benefit do not live in more expensive accommodation.

### **The Availability of Shared Accommodation**

4.12 We are not reassured by what officials have been able to tell us about the availability of, and market for, shared accommodation. As we have noted above, it seems that relatively little is known about the shared accommodation sector and this lack of information is of particular concern to us. While we would accept that some younger working people (particularly those who have experienced home-sharing while studying, for example) may opt to continue to share as they get older (not least because of cost-pressures and the lack of opportunity to buy), we have seen no evidence to suggest that there is widespread availability of shared accommodation at moderate rates that would be available to all of those who are targeted by the proposed changes and who have no other options available to them. The proposed changes are also to take effect at a time when there are other pressures on that part of the private rented sector that is accessible to people in receipt on benefits or otherwise on low incomes. When we discussed the proposals with officials they agreed that information was sparse and that in some areas, particularly the more remote rural areas, shared accommodation might not exist. The responses we received to our consultation, confirm that this is, indeed, the case. Moreover, in towns and cities with a large student population there is very little accommodation that is both within the shared accommodation rate and does not exclude Housing Benefit recipients.

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<sup>6</sup> Bruce Walker and Pat Niner: Low Income Working Households in the Private Rented Sector. DWP Research Report 698 published 2010

4.13 Indeed, we understand from recent research<sup>7</sup> that while the private rented sector has expanded over the past two decades, the level of shared accommodation has fallen in absolute terms. And a survey of 300 housing advisers undertaken by Crisis showed that 72% reported an inadequate supply of shared accommodation to meet current demand; only 7% said that it was adequate.<sup>8</sup>

4.14 The Government's assumption that the group targeted by the change will have other housing options available to them also appears to have no sound evidential basis. The Department has told us that around a third of single, childless 25 – 34 year olds currently live with their parents. However, it does not appear reasonable to us to assume that a return to the parental home is a real and workable option for many of those targeted by these proposals. Some of those who have been living independently will have been doing so primarily because of family breakdown or because their parents are no longer alive. The surviving parents of people in their mid-thirties could be relatively elderly and no longer living in accommodation that is large enough to accommodate them. Others may already have this option closed to them, for example following release from prison or a period of homelessness.

4.15 We find it equally implausible to assume that the 'rent a room' scheme would be an option for people who are reliant on Housing Benefit, whether they are working or not. People on Housing Benefit already have a limited choice of accommodation, with many parts of the market already closed to them and long-distance relocation the only option in both rural and/or high-cost areas. Moreover, under the current 'rent a room' allowance, home owners can charge room rents of approximately £81 a week tax free. This is significantly above the shared accommodation rate in the majority of Broad Rental Market Areas and, while it is possible that home owners may charge lower rents in certain markets, existing take-up of the scheme is poor. This suggests that even current returns do not offer sufficient incentive for people to take advantage of the scheme.

### **The Suitability of Shared Accommodation**

4.16 Shared accommodation within the shared accommodation rate tends to be in poor-quality houses in multiple occupation and is typified by over-occupation and a high turnover of tenants. Moreover, unlike other sharers, those subject to the SAR have little choice and often share with complete strangers

4.17 There are a number of groups for whom such shared accommodation may be inappropriate. We are concerned about the position of the 18% of Housing Benefit claimants in the target group who are known to be disabled and may encounter particular difficulties if they are priced out of their accommodation. It is not clear whether there is any shared accommodation available that would be suitable for those disabled people who are not covered by the current exemptions – recipients of the severe disability premium, for

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<sup>7</sup> David Rhodes and Steve Wilcox, (2011) *The shared accommodation rate of housing benefit*. University of York, Centre for Housing Policy.

<sup>8</sup> Crisis (2011) Shared accommodation rate: survey of housing advisers.

example - and it would appear that the additional costs of re-housing (in adapted accommodation) disabled people who are not exempted from these proposals and are found to be in priority need would fall to local authorities who would probably place them in expensive temporary, and inferior, accommodation.

4.18 People with certain mental health conditions can face real difficulties sharing with others yet may well not qualify for the severe disability exemption to the shared accommodation rate rule. Moving home in such circumstances can exacerbate their mental health.

4.19 Women are specifically affected in two important ways. Pregnant single women are restricted to the shared accommodation rate until they give birth, and face one of three undesirable situations. They can move home twice at a time when they may be financially, emotionally and physically ill-equipped to do so – into shared accommodation and back to self-contained accommodation when the baby is born. They can decide to move into shared accommodation and remain there after the birth of their child. Or they can try to make up the shortfall in their rent. The second group of women who are likely to be disadvantaged by the proposals are those escaping domestic violence, who may well find themselves having to live in insecure accommodation, putting them at risk of further abuse by their estranged partner<sup>9</sup>.

4.20 It is likely that many of those impacted by this proposed policy will be young men, who may well have parental responsibilities for children who are not resident with them. Family justice policies place considerable emphasis on fathers maintaining contact with their children, including overnight stays and during holidays. The presumption of shared parental responsibility and regular contact could be undermined if fathers are sharing accommodation and do not have suitable space to be able to offer overnight stays. Moreover, there could be child protection issues which could put their children at risk, or result in them being in violation of court orders, both of which would have the unintended consequence of limiting contact between fathers and their children.

## **Managing Cash Losses**

4.21 The Department has recognised that in more than half the Broad Rental Market Areas the Shared Accommodation Rates are around at least a third lower than the one bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate. An estimated 62,500 people will initially be affected by the change, with average losses of £41 per week, it appears unlikely that there will be scope for many tenants of one bedroom properties to renegotiate their rents to a level at which they become affordable. Indeed, a recent survey conducted by the National Landlords Association discovered that 90% of the 455 landlords they surveyed said that they could not afford to reduce rents to absorb existing cuts to Housing Benefit and 58% said that they would have to cut the number of properties they let to benefit recipients as a result.

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<sup>9</sup> David Rhodes and Steve Wilcox, (2011) *The shared accommodation rate of housing benefit*. University of York, Centre for Housing Policy.

4.22 Stakeholders have previously told us (for example, in response<sup>10</sup> to our public consultation on the Housing Benefit changes that are currently being implemented) that a considerable number of tenants – some in employment and some not - already have to meet shortfalls between their Housing Benefit and their contracted rent, including younger people (those currently subject to the shared accommodation rate). It would therefore seem likely that many of those affected by the current proposals would have to seek alternative accommodation if the changes are introduced in their present form. Although the Department is unable to give us much information about this group it is likely that it will include people who are ill-equipped to cope with the consequences but may not be regarded by local authorities as priority cases for help via the discretionary housing payment scheme. There is a risk that homelessness, loss of employment and adverse social and health impacts will result, placing downstream pressures on local authorities and other agencies that will have to assist and support the most vulnerable.

### **The Role of Discretionary Housing Payments**

4.23 The Department has pointed to the availability of the discretionary housing payments that Local Authorities can make to act as a safety net for Housing Benefit claimants who need to move or for longer term support for those claimants who may find it difficult to find alternative accommodation. However, although these cash limited funds have been boosted during the Spending Review period<sup>11</sup> the funding increase has been presented as a response to the all of Housing Benefit changes that have already been introduced and there has been no specific allocation to address the potential consequences of these proposals.

4.24 While we appreciate that local decision making that is based on a well-informed understanding of local conditions and the circumstances of individual claimants can be an effective way of allocating additional support in exceptional circumstances, we are concerned about the extent to which it appears these provisions are expected to be used. The budget is cash limited and vulnerable to surges in demand and discretionary payments cannot provide either claimant or landlord with the assurance that a rent liability will be met other than in the short term. Indeed some of the responses we received note that they are rarely for more than 6 months. These payments are not intended to be more than an intermediate solution to cash shortfalls in exceptional cases and they do not carry a right of appeal if payment is refused or terminated.

### **Impacts on Work Incentives**

4.25 The Department's Explanatory Memorandum states that 16% of those to be affected are already in work and that these people will lose, on average £49 a week. For

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<sup>10</sup> Our report on the Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 2010/2835) and The Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Amendment Order 2010 (S.I. No. 2010/2836) was published in November 2010.

<sup>11</sup> The allocation from central government was £20 million per annum from 2002. It was increased by £10 million for 2011/12 and £40 million a year from 2012/13 onwards.



this group the potential loss of their accommodation might well result in a move to a location some distance from their place of work, making it very difficult for them to stay in employment. It is also the case that working people and benefit recipients are not distinct categories. Individuals move in and out of work and their in-work incomes (and linked benefit entitlements) will vary from job to job and as their hours of work fluctuate. We can foresee particular problems for those living in rural areas and smaller towns where sustained local employment may be in short supply, and where there appears to be no alternative shared accommodation available.

4.26 We are unaware of any clear evidence that the current levels of Housing Benefit paid to working age claimants act as a disincentive to work and that reducing benefits will increase work incentives. In practice, the position would appear to be more complex. Evidence suggests that a lack of resources can act as a barrier to accessing support and services, thus impacting on a claimant's progression to work.<sup>12</sup> There is also evidence that the shared accommodation rate could currently act as a work disincentive. Research commissioned by the DWP into the operation of shared accommodation rate found that many organisations working with young people reported that it was undermining efforts to get them into employment because it did not create a stable base from which to access jobs or training.<sup>13</sup> We would also suggest that choices of accommodation that are driven solely by considerations of affordability do not necessarily take work-seekers into areas where employment is available and accessible.

4.27 In terms of the rationale for setting the age limit at 35, we would observe that if work incentives are the policy aim then it could be argued that the changes should apply to the population of single, childless people as a whole. Although we would not argue for a further extension of the age limits, we have seen no evidence to suggest that the age of 35 represents a particular watershed in peoples' choice of accommodation and/or employment.

## **5. The Views of Respondents**

5.1 We received 57 responses from a wide range of organisations and individuals. We heard from people who would be directly affected by the changes, including Housing Benefit claimants, private landlords and other housing providers, and from organisations representing the interests of these groups. None of the respondents supported the proposed changes and the vast majority recommended that they should not go ahead. Some went further and put forward evidence for an end to the shared accommodation rate for people of all ages. The majority of them both questioned the rationale put forward for them and challenged the Department's assessment of their likely impacts. The specific points raised in the submissions echoed our own concerns and, as a consequence, are not covered in detail.

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<sup>12</sup> J Griggs and F Bennett. (2009) SSAC Occasional Paper No. 6 Rights and Responsibilities in the Social Security System

<sup>13</sup> John Harvey and Donald Houston Research into the Single Room Rent Regulations Department for Work and Pensions Research report 243 June 2005

5.2 We were struck by the efforts that several organisations have made to gather and present to us information about a number of aspects of the proposals, such as the market for and availability of shared accommodation, and the impacts of current Housing Benefit shortfalls on claimant's lives. We are particularly grateful to Crisis for sight of their forthcoming research report<sup>14</sup> that has offered us information on the availability of shared accommodation, routes into shared housing, and the experience of shared housing. The current accommodation supply position at local level has also been usefully explored by Citizens Advice, and landlords. National and local organisations working with homeless people and other vulnerable groups have also contributed considered and detailed accounts of the potential impacts of the proposed changes on their clients and in the wider policy environments in which they operate.

5.3 In terms of supply of shared accommodation that is both within the shared accommodation rate and available to Housing Benefit recipients, respondents paint a picture of patchy availability. They have noted particular problems in rural areas and some larger cities, especially where there are large numbers of students are competing for the accommodation. It was also pointed out that the absolute level of shared accommodation in the private rented sector has declined over the last 15 years<sup>15</sup>, and that the numbers of sharers in the private rented sector varies considerably, with the highest concentrations of sharers located in a few central London boroughs. We were also offered examples of areas where supply of shared accommodation is dropping under pressure of the increased (and, from our point of view very welcome) regulation of houses in multiple occupation that is intended to improve standards. Respondents also point to landlords having already taken the decision to curtail their letting to Housing Benefit claimants in response to this year's Housing Benefit restrictions. Landlords themselves pointed out the disadvantages of letting their properties as 'houses in multiple occupation', citing high maintenance costs and problems with conflict between tenants and high turnover.

5.4 Overall, respondents described a buoyant private rented sector where demand already exceeds supply and landlords can pick and choose their tenants and pitch their lettings at the individuals and groups who are regarded as reliable, profitable, and easy to manage. It was recognised that some landlords might be more willing to let to older sharers but concern was expressed that this might be at the expense of younger sharers who are regarded as higher risk tenants. None of our respondents, including landlord organisations, suggested that there might be a market response to increased demand for shared accommodation.

5.5 Many respondents working with disadvantaged and excluded groups suggested that their resettlement programmes – which often rely on the use of self-contained accommodation, much of it in the private sector – to move people on from supported accommodation, hostels etc – could not be sustained if their clients could be paid no more than the Shared Accommodation Rate. They explained that most of the clients they work with, including offenders, people with substance abuse problems, mental health problems etc - could not and should not be housed in shared accommodation. In many areas social

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<sup>14</sup> Crisis/University of York (2011) '*The shared accommodation rate of housing benefit*'

<sup>15</sup> Crisis quotes a figure of less than one in twenty private renting households as sharing in 2005 to 2007.

housing is not available, and there is a concern that in the absence of suitable alternatives their clients will end up homeless and placing pressure on other services.

5.6 A number of respondents explained why shared housing would be unsuitable and inappropriate for the individuals and groups of which they have particular knowledge. Sharing with strangers is commonplace in the shared accommodation rate market and is a particular cause of concern, particularly for younger people, women and people with mental health conditions and people with physical health conditions or disabilities. Respondents cited security and personal safety issues, and the risks of mixing people who are ill-equipped to manage the stresses and conflicts that can arise in shared living space.

5.7 A number of respondents also pointed to other areas of public policy that appear to be at odds with the proposals. For example, policies to enable and encourage absent parents to maintain contact with their children appear to be thwarted by Housing Benefit provisions that could prevent an absent parent who needed to accommodate a child on overnight stays (not unusual in the target age group) from remaining in accommodation that was suitable for contact. Respondents share our concerns that shared accommodation would rarely be suitable or appropriate for contact arrangements and contact might cease.

5.8 Similarly, without access to self-contained accommodation policies and programmes aimed at the resettlement of ex-offenders would find it much more difficult to meet their objectives. Housing ex-offenders in shared accommodation is particularly problematic and responses to our consultation by individual members of the client group, the agencies that support them, landlords and fellow tenants identified substantial obstacles to shared housing.

5.9 Respondents commented on the disproportionate level of shortfalls against their rents being experienced by people who are currently on the shared accommodation rate when compared with others receiving Housing Benefit. And they noted that the extent of the cuts being proposed would, when taken with the reduction in the rate to the 30 percentile, leave people with very substantial shortfalls which, if they could not find alternative accommodation, would almost inevitably lead either to rent arrears and eviction or to action to recover arrears on other commitments.

5.10 The inadequacy of the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme was noted. Currently young people subject to shared accommodation rate are frequently considered a low priority and, in any case, payments are rarely given for more than six months, so that it is not a viable option for long-term Housing Benefit claimants. They argued for an extension to the list of exemptions from the shared accommodation rate to cover the types of vulnerable people noted above who would not be assisted by the scheme.

5.11 A number of the submissions made the point that homelessness (including hidden homelessness) is already disproportionately high in the 25 – 34 age group and could rise as a result of the proposals. This would include people unable to find suitable alternative accommodation and those currently homeless who would have a reduced chance of being

found a home. The Government has made clear its intention that the private rented sector should be used to resettle homeless people; these proposals will undermine this intention. Changes included in the Localism Bill will enable local authorities to discharge their duty to accommodate homeless people in priority need by placing them in private rented accommodation. The shared accommodation rate proposals will, therefore, potentially lead to vulnerable people previously entitled to secure housing being placed in unsuitable temporary housing.

## **6. Conclusions**

6.1 The proposals that have been presented to us are essentially cuts to the Housing Benefit budget and we do not find the rationale for the change to be either convincing or compelling when set against the potential negative impacts. There is no evidence that these measures will improve work incentives or that those under the age of 35 have similar patterns of housing to those under the age of 25. The evidence from private landlords is that the market for private rented accommodation is buoyant, that few landlords will reduce rents as a result of these proposed measures and that many are increasingly excluding Housing Benefit claimants. It is clear that the Department knows very little about either the shared accommodation market or the types of Housing Benefit claimants that currently live in this sector or may need to access the sector if these proposed measures are introduced.

6.2 In our report on the main package of changes to Housing Benefit, that were originally announced in the 2010 Emergency Budget<sup>16</sup>, we noted that the Government proposed introducing far-reaching modifications to the Housing Benefit scheme without having first conducted a full public consultation on the new arrangements. Although the proposed extension of the shared accommodation rate is change of a much smaller scale and scope we would again point to the absence of full consultation. In this case we are particularly concerned about the lack of information available to the Department to support its case for the proposed changes, and to assess its potential impacts. A consultation, and/or some well-targeted research, would have offered the opportunity to fill some of these information gaps.

6.3 Within the target group for these proposals there would appear to be significant numbers of claimants who have either been housed in one bedroom accommodation as part of a structured and supported move to independent living, or are in the process of being taken through this process. Although some of them may be exempt from the proposed changes the information we have received from respondents suggests that many will not be. We would question both the rationale for disrupting and undermining such programmes, and potentially passing the costs of their failure onto other agencies. In particular we would suggest that placing people with disabilities in expensive temporary accommodation, blocking moves from hostels, and impeding absent parents' relationships with their children could all be both financially burdensome and compromising in policy terms for those agencies dealing with the consequences of these proposed changes. In

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<sup>16</sup> See footnote 4

effect, these impacts could reduce considerably the overall financial savings that these proposals are intended to achieve.

6.4 More generally, we would question the capacity of the Discretionary Housing Payments system to address the needs of all the difficult cases that these changes will throw up. Assuming that those affected will have viable choices and alternatives available to them seems, at the very least, to be over-optimistic. The potential financial losses appear to be beyond the limits of the scope for renegotiating rents, and the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) system is not intended to provide large numbers of people with an indefinite cushion when they cannot move. This will be particularly difficult for people in low-paid work who may be unable to afford to move the considerable distances required in order to find alternative accommodation and for people who are moving in and out of work.

6.5 We have noted in our previous reports on proposed changes to the Housing Benefit system that benefit claimants do not have an open choice of accommodation. In an increasingly active and competitive private rented sector where Housing Benefit claimants will in any case be limited to the cheapest properties we would question whether there will be adequate supply to meet demand as Housing Benefit claimants are pushed into ever more limited segments of the market. There will be relatively little time for both claimants and landlords to adapt to the new arrangements and for the cumulative effects of a succession of measures to cut back Housing Benefit expenditure to become clearer. In meantime, the Department's assumption that the supply of shared accommodation will increase to meet the demand from the Department's estimated additional 62,500 claimants seeking housing, appears highly optimistic.

6.6 For the more vulnerable, such as disabled people – particularly those with mental health problems – and people who live marginal lives, have criminal records, or who cannot present a work history, afford a large deposit or supply references, choice and access can be very limited. The evidence we have seen points to this being a high risk approach to cutting costs that does not take account of potentially negative impacts on other areas of public policy and potential increases in other areas of public expenditure.

6.7 We would not argue that shared accommodation is potentially unsuitable for all of the people in the target group. As our respondents have pointed out, there is a strong market in many areas for flat and house shares for younger working people, students and so on. However, this market is often selective (in that it excludes benefit claimants and targets particular types of capable and relatively affluent people) and is not necessarily for cheaper properties. We have seen nothing to suggest that there is any incentive for private landlords to reduce rents in what is very much a sellers' market or for them to develop low-cost shared accommodation which is hard to manage effectively and profitably and subject to stringent local authority controls.

## **7. Recommendations**

7.1 We recommend that the proposals do not go ahead in their current form.

7.2 If the proposals do go ahead, before taking the proposals any further the Department should:

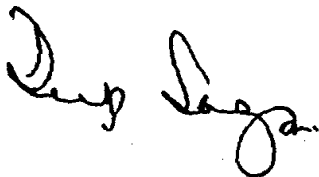
- be proactive in filling the information gaps by working with local authorities and other stakeholders, paying particular attention to the supply and availability of shared accommodation;
- and work with stakeholders to understand the impacts on specific groups of vulnerable people and define some further specific exemptions to prevent them being pushed towards discretionary housing payment scheme and/or reserve part of the discretionary fund these groups or increase overall scheme budget.

7.3 If the new evidence gathered justifies the introduction of changes then we recommend a one year pathfinder scheme in rural and urban locations and the following modifications to the current proposals:

- for people leaving paid employment, there should be provisions permitting Housing Benefit payable to continue to be paid at the same level for 26 weeks, reflecting the period of most shorthold tenancies. This would have the added benefit of not capturing within the changes people who are out of work for only short periods of time;
- the extension to age 35 should be introduced gradually, with a first move to age 30 trialled and evaluated over one year;
- the budget of the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme should be further increased to cover the additional costs likely to be generated by these proposals;.

Finally, we recommend that the independent review of Housing Benefit pays particular attention to this sector of the housing market.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deep Sagar', written in a cursive style.

Deep Sagar

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## Appendix 1

Ms Gill Saunders  
Secretary  
Social Security Advisory Committee  
The Adelphi  
1-11 John Adam Street  
London WC2N 6HT

20 April 2011

Dear Gill,

### **The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011**

I am writing to you with the draft Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011 for consideration by the Social Security Advisory Committee on 5 May 2011.

The regulations make changes to the Housing Benefit regulations to amend the definition of a “young individual” from under age 25 to 35. This introduces the change announced as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review last October that the shared accommodation rate should apply to those aged up to and including 34.

Along with the draft regulations I also attach the Explanatory Memorandum for the Committee and a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment. The Equality Impact Assessment also includes an impact document as an annex which provides a breakdown of the impacts by regions and local authorities. Please let me know if the Committee requires any further information.

I will be attending the meeting on 4 May along with Nina Young, Dave Jones, Lewis Smith and Nicola Patchett.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Isaacson  
Housing Policy Division

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Direct line 0207 449 5331

# EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011

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### Introduction

1. The Government announced in last October's Comprehensive Spending Review that it would extend the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate<sup>1</sup> to people under the age of 35 from April 2012.
2. This change follows reforms to the Housing Benefit Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rules, announced in June 2010 and introduced on 1 April 2011, which cap the level of payments for different sized properties up to a maximum of a four bedroom rate and reduce LHA rates so that they are based on the 30th percentile of rents rather than the median. In November 2010 the Government announced that it would provide existing customers with more time to adjust to any reduction in entitlement as a result of the Local Housing Allowance reforms. The regulations bringing in these changes<sup>2</sup> contained a provision to give those affected up to nine months transitional protection from the anniversary date of their claim.
3. In considering the detailed implementation arrangements for the shared accommodation rate changes the Government looked at how these fit with the nine month transitional protection period for existing Housing Benefit claimants. Many existing customers will not start to see a change in their Local Housing Allowance rate until January 2012 and some will not be affected until December 2012.
4. On 28 March DWP Ministers announced, through a written Ministerial statement, the Government's intention to bring forward the shared

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<sup>1</sup> This includes what were formerly known as the single room rent and the shared room rate.

<sup>2</sup> Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2010 No 2835 and the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Amendment Order 2010 No 2836 laid before Parliament on 30 November 2010.



accommodation rate changes by three months so that they start to take effect from January 2012. Introducing the shared accommodation rate changes slightly earlier will bring the timing of the shared accommodation rate change into line with the Local Housing Allowance reforms for existing customers. It will ensure that single people aged at least 25 but under the age of 35 reaching the end of their transitional protection period will experience at that point a single reduction in their Housing Benefit, rather than two separate reductions.

5. Continuing with the initial plan to implement the shared accommodation rate changes from April 2012 would have meant some existing claimants in the relevant age group reaching the end of their transitional protection period experiencing two reductions in Housing Benefit in quick succession. Their Housing Benefit would have been reduced at the end of their transitional protection period and then another reduction would be made three months later to reflect payment at the shared accommodation rate.

### **Rationale for change**

6. The proposed extension of the shared accommodation rate will ensure that Housing Benefit rules reflect the housing expectations of people of a similar age not on benefits. We estimate that around 40% of the relevant group of private renters not in receipt of Housing Benefit have shared accommodation arrangements, and that around a third of all single childless 25 to 34 year olds live with their parents. We also estimate that over one third of those on Housing Benefit who would potentially be affected are already assessed at the shared accommodation rate.

7. The Government believes that work should be people's first choice and that it is reasonable and fair that those slightly older working age individuals who have recourse to public funds should have their Housing Benefit limited in this way. The taxpayer should not be expected to pay the full cost of self-contained accommodation through Housing Benefit for single people aged 34 and under when many of their contemporaries in work would be living in shared accommodation.

8. These changes are also at the heart of the Government's reforms and their drive to contain rising Housing Benefit expenditure. Expenditure has roughly doubled in cash terms from £11bn to £21.7bn over the ten years to 2010/11. The shared accommodation rate changes are expected to deliver savings to the Exchequer of around £215m by 2014/15.

### **Policy and operational background**

9. The Local Housing Allowance shared accommodation rate applies to:

- single people aged under 25 years old; and
- single people aged 25 and over or couples with no children who live in shared accommodation.

10. The shared accommodation rate in LHA cases restricts the maximum Housing Benefit for those living in the private-rented sector to the level of the published rate. Rent officers gather information on achieved rents for properties in the area. The shared accommodation rate in LHA cases is based on the thirtieth percentile of those rents for properties that are not self contained, where the tenant has exclusive use of a bedroom and shares at least a kitchen, bathroom or toilet or a room suitable for living in. This is laid out in paragraph 1 of the schedule 3B to the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Order 1997.

11. At March 2010, we estimate that there were 54,000 customers under 25 and 93,000 aged 25 and over being paid Local Housing Allowance at the shared accommodation rate. This is within a total LHA caseload of just over one million. Information on the current shared accommodation rates in different parts of the country is available at the Direct Gov website (under local housing allowance). These rates are shown as the 'shared accommodation rate' but are only relevant to those who are assessed under the Local Housing Allowance rules.

#### Examples of rates

<b>Area</b>	<b>One bedroom rate £pw</b>	<b>Shared accommodation rate £pw</b>
Central London	250.00	137.50
Inner North London	245.00	103.89
Outer West London	167.31	75.19
Greater Glasgow	91.15	63.46
Newport	78.00	53.08

Note: These are the new rates for April 2011, set at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile and subject to a £250pw national cap.

12. The single room rent applies to Housing Benefit cases not assessed under the local housing allowance rules i.e. cases where the claimant has continued to live at the same address and claim HB since before the introduction of the LHA. It reflects local rent levels for a one bedroom property where the person has sole access to a bedroom with shared access to a living room, bathroom, toilet and kitchen. In effect, they provide for a room in a shared house.

13. The single room rent relies on the previous system of individual rent officer referrals, starting at the point of claim and then every 52 weeks from the date of the original or previous referral. This is similar in concept to the anniversary date in the Local Housing Allowance. Existing cases in the age group 25 to 34 receiving Housing Benefit under these rules rather than LHA rules would then move on to the single room rent at their annual review.

## Exemptions

14. Various groups of tenants are exempt from the shared accommodation rate and these will be carried forward to the extended age group. These are:

- Local Authority and Registered Housing Association tenants. Social sector tenants normally have their rent met in full (less deductions for non-dependants and earnings) as rents are generally below market rates.
- Tenants in certain supported accommodation. This covers tenants who are in accommodation where the landlord is a county council, voluntary organisation, housing association or registered charity and provides care, support or supervision. These cases are assessed under pre 1996 rules which recognise that their housing costs may be more expensive.
- Claimants entitled to the severe disability premium, that is customers who receive the middle or highest rate care component of Disability Living Allowance.
- Claimants who have a non-dependant residing with them.
- Claimants under the age of 22 who were formerly in social services care. This allows care leavers some leeway to become settled and move in to work or establish links whereby they could share accommodation with others. [Note: this exemption will not apply to the extended age group but is included for completeness to show the current exemptions]
- Claimants entitled to an extra bedroom to allow for a non-resident carer to sleep over where overnight care is required.

15. A number of commentators have suggested that these exemptions be extended to cover people in vulnerable situations including those with mental disabilities or illnesses, former rough sleepers, ex-offenders, foster carers and those with shared care of children. Rather than creating exemptions for broad categories the Government believes that Discretionary Housing Payments are the right approach to supporting people in more vulnerable circumstances. For example, not every person with a mental illness would need extra support but some individual cases may warrant help through Discretionary Housing Payments.

16. To help the most vulnerable people who could be affected by the Housing Benefit reforms the Discretionary Housing Payments budget will be increased by an additional £10 million in 2011-12 and then £40 million per year from 2012-13. Trebling of the Discretionary Housing Payments budget is intended to give local authorities the flexibility to sustain some tenancies where more support is needed.

### **The proposed changes to the Housing Benefit regulations**

17. The proposed Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011 make the following amendments to the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 and the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006:

## Regulation 1

Regulation 1 deals with the title of the Regulations and commencement.

## Regulation 2

Regulation 2 amends the definition of 'young individual' to reflect the increase in age threshold from 25 to 35 and sets out when the changes will take effect for existing claimants. It also amends the LHA transitional protection regulations 12M to ensure that the shared accommodation rate applies once the nine month period ceases. A more detailed explanation of the effect of these amendments is attached at Annex A.

## Regulation 3

This removes the redundant definition of "young individual" from the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006.

## **Implementation arrangements**

18. The date from which these changes will apply will depend on whether the claimant is making a new claim to Housing Benefit or whether they are an existing claimant. Single claimants aged 25 or over but under the age of 35 making **new claims** to Housing Benefit on or after 1 January 2012 will be entitled to the shared accommodation rate rather than the one bedroom self-contained rate.

19. For **existing claimants**, the date from which the changes will apply will depend on their circumstances as follows:

- existing claimants who on or after 1 January 2012 are in a transitional protection period for the April 2011 LHA changes will move to the shared accommodation rate at the same time as their transitional protection ceases;
- existing claimants not receiving transitional protection, i.e. those whose claims are made on or after 1 April 2011 but before 1 January 2012, or who have lost their transitional protection because of a change of circumstances before January 2012 will move to the shared accommodation rate on the anniversary date of their claim;
- pre-LHA cases will move to the shared accommodation rate (previously known as the single room rent) on the annual review of their case.

20. Further examples of how these changes will affect individuals are contained at Annex B.

## **Impact Assessment**

### Equality and diversity

21. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached.

### Complexity

22. The proposed regulations are designed to make implementation of this change as straightforward as possible. For existing claimants the shared accommodation rate changes will be aligned to take effect at the end of the Local Housing Allowance transitional protection period, where appropriate. This should provide more certainty to customers and to staff administering these changes. Current rules and exemptions apply to the new age group.

### Operations

23. The regulations will require some changes to IT systems but these changes should be relatively straightforward in line with the implementation arrangements. Comprehensive guidance will be issued to staff about the changes to the shared accommodation rate in due course once the regulations are in place, subject to the usual parliamentary processes.

### Child poverty and wellbeing of children

24. The shared accommodation rate rules apply to single people, so there will not be a direct effect on households with children. However, a number of the people affected will have children who do not live with them but where shared care or shared custody arrangements are in place. In these circumstances it is possible that some parents receiving the shared accommodation rate may choose not to move so that they are better able to accommodate their children staying overnight. While it will be for claimants to decide how they meet any shortfall between their rent and Housing Benefit there could be an indirect impact in some cases on the contribution that a claimant is able to make to their child's upkeep.

25. It is not possible to make an objective assessment of the potential impact, if any, of this measure on the wellbeing of children as DWP has no evidence on which to assess this.

### Business/local government

26. These regulations have no impact on the civil society organisations, and only a negligible impact on the public sector. It is too early to quantify the impact of these changes on private landlords because of the uncertainty about tenant and landlord behaviour. It is therefore not necessary to publish a full impact assessment.

## Rural Impacts

27. DWP has limited evidence on which to assess the potential impact of this measure on those living in rural locations. It is too soon to know what the behavioural impacts might be once the measure has been introduced. If the availability of shared accommodation is more limited in some rural areas those affected may face more difficulty in securing suitable accommodation.

## **Research, monitoring and evaluation**

28. The Government acknowledges the importance of undertaking an analysis of the effects of the Housing Benefit reforms on particular groups. The Department has commissioned independent, external research that will monitor the 2011 Local Housing Allowance measures. The evaluation will include qualitative and survey research with claimants, landlords and external organisations and will pay particular attention to the impact in a number of key areas including:

- Homelessness and numbers moving
- The shared accommodation rate and Homes in Multiple Occupation
- Greater London
- Rural communities
- Black and Minority Ethnic households
- Families with children, particularly large families or those with multiple risk factors
- Older people
- People with disabilities
- Working claimants
- Landlords
- Housing and labour markets

The impacts on the wider health and wellbeing of vulnerable people will also be considered in this research, as well as the financial impacts on individuals.

29. The Equality Impact Assessment contains further information on monitoring and evaluating the shared accommodation rate changes.

## **Information strategy and communications**

30. DWP will publicise these proposed changes through appropriate channels to make sure that people, particularly those to be affected from January, know about them in advance. DWP has already issued an HB/CTB circular<sup>3</sup> to Local Authority staff who administer Housing Benefit to tell them about bringing forward the planned implementation date to January 2012. The circular advises Local Authorities of the importance of ensuring that any information about the rate of LHA payable to individuals at the end of their transitional protection period is as accurate as possible.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/a6-2011.pdf>

31. Local Authorities have been asked wherever possible to advise those affected of this change to the shared accommodation rate alongside the notifications of the new LHA rates. At the point of moving to the shared accommodation rate the rate payable will be the appropriate rate in place at that time. So while it won't be possible to confirm in advance the precise rate that will be payable to individuals, customers can be directed to information on current LHA rates for shared accommodation on the LHADirect part of Direct Gov.

32. DWP is developing a comprehensive communications strategy to inform and engage directly with customers likely to be affected by these changes and with a range of stakeholders including landlords, Local Authorities, Customer Representation Groups, local communities and others. It will consider the most effective way of engaging with stakeholders and how key messages might be targeted whilst keeping costs to a minimum. As part of this strategy DWP will consider the feasibility and effectiveness of using a range of different communications channels and printed material including leaflets and posters to ensure that the information reaches the most vulnerable customers who may be affected by the change.

## **Annex A**

### **The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011**

Regulations 13(5) and 13D(2) of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 set the maximum rent and maximum rent (LHA) at the single room rent and one bedroom shared accommodation rate, respectively, for those who are classified as a “young individual” through the definition in regulation 2(1).

The shared accommodation rate has been applied to young individuals, aged up to 24 years old, in a variety of forms since first introduced in October 1997. Essentially, the eligible rent of young individuals is restricted to the level of shared or non self contained properties locally irrespective of the size of property they occupy.

Regulation 12M provides transitional protection for those affected by the April 2011 changes to how the maximum rent (LHA) is set. This protection starts from the first anniversary date on or after the date these changes came into force. Regulation 12M(3) protects the existing eligible rent for nine months for those who would face a reduction and also acts on those whose eligible rent no longer includes a £15 addition on top of their cap rent and who face no further reduction in entitlement at the end of the nine month period.

The first change made by regulation 2(2) is to the definition of a young individual in regulation 2(1), which has been amended so that a “young individual” will now be a person who has not yet attained the age of 35. This change ensures that the eligible rent for those young individuals currently subject to the maximum rent will revert from the two room Local Reference Rent to the Single Room Rent from the date the rent officer referral is required on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, as required by regulation 14(1)(c), (f) or (g).

Regulation 12M(4A) applies to those young individuals who are at least 25 and subject to the maximum rent (LHA). This ensures that a new maximum rent (LHA) will take effect from the end of the period of transitional protection for those “young individuals” who are by then aged at least 25. This will be the case whether the person has received additional benefit or not during this period.

The young individual’s eligible rent will, in effect, revert to the post transitional period amount of the Local Housing Allowance one bedroom shared accommodation rate from the one bedroom rate.

Regulation 12M(4A) also ensures that this setting of a new eligible rent based on maximum rent(LHA) at the end of the transitional protection period will not reset the anniversary date, as would be the case otherwise. This looks to replicate what will happen with all other cases subject to transitional protection, which does not interrupt the anniversary date cycle.



## Annex B

### Shared accommodation rate (SAR) - implementation dates for new and existing cases

<b>EXISTING HB CASES WITH TRANSITIONAL PROTECTION FROM THE LHA REFORMS</b>		
<b>Date of claim or most recent anniversary date</b>	<b>Date of notification of LHA changes (30<sup>th</sup> percentile and cap)</b>	<b>Date LHA and SAR changes implemented</b>
<b>1 - 30 April 2010</b>	1 – 30 April 2011	1 – 30 January 2012
<b>1 - 31 May 2010</b>	1 – 31 May 2011	1 – 28 February 2012
<b>1 - 30 June 2010</b>	1 – 30 June 2011	1 – 30 March 2012
<b>1 - 31 July 2010</b>	1 – 31 July 2011	1 – 30 April 2012
<b>1 - 31 August 2010</b>	1 – 31 August 2011	1 – 31 May 2012
<b>1- 30 September 2010</b>	1 – 30 September 2011	1 – 30 June 2012
<b>1 - 31 October 2010</b>	1 – 31 October 2011	1 – 31 July 2012
<b>1 - 30 November 2010</b>	1 – 30 November 2011	1 – 31 August 2012
<b>1 - 31 December 2010</b>	1 – 31 December 2011	1 – 30 September 2012
<b>1 - 31 January 2011</b>	1 – 31 January 2012	1 – 31 October 2012
<b>1 - 28 February 2011</b>	1 – 28 February 2012	1 – 28 November 2012
<b>1 - 31 March 2011</b>	1 – 31 March 2012	1 – 31 December 2012
<b>HB CASES WHERE CLAIM MADE ON OR AFTER 1 APRIL 2011 BUT BEFORE 1 JANUARY 2012</b>		
<b>Date of claim</b>	<b>Date LHA changes (30<sup>th</sup> percentile and cap) effective from</b>	<b>Date SAR changes implemented</b>
<b>1 – 30 April 2011</b>	1 – 30 April 2011	1 – 30 April 2012
<b>1 – 31 May 2011</b>	1 – 31 May 2011	1 – 31 May 2012
<b>1 – 30 June 2011</b>	1 – 30 June 2011	1 – 30 June 2012
<b>1 – 31 July 2011</b>	1 – 31 July 2011	1 – 31 July 2012
<b>1 – 31 August 2011</b>	1 – 31 August 2011	1 – 31 August 2012
<b>1 – 30 September 2011</b>	1 – 30 September 2011	1 – 30 September 2012
<b>1 – 31 October 2011</b>	1 – 31 October 2011	1 – 31 October 2012
<b>1 – 30 November 2011</b>	1 – 30 November 2011	1 – 30 November 2012
<b>1 – 31 December 2011</b>	1 – 31 December 2011	1 – 31 December 2012
<b>HB CASES WHERE CLAIM MADE ON OR AFTER 1 JANUARY 2012</b>		
The shared accommodation rate will be payable from the effective date of the person's claim		

Note: Those aged at least 25 but under 35 and not assessed under LHA rules would move to the single room rent on their annual review date, in line with the proposed arrangements for the shared accommodation rate cases where a new claim is made on or after 1 April 2011 but before 1 January 2012.

## **Further questions and answers on implementation issues:**

***As the LHA maximum rent determinations are for a year (for protected claims this is 9 months TP + 3 months on the unprotected rate), what will trigger the new LHA maximum rent for each of the above?***

The proposed policy is that single claimants who are aged under 35 at the end of their transitional protection (TP) will move onto the shared accommodation rate for properties that are not self contained at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile, rather than the self-contained accommodation rate, from the end of their nine month protection. The present draft amendments include a provision within HB reg. 12M that will prompt a new eligible rent based on the maximum rent (LHA) at the end of the TP period. The amendment also ensures that the anniversary date will not be reset.

***What about claims that were eligible for consideration for the April 2011 protection but who did not qualify?***

These will be cases where there is entitlement to transitional protection but their actual rent is lower than their eligible rent before 1st April 2011. They will have been capped rent cases that would have been eligible for the up to £15 addition, which will be lost immediately from the anniversary date on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. An eligible rent established through HB reg. 12M(2)(b)(ii) would apply, the cap rent having lost the £15 addition through the revocation of HB reg. 13D(6). This eligible rent is protected by HB reg. 12M(3)(a) for 9 months, even where there is no extra money to protect. The shared accommodation rate would take effect from the end of the 9 months rather than the next anniversary date.

***Those who did qualify for a transitional period but whose qualification ends before January 2012 (e.g. a 27 year old claimant whose category was protected when at 2 rooms but has a subsequent change of dwelling that reduces the category to 1 room), or***

TP ends where the claimant warrants a bigger or smaller dwelling, moves or experiences a death in the household following the first anniversary date after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. A new maximum rent (LHA) would then be implemented with a new anniversary date. Where the change occurred before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, the shared accommodation rate would apply from the next anniversary of this date if it had not already done so.

***A claimant who moves off TP because they become entitled to bereavement protection, etc.)?***

TP ends where the claimant experiences a death in the household following the first anniversary date after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. A new maximum rent (LHA) would be required with a new anniversary date, although not implemented because of the 12 month protection in the case of deaths occurring after 1 January 2012. In these cases the local authority will be required to determine an eligible rent in accordance with regulation 12D(3)(a). The shared

accommodation rate would effectively be implemented at the end of the 12 month protection.

***And how does the change affect Pathfinder protected claims?***

The existing Pathfinder Authority transitional protection would not be affected by the extension of the definition of young individual up to those aged 34 years.

***What happens if someone was in TP and then is removed out of TP prior to January 2012 - will they immediately be entered into one bedroom shared rate or will it only happen at anniversary?***

Where TP ends before January 2012 a new maximum rent (LHA) would be required with a new anniversary date. Where the change occurred before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, the shared accommodation rate would apply from this new anniversary date.

***What happens if someone is under 25 and in the shared room rate and becomes 25 years of age and would move into one bedroom self contained rate prior to the end TP period and this larger category of dwelling results in the customer remaining in TP?***

For a person on the shared accommodation rate during the transitional protection period and living in or moving to a one bedroom self contained dwelling on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, who becomes 25 years old in the period of TP, but before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, their TP would end and they would be subject to the one bedroom self contained LHA rate from their birthday as a new maximum rent (LHA) would apply because the category of property would have changed. This would reset a new anniversary date and the shared accommodation rate would apply from the anniversary of that date.

***What happens if someone under 25 is not in TP and is in the shared room rate and becomes 25 years of age prior to Anniversary but before 1 January 2012?***

Assuming this person is in a one bedroom self contained property they would be subject to the one bedroom self contained LHA rate from their birthday and a new maximum rent (LHA) would apply as the category of property they are entitled to has changed. This would reset the anniversary date from when the shared accommodation rate would apply.

***If the maximum LHA is based on one bedroom self contained rate and the person is a single claimant 25 and over but under 35 at the same point TP ends and this date falls on or after January 2012 do you expect the Local Authority to determine the maximum LHA using change in category of dwelling legislation and a new anniversary date set?***

The present draft amendments include a provision that will prompt a new eligible rent based on maximum rent (LHA) at the end of the TP period but will also ensure that the anniversary date will not be reset.

***If the claim was made in January 2011 and is based on a one bedroom self contained rate and person is a single claimant 25 and over but under 35 and the first determination on or after April 2011 = Anniversary i.e. January 2012. Would you consider TP based on one bedroom self contained rate or immediately enter them into one bedroom shared room rate or would you wait to the earliest of end of protection period or January 2013 anniversary?***

The maximum rent (LHA) would in January 2011 initially be set at the one bedroom self contained LHA median rate. This will apply until the January 2012 anniversary date. As the person is now a “young individual” the shared accommodation rate would be appropriate but HB reg. 12M(2)(b) would apply, meaning that the existing amount would be protected for a further 9 months at which point the shared accommodation rate at the 30th percentile would apply but their anniversary date will not be reset.

***Would there be any impact on temporary accommodation LHA based subsidy – currently subsidy is based on one bedroom self contained rate and there is no reference to one bedroom shared room rate?***

None.

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Housing Benefit

Increasing the Shared Accommodation Rate age threshold to 35.

April 2011

Equality impact assessment for increasing the age threshold for the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate to 35.

## Introduction

1. The Department for Work and Pensions has carried out an equality impact assessment on the proposal to increase the age threshold to 35 for the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate, assessing the proposal in line with the public sector equality duties.
2. This process will help to ensure that:
  - the Department’s strategies, policies and services are free from discrimination;
  - the Department complies with current equality legislation;
  - due regard is given to equality in decision making and subsequent processes; and
  - opportunities for promoting equality are identified.
3. Single Housing Benefit claimants living in the private rented sector who are aged under 25 are classed in secondary legislation as “young individuals” for Housing Benefit purposes. When calculating the amount of Housing Benefit payable they are restricted to the shared accommodation rate (previously known as the shared room rate). Under Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rules, this is the rate appropriate to a dwelling where the tenant has exclusive use of only one bedroom and shares at least one of: a kitchen; a bathroom; a toilet; or a room suitable for living in. In cases where entitlement to Housing Benefit is assessed under the pre-Local Housing Allowance rules, it is the rate appropriate to a dwelling where the tenant has exclusive use of a bedroom and shares a toilet, bathroom, kitchen and a room suitable for living in (the single room rent). These rates are also applicable to claimants actually living in this type of accommodation, regardless of age or whether they are part of a couple.
4. There are exemptions from the shared accommodation rate for those in receipt of the severe disability premium<sup>1</sup>, those under 22 who have previously been in social services care and those claimants who require overnight care and have a bedroom for a non-resident carer. The shared accommodation rate does not apply to those living in the social sector or living in certain supported accommodation. Housing Benefit for single claimants who are exempt from these rules is calculated on the basis of the rate for self-contained one bedroom accommodation.

## Scope of this assessment

5. The equality impact assessment will demonstrate how the Department has paid due regard when developing new services or processes of protection against

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<sup>1</sup> That is claimants who receive the middle or highest rate care component of Disability Living Allowance

discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief (the protected characteristics).

## Brief outline of the policy or service

*What is the change in policy?*

6. From 1 January 2012 the age threshold for the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate will increase from 25 to 35. Existing exemptions, including those for care leavers, those in receipt of the severe disability premium and those with a non-resident carer will continue to apply.
7. The changes made to Housing Benefit from April 2011 (use of the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile, introduction of caps, a maximum of four bedroom rate) also included transitional protection for existing customers. Those single claimants in the affected age group who are in a transitional protection period will move to the shared accommodation rate immediately that nine month protection period ends.
8. New claims made on or after 1 January 2012 will be affected from the start of their claim and existing customers not receiving transitional protection will be affected on the anniversary date of their claim. Pre LHA cases will move to the shared accommodation rate (formerly known as the single room rent) on the review date of their claim.

## Reason for change in policy?

### Policy Objective

9. This measure is being introduced in order to:
  - ensure greater fairness - ensuring that those receiving Housing Benefit do not have an advantage over those who are not on benefit, but have to make similar choices about what they can afford;
  - ensure that Housing Benefit rules reflect the housing expectations of people of a similar age not on benefits;
  - help contain growing Housing Benefit expenditure;
  - remove a potential work disincentive.

### Rationale for Intervention

10. Expenditure on Housing Benefit has increased significantly from £11 billion in 2000/2001 (£15 billion in today's prices) to over £21.5 billion in 2010/2011.
11. This measure is expected to save around £200m per year in the longer term.
12. While this is primarily a saving measure, it also creates more of a level playing field, in the affected age group between recipients of Housing Benefit and those who are not on benefit. It is also thought likely to decrease work disincentives by ensuring that those on Housing Benefit are not advantaged when compared with those not on benefit. The Government believes that work should be people's first choice and also that it is reasonable that those slightly older working age

individuals who have recourse to public funds should have their Housing Benefit limited in this way. Exemptions will remain for the most vulnerable.

13. Latest figures show that two thirds of LHA claimants assessed under the shared accommodation rate are couples or are aged 25 or over. This suggests that many claimants in the 25-35 age group are already choosing to live in shared accommodation.

## Consultation and involvement

14. This measure was announced in the October 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and since then, we have been working with the Department of Communities and Local Government, the devolved administrations and stakeholders on both the detailed design of the measure and how it might work in practice.
15. The Work and Pensions Select Committee reported on the reforms to Housing Benefit on 22 December 2010. The Committee considered the shared accommodation rate and accepted the need to make savings but recommended that this change should be a short term measure<sup>2</sup>. The DWP Two Year Review of Local Housing Allowance reported on 10 February 2011<sup>3</sup> and included data on the shared accommodation rate showing that a sizeable proportion of claimants choose to live in shared accommodation.
16. We have met with groups representing housing associations and those that work with the homeless to listen to their concerns. We hold regular meetings with customer representative groups, and talked to key external stakeholders through the DWP Policy and Strategy Forum. These discussions have raised concerns for a number of groups although little data has been provided on how these groups will be affected other than anecdotal evidence and a general expression of concern for the groups they represent. Paragraph 43 looks at the concerns for these groups and considers any need for mitigation.
17. We are running a formal consultation with local authority representative groups on the amending regulations being referred to the Social Security Advisory Committee. The deadline for their response is 5 May 2011.

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<sup>2</sup> Changes to Housing Benefit announced in the June 2010 Budget: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2010–11 (pages 6 and 7)  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmworpen/845/845.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Two Year Review of the Local Housing Allowance. Feb 2011.  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-review-feb-2011.pdf>



# Impact of increasing the age threshold for the shared accommodation rate to 35.

## Estimated Savings

18. The increase in the age threshold will result in savings to the Exchequer.

**Table 1: Estimated savings**

Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Savings £million, cash terms	10	170	230	215

Source: Budget 2011 estimates

## Gender

19. This policy is aimed at single people regardless of gender. The total Housing Benefit caseload has around one million more women than men. However, most younger women claiming Housing Benefit are lone parents, while few single men have full time caring responsibilities for dependent children. As this policy is aimed at younger claimants without children, most of those affected are men.

20. Table 2 below shows the gender breakdown of those affected compared to others on Housing Benefit and to the wider population of private renters. Nearly three quarters of those affected are men, but the fourth column shows that amongst all working age private renters, most single people without (dependent) children are men. It is this group, single with no dependents living with them, that this policy is purposely aimed at.

**Table 2: Gender breakdown of those affected**

	People affected by policy	All Local Housing Allowance	All Housing Benefit	Single, childless, working age private renters, including those not on HB	All private renters, including those not on HB
Female	28%	46%	51%	36%	31%
Male	72%	33%	29%	64%	36%
Couple	0%	22%	20%	0%	33%
Source	Single Housing Benefit Extract, March 2010 data			Family Resources Survey 2008/09	

## Disability

21. The current exemption for claimants entitled to the severe disability premium in Housing Benefit will continue to apply. We expect that around 4,000 people will be exempt on this basis, but some people who meet the wider Equality Act 2010 (EA) definition will be affected. Housing Benefit administrative data does not identify these, but the Family Resources Survey does allow us to look at the prevalence of EA disability amongst private renters.
22. Others will be excluded from this measure because they live in certain types of supported accommodation which is exempt from the shared accommodation rate.
23. Table 3 below gives estimates of the proportion of private renters who are disabled (under the EA definition). It shows that the level of disabled people privately renting differs very little between 25-34 year olds and under-25s, who are already subject to the shared accommodation rate. Unsurprisingly, whilst those in the new age group is slightly higher, given their relative youth, both groups show a lower proportion of disabled people than the overall private renters level.

**Table 3: Proportions of private renters with a disability**

	Single childless private renters under 25	Single childless private renters aged 25-34	All private renters
Non-disabled	93%	91%	78%
Disabled	7%	9%	22%
Source	Family Resources Survey 2008/09		

24. Administrative data does allow for identification of those whose benefit award includes disability elements. Table 4 below estimates the proportion of single, childless LHA recipients who have disability elements in their Housing Benefit assessment or in an underlying claim for Income Support or Employment Support Allowance. It excludes those who would be exempt from the shared accommodation rate through receipt of the severe disability premium or living with a non-dependant.

**Table 4: Receipt of disability premiums in LHA awards**

	Under 25	25-34	35-60
Proportion of single, childless LHA claimants with disability premiums	11%	18%	28%
Source	Single Housing Benefit Extract, and Work and Pensions Longitudinal study data, May 2010		

25. Some of these will be helped by the introduction of the room for non-resident carers for those who require overnight care that was introduced from April 2011.

## Ethnicity

26. Figures on the ethnicity of those affected are not available, as local authorities are not required to gather this information. Table 5 below gives estimates of the proportion of private renters who are black or in a minority ethnic group, derived from the Family Resources Survey.

**Table 5: Ethnicity of private renters**

	Single childless private renters under 25	Single childless private renters aged 25-34	All private renters
White	80%	79%	84%
BME	20%	21%	16%
Source	Family Resources Survey 2008/09		

27. The table shows that the 25-34 age group have similar characteristics to the under 25s, who are already subject to the shared accommodation rate.

## Age

28. This policy is deliberately aimed at younger adults Table 6 below gives estimates of the numbers of LHA claimants currently assessed at the shared and one-bedroom rates. This shows that two thirds of those currently assessed at the shared rate are couples or are over 25, and that over one third of those who could potentially be affected by the policy are already living in shared accommodation.
29. Based on the 2008/09 Family Resources Survey we estimate that around 40% of single, childless, non-student private renters aged 25-34 are in shared accommodation. This shows that sharing is prevalent for those in this age group and not on Housing Benefit.

**Table 6: LHA shared and one-bedroom caseloads**

LHA caseload, March 2010	Shared Accommodation Rate	One bedroom rate	Shared or one bedroom
Under 25, entitled only to shared rate	53,140	-	53,140
25-34 and would lose, but already assessed at shared rate	35,780	-	35,780
25-34 assessed at one bedroom rate and will lose	-	62,500	62,500
Couples, over 35 or exempt	57,730	253,270	311,000
All	146,650	315,770	462,430

Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract, March 2010

30. **Table 7** below compares the characteristics of the first three age groups set out above.

	Under 25, entitled only to shared rate	25-34 and would lose, but already assessed at shared rate	25-34 assessed at one bedroom rate and will lose
Number of cases	53,140	35,780	62,500
Receipt of passporting benefits			
With income support	12%	7%	14%
With JSA(income-based)	55%	52%	44%
With ESA(income-related)	6%	5%	8%
Without a passporting benefit	27%	36%	34%
Gender			
Female	39%	25%	28%
Male	59%	73%	71%
Gender not recorded	2%	2%	1%
Employment			
In work	14%	13%	16%
Not in work	86%	87%	84%
Duration of current Housing Benefit claim			
0-3 months	31%	26%	19%
3-6 months	27%	23%	20%
6-9 months	17%	16%	15%
9-12 months	9%	11%	13%
12-18 months	10%	14%	18%
18-24 months	4%	6%	8%
Over two years	2%	4%	6%

Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract, March 2010

31. Table 8 below gives estimates of the accommodation arrangements of single people without dependent children across all tenancy types. This shows that it is relatively common for people in the 25 to 34 age bracket to have shared accommodation arrangements or to live in their parents' house.

**Table 8: Accommodation arrangements of single people without dependent children across all tenancy types**

	Age group			
	Under 25	25-34	35-state pension age	All working age
Sole owner or renter	10%	43%	84%	46%
Cared for within household	2%	2%	2%	2%
Caring for someone in household	2%	2%	2%	2%
Student in shared household	19%	3%	-	8%
Shared households	8%	13%	2%	6%
Living with Parents	56%	32%	6%	31%
Boarder or Lodger	1%	2%	-	1%
Other multiple benefit unit arrangements	3%	4%	3%	3%
All	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total individuals, grossed (rounded to 100,000)	4,100,000	2,000,000	4,100,000	10,300,000
Total sample records, column	2,543	1,473	3,583	7,599

Source: Family Resources Survey, 2008/09

32. This analysis is based on the Family Resources Survey definition of a 'household' as being people living under one roof who share meals. Note that some of those labelled as 'sole owner or renter' may be living in accommodation which meets the shared accommodation criteria of Local Housing Allowance; e.g. living in a bedsit which shares some facilities, but as a separate household from others in the same building.

33. Conversely, the 'shared households' category in this table uses the FRS definition of shared accommodation, which covers multiple adults living as a single household, on an equal basis; e.g. sharing the tenancy on a flat. In some cases this may entail individuals having greater exclusive use of facilities than is covered under the Local Housing Allowance definition of shared accommodation.

## Gender reassignment

34. The Department does not hold information on transgender people and it is not likely that this will be available in the future. However the Government does not envisage a particular impact on these grounds.

## Marriage and civil partnership

35. This policy is deliberately aimed at those that are single (living alone) and so the Government does not see that there will be a particular impact on these grounds.

## Sexual orientation

36. The Department does not hold information on sexual orientation of claimants and it is not likely that this will be available in the future. However the Government does not envisage a particular impact on these grounds.

## Religion or belief

37. The Department does not hold information on the religion or beliefs of claimants and it is not likely that this will be available in the future. We do not see, however, that any of these groups would be affected by this measure.

## Pregnancy and maternity

38. This will not affect anybody who already has children and where they are included in their Housing Benefit assessment. A small number of single women aged 25 to 34 will now be entitled to only the shared rate during their first pregnancy, putting them in the same position as women living alone aged under 25.

## Mitigation

39. Various groups of tenants are exempt from the shared accommodation rate and these will continue to apply. These are:

- Local Authority and Registered Housing Association tenants. Social sector tenants normally have their rent met in full (less deductions for non-dependants and earnings) as rents are generally below market rates.
- Tenants in certain supported accommodation. This covers tenants who are in accommodation where the landlord is a county council, a housing association, voluntary organisation or registered charity and provides care, support or supervision. These cases are assessed under pre 1996 rules which recognise that their housing costs may be more expensive.
- Claimants entitled to the severe disability premium.
- Claimants who have a non-dependant residing with them.
- Claimants under the age of 22 who were formerly in social services care. This allows care leavers some leeway to become settled and establish links whereby they could share accommodation with others.
- Claimants entitled to an additional bedroom to accommodate a non-resident carer because they require overnight care.

40. We expect that some tenants may be able to re-negotiate their rent with their landlords particularly where the reduction is small. Landlords might prefer to accept a reduced rent from a good tenant than run the risk of letting to someone new. In other cases, the difference in rents between the one bedroom self-contained rate and the shared accommodation rate could be significant and we acknowledge that many will move as a result of these changes. Alternatively

claimants may meet the shortfall through other income such as employment or savings or a combination of these.

41. Further, there is already a general Housing Benefit easement which entitles new claimants to have their rent met in full for 13 weeks if they have not claimed Housing Benefit in the last year and could afford their rent at the time they entered into their tenancy. This means that claimants who experience only a short spell of unemployment should not be forced to move and it gives others time to consider their housing options. People who have been recently bereaved are entitled to similar protection for 12 months (e.g. following the loss of a partner or for a lone parent the loss of their child).

42. Individuals considering their accommodation options because of this measure may consider their options and these are shown in table 9 below.

**Table 9: Accommodation choices**

<b>Type of accommodation</b>	<b>HB entitlement</b>
Remain in their current home	Shared accommodation rate applies and claimant will need to meet the shortfall through other income or savings
Return to family home	None
Move into shared accommodation	Shared accommodation rate applies
Become a boarder or lodger (where meals are provided)	Shared accommodation rate applies (formerly known as the single room rent)
Become a boarder or lodger (no meals provided)	Shared accommodation rate applies
Move to cheaper self contained accommodation	Shared accommodation rate applies and claimant will need to meet the shortfall

43. At discussions with stakeholders they have raised concerns about people in vulnerable situations and suggested a number of others should be made exempt from this measure. Particular concerns has been highlighted for:

- those who have been rough sleeping;
- those with mental disabilities or illnesses but do not meet the disability premium requirements;
- parents who share the care of their children but do not have main custody;
- ex-offenders;
- foster carers.

44. A number of these might be difficult for claimants to demonstrate that they meet any qualifying conditions. And in some cases providing a specific exemption would also add an element of double provision, such as those with shared commitments for children or foster carers in receipt of a fostering allowance. Many individuals within these groups could reasonably share with others and therefore a blanket exemption is not necessary. We therefore do not consider it appropriate to make any further exemptions than are already in place but



consider that Discretionary Housing Payments can best address the individual nature of such cases (see below).

## Discretionary Housing Payments

45. Local authorities can make Discretionary Housing Payments from a cash limited fund to tenants who face a shortfall in their rent. The central government funding allocation for this fund has been £20 million per annum since 2002. The Government has recognised that some customers may need targeted support as a result of recent changes and announced an increase in the allocation of £10 million in 2011/12 and £40 million a year from 2012/13 onwards increasing the government contribution to £60 million overall during the Spending Review period. This additional funding will give local authorities flexibility to provide support where it is most needed. For example, to act as a safety net for customers who need to find alternative accommodation or longer term support for customers who are less able to move.

## Monitoring and evaluation

46. DWP is committed to monitoring the impacts of its policies and we will use evidence from a number of sources on the experiences and outcomes of the protected groups.

- We will use administrative datasets, including the Single Housing Benefit Extract, to monitor trends in the benefit caseload for the protected groups, looking at the level of Housing Benefit and the impact of the move to the shared accommodation rate. The administrative data will provide robust material for age and gender although not for the other protected groups.
- Where possible we will use survey data to examine the impact on protected groups and to assess the resulting changes in accommodation choices
- We will use qualitative research and feedback from stakeholder groups to assess whether there are unintended consequences for the protected groups, and whether the policy is resulting in adverse consequences for particular groups.
- We will draw on broader research where appropriate, including the independent external evaluation of our Housing Benefit reforms that is currently being commissioned.

47. The material in this Equality Impact Assessment covers the equality groups of age, disability, gender and ethnicity. For the age and gender strands we have good quality information from both the administrative and survey data, while for ethnicity and disability we have reasonable information from the survey data.

48. This Equality Impact Assessment also covers sexual orientation, transgender, religion or belief and pregnancy/maternity; with the exception of maternity, these

groups will not be captured in the Departmental administrative information. We have requested for information on religion or belief and sexual orientation to be included in the main survey used for low income and poverty analysis from April 2011. Also, as part of our actions in the context of the data requirements under the Equality Act 2010, we are looking across DWP activities to identify and address further gaps in data provision wherever reasonable.

## Next steps

49. This Equality Impact Assessment is being published alongside draft Regulations to implement this change. It will be reviewed as the Regulations progress and account will be taken of consultation and operational considerations.

## Contact details

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# Impact of changes to the Housing Benefit shared accommodation rate

Impact of increasing the housing benefit age threshold for the shared accommodation rate from 25 to 35 years old, from January 2012

April 2011

**DWP** Department for  
Work and Pensions

# Methodology and Background

1. This document presents an estimate of the impacts of the Housing Benefit (HB) measure to increase the age threshold for the shared accommodation rate (SAR) from 25 to 35 years old.
2. This measure comes into effect from January 2012, and applies to tenants receiving HB in the private rented sector.
3. The shared accommodation rate for Local Housing Allowance (LHA) cases and the single-room rent for pre-LHA cases apply to:
  - single people aged under 25 years old;
  - Couples without children or single claimants over 25 who live in shared accommodation.
4. Certain exemptions exist for those who are severely disabled. Under the SAR arrangements, Housing Benefit is restricted to the level published for each area. Rent officers gather information on achieved rents for shared properties in the area. The SAR is currently based on the median of those rents where the tenant has exclusive use of a bedroom and shares at least a kitchen, bathroom or toilet.
5. It has been announced, independently from the measures considered here, that during 2011/12 LHA rates, including the SAR, will be based on the 30th percentile of rents rather than the median, and capped at various levels. These changes are due to take effect from April 2011, with up to 9 months transitional protection for existing LHA recipients. It should be noted that, currently, the announced LHA caps do not have an impact on the SAR as all SAR LHA rates are below £250 per week.<sup>1</sup>

## Analytical approach

6. The analytical approach used in this document is the same as that used in the document **“Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12”**<sup>2</sup> which was published on 23 July 2010.
7. However, as these reforms will have taken effect before the SAR change is brought in, the analysis considers the impacts over and above these changes. This means, for example, that we are considering the impact of the change for someone receiving the 1-bedroom LHA rate at the 30th percentile versus receiving the SAR LHA rate also calculated at the 30th percentile.

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<sup>1</sup> Internet links pointing to the current LHA rates are provided at the end of this document.

<sup>2</sup> This document is available at the following address: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/impacts-of-hb-proposals.pdf>

8. The analysis presented in this document has been carried out as follows:
  - We considered customers who were in receipt of Housing Benefit assessed under the Local Housing Allowance scheme in March 2010.
  - We first calculated their maximum HB entitlement on the basis of the HB rules that have an impact on the SAR and would take effect before the SAR changes. This means that the impacts are measured on top of the following:
    - Setting LHA rates as the 30th percentile of local rents;
    - Removal of the excess of up to £15 for those whose rent is below their LHA rate.
  - We then calculated the maximum HB entitlement after the shared accommodation rate change takes effect.
9. No other changes are assumed. In particular, rents and the makeup of the caseload (in terms of their family characteristics) are assumed to remain the same as now. Furthermore, no behavioural changes have been modelled, for example customers moving to a cheaper property or landlords reducing their rents.
10. As a result of the above assumptions, when we report ‘losers’ or ‘customers losing out’, these would either be actual losers who would see their benefit decrease, or notional losers, e.g. new claimants, who would not see any benefit change as such, but would receive less HB than if they had claimed under the previous arrangements.

## Data sources

11. The March 2010 Single Housing Benefit Extract was used for this analysis, providing information on bedroom entitlement, geographical area and rent levels of Housing Benefit recipients. This information is combined with LHA rates for June 2010 and the benefit entitlement is recalculated. From this we can get an estimate of the proportion of customers that would lose out and the level of the loss.
12. In the tables presented:
  - Housing Benefit caseloads relate to March 2010. They comprise cases which have the full information necessary for the calculation of impacts, and hence are lower than the figures published as National Statistics;
  - Average losses per week reflect March 2010 losses. (i.e. they show what would have happened had we introduced the change immediately for all claimants in March 2010 but with the measures of paragraph 7 in place);
  - Losers and percentage of claimants losing out reflect the full impact of this measure in the steady state, i.e. for the full caseload affected;
  - “Average maximum HB” is the minimum of the weekly rent and the corresponding LHA rate; it may be higher than the actual HB as it does not account for excess income.

13. Due to these limitations, the analysis of the impacts presented in this document should be treated as indicative.

# Analysis

14. Table 1 displays a high-level breakdown of the estimated impact of the measure to extend the shared accommodation rate to those under 35 years old.
15. It contains estimates of:
  - the number of households that would lose out under this measure;
  - the average loss (or notional loss) in pounds per week for each household that would lose out.
16. For comparison we also present:
  - the total LHA caseload;
  - the total 1-bedroom LHA caseload, as all those losing out would currently be entitled to the 1-bedroom rate.
  - the average maximum HB, calculated based on the arrangements before this reform takes place, but on top of the other Emergency Budget (EB) measures (which are due to come into force before 2012);
  - the proportion of losers as compared to the total LHA caseload and, separately, the 1-bedroom LHA caseload.
17. Nationally, around 7% of the LHA caseload, or 20% of the 1-bedroom LHA caseload, would receive, on average, £41 per week less benefit than under the current rules.
18. Using estimates of the March 2010 LHA caseload, this represents 63,000 people losing out. Of these, the majority would be single males; and/or not in employment; and/or on income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
19. In March 2010 there were also around 7,000 cases aged 25 to 34 still receiving Housing Benefit assessed under the pre-LHA Local Reference Rent rules, who would be likely to have their benefit reduced to the level of the Single Room Rent. It is likely that by the time this change is introduced in 2012 the number of claimants still assessed under the pre-LHA scheme will be significantly lower than this.



## Table 1: Impact of extending the SAR from 25 to 35 years

	Compared to the total LHA caseload			Compared to the current one-bedroom LHA caseload			Number of losers or notional losers	
	Analysis based on an LHA caseload of:	Average maximum HB (total LHA), £ per week	Estimate of percent of losers in row (% of total LHA)	One-bedroom LHA caseload:	Average maximum HB (1-bed LHA), £ per week	Estimate of percent of losers in row (% of 1-bed LHA)	Estimate of number of losers	Average loss per loser, £/week
National (GB)	939,220	£113	7	315,770	£100	20	62,500	£41
Shared room	146,650	£63	0	0	£0	0	0	£0
1-bedroom	315,770	£100	20	315,770	£100	20	62,500	£41
2-bedroom	328,250	£127	0	0	£0	0	0	£0
3-bedroom	112,550	£149	0	0	£0	0	0	£0
4-bedroom	36,000	£185	0	0	£0	0	0	£0
Couple	205,840	£131	0	51,270	£99	0	0	£0
Female	429,300	£120	4	89,090	£101	19	17,220	£44
Male	297,190	£90	15	173,180	£100	26	44,480	£40
Gender not recorded	6,880	£99	11	2,240	£103	35	780	£43
In employment	242,080	£130	4	47,890	£110	21	10,030	£49
Not in employment	697,140	£107	8	267,880	£98	20	52,470	£40
on PCGC	51,840	£99	0	39,220	£98	0	0	£0
on IS	266,080	£121	3	56,380	£99	16	8,850	£41
on JSA(IB)	206,420	£95	13	86,850	£100	32	27,450	£40
on ESA(IR)	42,470	£102	11	20,430	£100	23	4,710	£41
others	372,400	£120	6	112,890	£102	19	21,490	£43
East Midlands	59,100	£89	6	19,360	£78	18	3,470	£24
East of England	71,010	£113	5	22,940	£100	17	3,900	£39
London	159,370	£179	7	46,530	£167	25	11,780	£87
North East	45,160	£86	9	16,610	£80	24	3,950	£31
North West	131,180	£92	8	47,990	£83	21	9,890	£28
Scotland	51,060	£96	8	20,270	£84	19	3,920	£22
South East	123,000	£125	5	38,930	£111	16	6,180	£45
South West	83,180	£106	6	30,130	£97	16	4,860	£36
Wales	48,710	£85	6	17,420	£74	18	3,080	£24
West Midlands	80,140	£95	7	25,080	£87	21	5,240	£32
Yorkshire and the Humber	87,310	£83	7	30,510	£76	20	6,230	£21
Not losing	876,710	£113		253,270	£99		0	£0
Losses of £0-£5					£64		760	£3
Losses of £5-£10					£68		1,220	£8
Losses of £10-£15					£74		2,970	£13
Losses of £15-£20					£74		7,230	£18
Losses of £20-£30					£84		13,770	£25
Losses of £30-£40					£90		13,420	£34
Losses over £40					£141		23,130	£69

- Source: Estimates based on the March 2010 Single Housing Benefit Extract.
- PCGC: Pension Credit Guarantee Credit; IS: income support; ESA(IR): income-related Employment and Support Allowance; JSA(IB): income-based Jobseeker's Allowance. 'Others' includes contributory Jobseeker's Allowance cases.
- Average maximum HB award relates to the amounts that would be calculated under the LHA rules, after the Emergency Budget announced measures have been implemented, but before the SAR changes have been considered.

20. Table 2 presents the distribution of losses, for each Government Office Region, as a percentage of the total LHA caseload in each region. Table 3 presents the same information but as a proportion of the 1-bedroom caseload instead.

**Table 2: Distribution of losses by Government Office Region (as a percentage of total caseload)**

Percentage (%) of LHA recipients	Not losing	Losses of £0-£5	Losses of £5-£10	Losses of £10-£15	Losses of £15-£20	Losses of £20-£30	Losses of £30-£40	Losses of over £40
East Midlands	94	0	0	0	2	2	1	0
East of England	95	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
London	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
North East	91	0	0	0	2	1	2	3
North West	92	0	0	0	1	2	3	0
Scotland	92	0	0	1	1	3	0	1
South East	95	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
South West	94	0	0	0	0	2	1	2
Wales	94	0	0	1	2	1	1	1
West Midlands	93	0	0	0	0	1	3	2
Yorkshire and the	93	0	0	1	2	3	0	0

- Source: Estimates based on the March 2010 Single Housing Benefit Extract.

**Table 3: Distribution of losses by Government Office Region (as a percentage of those entitled to the 1-bedroom rate)**

Percentage (%) of LHA recipients currently entitled to the 1-bed rate	Not losing	Losses of £0-£5	Losses of £5-£10	Losses of £10-£15	Losses of £15-£20	Losses of £20-£30	Losses of £30-£40	Losses of over £40
East Midlands	82	0	0	1	5	6	4	1
East of England	83	0	0	0	1	2	6	7
London	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
North East	76	0	0	0	5	2	6	9
North West	79	0	0	1	3	6	9	1
Scotland	81	1	1	4	3	9	1	2
South East	84	0	0	0	0	2	3	10
South West	84	0	0	0	0	5	4	7
Wales	82	0	1	3	5	4	2	3
West Midlands	79	0	0	1	1	3	11	5
Yorkshire and the	80	0	1	2	7	9	1	1

- Source: Estimates based on the March 2010 Single Housing Benefit Extract.

21. Table 4 presents an estimate of the number of households that would lose out under this measure, as well as their proportion compared to the total number of households assessed under the LHA in the one-bedroom category. The average loss in pounds per week for each household that would lose out in the one bedroom category is also presented.
22. For example, in County Durham, an estimated 790 households would lose out, which represents 23 percent of those households with an LHA entitlement to the 1-bedroom rate. The average loss is £22 per week.

Table 4: Estimated number of LHA recipients losing or notionally losing, and average loss, £ per week

Table 4: Estimated number of those losing or notionally losing, by Local Authority	Losers or notional losers (and % of total 1-bedroom caseload)	Average loss per loser, £ per week
County Durham UA	790 (23%)	-22
Darlington UA	200 (22%)	-24
Hartlepool UA	260 (27%)	-39
Middlesbrough UA	380 (29%)	-40
Northumberland UA	290 (17%)	-16
Redcar and Cleveland UA	230 (26%)	-39
Stockton-on-Tees UA	310 (25%)	-39
Gateshead	230 (25%)	-29
Newcastle upon Tyne	260 (23%)	-30
North Tyneside	260 (20%)	-29
South Tyneside	200 (23%)	-30
Sunderland	540 (27%)	-41
Blackburn with Darwen UA	240 (22%)	-32
Blackpool UA	720 (12%)	-23
Cheshire East UA	220 (18%)	-26
Cheshire West and Chester	210 (17%)	-32
Halton UA	180 (28%)	-34
Warrington UA	180 (23%)	-33
Allerdale	50 (20%)	-18
Barrow-in-Furness	100 (18%)	-17
Carlisle	80 (22%)	-23
Copeland	40 (20%)	-18
South Lakeland	40 (12%)	-23
Bolton	390 (23%)	-33
Bury	220 (23%)	-33
Manchester	1,000 (29%)	-28
Oldham	270 (22%)	-27
Rochdale	290 (21%)	-29
Salford	380 (26%)	-30
Stockport	220 (21%)	-34
Tameside	230 (20%)	-31
Trafford	160 (22%)	-31
Wigan	340 (21%)	-21
Burnley	230 (19%)	-18
Chorley	60 (17%)	-41
Fylde	80 (12%)	-23
Hyndburn	190 (20%)	-32
Lancaster	180 (13%)	-34
Pendle	220 (23%)	-18
Preston	150 (23%)	-39
Ribble Valley	20 (9%)	-25
Rossendale	110 (21%)	-26
South Ribble	40 (16%)	-38
West Lancashire	50 (15%)	-23
Wyre	90 (10%)	-24
Knowsley	220 (27%)	-31
Liverpool	1,450 (28%)	-34
Sefton	420 (20%)	-24
St. Helens	210 (15%)	-17
Wirral	620 (22%)	-28
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	200 (11%)	-18
Kingston upon Hull, City of	570 (22%)	-16
North East Lincolnshire UA	280 (20%)	-16
North Lincolnshire UA	110 (16%)	-14
York UA	100 (18%)	-34
Craven	40 (16%)	-20
Hambleton	20 (9%)	-25
Harrogate	110 (15%)	-37

Table 4: Estimated number of those losing or notionally losing, by Local Authority	Losers or notional losers (and % of total 1-bedroom caseload)	Average loss per loser, £ per week
Scarborough	210 (16%)	-25
Selby	50 (15%)	-31
Barnsley	320 (23%)	-13
Doncaster	400 (22%)	-21
Rotherham	210 (20%)	-19
Sheffield	370 (23%)	-23
Bradford	740 (22%)	-21
Calderdale	350 (25%)	-18
Kirklees	580 (23%)	-18
Leeds	1,270 (21%)	-22
Wakefield	320 (20%)	-32
Derby UA	310 (23%)	-26
Leicester UA	420 (23%)	-28
Nottingham UA	480 (26%)	-16
Rutland UA	10 (11%)	-31
Amber Valley	100 (16%)	-25
Bolsover	70 (15%)	-25
Chesterfield	130 (18%)	-30
Derbyshire Dales	30 (13%)	-20
Erewash	140 (23%)	-16
High Peak	110 (18%)	-27
North East Derbyshire	40 (15%)	-27
South Derbyshire	60 (17%)	-26
Blaby	30 (16%)	-29
Charnwood	60 (16%)	-28
Harborough	20 (10%)	-29
Hinckley and Bosworth	50 (16%)	-28
Melton	10 (8%)	-29
North West Leicestershire	40 (15%)	-28
Oadby and Wigston	20 (15%)	-28
Boston	30 (14%)	-31
East Lindsey	120 (9%)	-12
North Kesteven	30 (8%)	-26
South Holland	30 (10%)	-29
South Kesteven	80 (15%)	-22
West Lindsey	80 (13%)	-25
Corby	50 (17%)	-22
Daventry	30 (12%)	-28
East Northamptonshire	30 (12%)	-21
Kettering	60 (15%)	-21
Northampton	190 (21%)	-44
South Northamptonshire	20 (12%)	-42
Wellingborough	30 (11%)	-24
Ashfield	90 (20%)	-19
Bassetlaw	80 (16%)	-20
Broxtowe	90 (22%)	-16
Gedling	100 (20%)	-15
Mansfield	110 (21%)	-20
Newark and Sherwood	50 (14%)	-19
Rushcliffe	60 (20%)	-17
Herefordshire, County of UA	80 (12%)	-26
Shropshire UA	120 (11%)	-20
Stoke-on-Trent UA	430 (25%)	-29
Telford and Wrekin UA	110 (16%)	-22
Cannock Chase	90 (20%)	-28
East Staffordshire	100 (19%)	-26
Lichfield	30 (13%)	-29
Newcastle-under-Lyme	50 (16%)	-29
South Staffordshire	30 (16%)	-30
Stafford	40 (15%)	-34
Staffordshire Moorlands	60 (19%)	-29
Tamworth	30 (17%)	-31
North Warwickshire	40 (17%)	-31
Nuneaton and Bedworth	110 (17%)	-26
Rugby	70 (19%)	-24
Stratford-on-Avon	50 (14%)	-41

Table 4: Estimated number of those losing or notionally losing, by Local Authority	Losers or notional losers (and % of total 1-bedroom caseload)	Average loss per loser, £ per week
Warwick	90 (18%)	-44
Birmingham	1,410 (26%)	-38
Coventry	490 (16%)	-29
Dudley	290 (24%)	-28
Sandwell	370 (26%)	-32
Solihull	100 (19%)	-41
Walsall	310 (24%)	-29
Wolverhampton	380 (25%)	-29
Bromsgrove	20 (12%)	-32
Malvern Hills	40 (16%)	-32
Redditch	60 (24%)	-30
Worcester	110 (24%)	-33
Wychavon	30 (11%)	-31
Wyre Forest	110 (19%)	-29
Bedford UA	140 (20%)	-26
Central Bedfordshire UA	100 (15%)	-44
Luton UA	340 (25%)	-52
Peterborough UA	170 (20%)	-33
Southend-on-Sea UA	340 (18%)	-37
Thurrock UA	150 (23%)	-46
Cambridge	40 (20%)	-56
East Cambridgeshire	30 (14%)	-44
Fenland	80 (16%)	-28
Huntingdonshire	50 (15%)	-36
South Cambridgeshire	30 (16%)	-46
Basildon	110 (20%)	-45
Braintree	70 (15%)	-37
Brentwood	30 (23%)	-45
Castle Point	30 (10%)	-36
Chelmsford	80 (20%)	-37
Colchester	150 (20%)	-37
Epping Forest	70 (21%)	-65
Harlow	70 (20%)	-46
Maldon	40 (15%)	-34
Rochford	20 (11%)	-36
Tendring	240 (14%)	-37
Uttlesford	30 (15%)	-46
Broxbourne	70 (21%)	-64
Dacorum	80 (19%)	-60
East Hertfordshire	40 (14%)	-54
North Hertfordshire	60 (16%)	-41
St Albans	40 (15%)	-59
Stevenage	40 (18%)	-43
Three Rivers	30 (20%)	-58
Watford	80 (22%)	-63
Welwyn Hatfield	20 (16%)	-59
Breckland	50 (9%)	-29
Broadland	30 (10%)	-30
Great Yarmouth	150 (16%)	-18
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	70 (11%)	-27
Norwich	200 (22%)	-32
South Norfolk	40 (6%)	-31
Babergh	40 (12%)	-34
Forest Heath	50 (18%)	-36
Ipswich	180 (22%)	-33
Mid Suffolk	20 (10%)	-32
St Edmundsbury	20 (11%)	-32
Suffolk Coastal	60 (12%)	-32
Waveney	120 (13%)	-19
Camden	380 (30%)	-116
City of London	-	-
Hackney	610 (29%)	-93
Hammersmith and Fulham	250 (27%)	-94
Haringey	820 (28%)	-84
Islington	410 (34%)	-109
Kensington and Chelsea	310 (26%)	-104

Table 4: Estimated number of those losing or notionally losing, by Local Authority	Losers or notional losers (and % of total 1-bedroom caseload)	Average loss per loser, £ per week
Lambeth	480 (27%)	-73
Lewisham	650 (24%)	-76
Newham	370 (23%)	-86
Southwark	270 (29%)	-82
Tower Hamlets	320 (33%)	-109
Wandsworth	330 (17%)	-90
Westminster	680 (28%)	-108
Barking and Dagenham	210 (26%)	-74
Barnet	570 (25%)	-60
Bexley	150 (22%)	-66
Brent	710 (26%)	-111
Bromley	190 (19%)	-72
Croydon	680 (24%)	-70
Ealing	420 (24%)	-95
Enfield	690 (29%)	-91
Greenwich	220 (25%)	-71
Harrow	200 (20%)	-79
Havering	160 (22%)	-74
Hillingdon	260 (26%)	-77
Hounslow	190 (20%)	-85
Kingston Upon Thames	90 (18%)	-79
Merton	170 (22%)	-63
Redbridge	300 (24%)	-78
Richmond Upon Thames	90 (15%)	-85
Sutton	130 (18%)	-67
Waltham Forest	460 (27%)	-80
Bracknell Forest UA	40 (16%)	-42
Brighton and Hove UA	840 (15%)	-51
Isle of Wight UA	220 (16%)	-35
Medway UA	270 (17%)	-35
Milton Keynes UA	290 (25%)	-45
Portsmouth UA	270 (18%)	-42
Reading UA	220 (25%)	-60
Slough UA	160 (22%)	-56
Southampton UA	310 (22%)	-45
West Berkshire UA	50 (16%)	-51
Windsor and Maidenhead UA	50 (21%)	-56
Wokingham UA	20 (11%)	-63
Aylesbury Vale	70 (15%)	-40
Chiltern	20 (15%)	-46
South Bucks	10 (16%)	-54
Wycombe	70 (18%)	-49
Eastbourne	150 (14%)	-36
Hastings	310 (19%)	-24
Lewes	60 (11%)	-48
Rother	50 (8%)	-25
Wealden	50 (11%)	-41
Basingstoke and Deane	50 (17%)	-50
East Hampshire	30 (13%)	-46
Eastleigh	60 (19%)	-46
Fareham	20 (9%)	-43
Gosport	80 (19%)	-40
Hart	20 (17%)	-51
Havant	60 (14%)	-43
New Forest	30 (6%)	-46
Rushmoor	50 (17%)	-50
Test Valley	20 (7%)	-51
Winchester	20 (12%)	-52
Ashford	40 (11%)	-47
Canterbury	10 (5%)	-45
Dartford	70 (21%)	-46
Dover	120 (15%)	-30
Gravesham	110 (21%)	-44
Maidstone	90 (16%)	-41
Sevenoaks	20 (10%)	-51
Shepway	150 (15%)	-30

Table 4: Estimated number of those losing or notionally losing, by Local Authority	Losers or notional losers (and % of total 1-bedroom caseload)	Average loss per loser, £ per week
Swale	110 (14%)	-35
Thanet	330 (15%)	-25
Tonbridge and Malling	30 (11%)	-49
Tunbridge Wells	70 (18%)	-48
Cherwell	70 (16%)	-48
Oxford	110 (26%)	-69
South Oxfordshire	30 (16%)	-62
Vale of White Horse	20 (11%)	-57
West Oxfordshire	30 (12%)	-63
Elmbridge	50 (17%)	-73
Epsom and Ewell	30 (17%)	-72
Guildford	40 (11%)	-74
Mole Valley	30 (16%)	-56
Reigate and Banstead	30 (10%)	-54
Runnymede	30 (15%)	-69
Spelthorne	40 (15%)	-71
Surrey Heath	20 (13%)	-51
Tandridge	20 (10%)	-59
Waverley	50 (17%)	-55
Woking	40 (18%)	-70
Adur	30 (12%)	-51
Arun	130 (12%)	-43
Chichester	40 (10%)	-47
Crawley	60 (17%)	-55
Horsham	40 (12%)	-51
Mid Sussex	50 (13%)	-51
Worthing	130 (14%)	-43
Bath and North East	100 (16%)	-47
Bournemouth UA	460 (18%)	-42
Bristol, City of UA	770 (26%)	-45
Cornwall UA	550 (14%)	-36
North Somerset UA	280 (17%)	-35
Plymouth UA	380 (19%)	-24
Poole UA	100 (13%)	-44
South Gloucestershire UA	130 (17%)	-48
Swindon UA	200 (19%)	-32
Torbay UA	340 (14%)	-27
Wiltshire UA	170 (13%)	-36
East Devon	60 (8%)	-28
Exeter	110 (18%)	-25
Mid Devon	30 (10%)	-20
North Devon	110 (14%)	-27
South Hams	40 (10%)	-27
Torridge	70 (12%)	-27
West Devon	30 (9%)	-24
Christchurch	10 (5%)	-49
East Dorset	20 (8%)	-47
North Dorset	10 (8%)	-29
Purbeck	30 (15%)	-41
West Dorset	30 (8%)	-40
Weymouth and Portland	100 (14%)	-38
Cheltenham	130 (23%)	-36
Cotswold	40 (14%)	-38
Gloucester	170 (21%)	-27
Stroud	90 (18%)	-26
Tewkesbury	40 (17%)	-36
Mendip	80 (14%)	-42
South Somerset	60 (10%)	-27
Taunton Deane	90 (17%)	-25
West Somerset	30 (11%)	-28
Isle of Anglesey / Ynys Môn	40 (12%)	-14
Gwynedd / Gwynedd	70 (13%)	-10
Conwy / Conwy	150 (9%)	-14
Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych	150 (15%)	-14
Flintshire / Sir y Fflint	90 (18%)	-19
Wrexham / Wreccsam	70 (17%)	-14



Table 4: Estimated number of those losing or notionally losing, by Local Authority	Losers or notional losers (and % of total 1-bedroom caseload)	Average loss per loser, £ per week
Powys / Powys	70 (10%)	-10
Ceredigion / Ceredigion	40 (10%)	-15
Pembrokeshire / Sir Benfro	110 (9%)	-22
Carmarthenshire / Sir	180 (18%)	-19
Swansea / Abertawe	240 (20%)	-31
Neath Port Talbot / Castell-	190 (20%)	-20
Bridgend / Pen-y-bont ar	180 (22%)	-27
The Vale of Glamorgan / Bro	160 (20%)	-38
Cardiff / Caerdydd	480 (26%)	-40
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff /	310 (23%)	-17
Merthyr Tydfil / Merthyr	90 (27%)	-19
Caerphilly / Caerffili	150 (20%)	-16
Blaenau Gwent / Blaenau	110 (23%)	-19
Torfaen / Tor-faen	10 (13%)	-20
Monmouthshire / Sir Fynwy	40 (13%)	-26
Newport / Casnewydd	180 (25%)	-25
Aberdeen City	60 (23%)	-34
Aberdeenshire	30 (10%)	-32
Angus	70 (16%)	-17
Argyll and Bute	60 (6%)	-11
Clackmannanshire	40 (19%)	-20
Dumfries and Galloway	70 (12%)	-14
Dundee City	240 (25%)	-18
East Dunbartonshire	40 (18%)	-28
East Lothian	50 (16%)	-34
East Renfrewshire	30 (24%)	-19
Edinburgh, City of	590 (17%)	-37
Eilean Siar	10 (11%)	-22
Fife	330 (22%)	-25
Glasgow City	800 (27%)	-22
Highland	50 (8%)	-22
Inverclyde	130 (25%)	-21
Midlothian	30 (17%)	-39
North Ayrshire	190 (20%)	-13
North Lanarkshire	250 (19%)	-20
Orkney Islands	10 (6%)	-25
Perth and Kinross	70 (13%)	-24
Renfrewshire	200 (25%)	-20
Scottish Borders	80 (15%)	-16
Shetland Islands	-	-
South Ayrshire	120 (18%)	-13
South Lanarkshire	270 (23%)	-11
Stirling	30 (17%)	-20
West Dunbartonshire	60 (20%)	-17

- Due to data issues or small caseloads, it has not been possible to provide an analysis for the following thirteen local authorities: Richmondshire, West Lothian, North Norfolk, Falkirk, Moray, Ryedale, East Ayrshire, Lincoln, Forest of Dean, Eden, Teignbridge, Hertsmere, Isles of Scilly. We do not expect the impact for these areas to be dissimilar to neighbouring authorities.
- Figures are rounded to the nearest pound.
- A dash "-" indicates nil or negligible loss, or that fewer than 5 cases are affected.

# Background Information

23. Tables 5 and 6 present a breakdown of the LHA caseload as at March 2010 and their average HB award, by bedroom entitlement. This is based on administrative data at March 2010, under the current LHA rules.
24. Note that table 6 shows actual average awards of Housing Benefit in March 2010, whereas the earlier tables show the average maximum Housing Benefit, before the assessment of the claimants income, that would apply once the April 2011 reforms are in place.
25. In these tables we also break down the number and average awards as assessed under the shared accommodation rate, by age (under-25 or 25-or-over). This is because households who would normally be entitled to a 1-bedroom under the LHA rules but are choosing to rent in shared accommodation would be subject to the shared accommodation rate (The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 regulation 13D(2) b).<sup>3</sup>
26. **Technical Note:** The first three columns in Tables 5 and 6 are estimates of the number of people subject to the shared room rate and 1-bedroom rate produced by DWP. In the course of the analysis it became apparent that some cases were recorded as 1-bedroom cases, but that the recorded LHA rate indicated that it was probable that they were in fact subject to the shared accommodation rate. This could be due to the rule outlined in the previous paragraph where someone normally entitled to the 1-bedroom rate, is assessed at the shared rate if they are living in shared accommodation by choice.
27. By comparing the awards to the relevant shared and 1-bedroom rates, we were able, where possible, to re-assign some of the 1-bedroom cases to the more appropriate shared accommodation categories. This approach however is not perfect and therefore the figures in the first three columns should be treated with caution as it is likely that this method will not have worked perfectly for all local authorities.
28. The figures presented in Tables 5 and 6 build on the analysis presented in the July 2010 publication “Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12” and in the Two Year Review of the Local Housing Allowance, published in February 2011. The updated analysis gives a significantly higher estimate of the number of claimants aged over 25 who are already being assessed under the shared rate.

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<sup>3</sup> This feature is unique to the shared accommodation rate and does not apply to the higher bedroom entitlements; someone entitled to the 3-bedroom LHA rate who chooses to live in a 2-bedroom rate would still be assessed under the 3-bedroom rate.

Table 5: HB caseload for those assessed under the LHA arrangements.

Table 5: HB (LHA) caseload, March 2010	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	Information not available	LHA caseload
	under 25*	over 25*							
National (Great Britain)	54,290	92,260	322,720	333,440	114,120	28,250	8,250	61,980	1,015,330
East Midlands	3,600	4,830	20,300	22,390	7,470	1,840	530	4,500	65,450
East of England	4,040	7,380	24,010	26,220	9,000	2,110	490	5,690	78,940
London	7,430	21,980	46,580	54,700	20,390	5,870	2,420	7,410	166,780
North East	2,750	2,080	16,620	16,280	5,650	1,440	350	2,380	47,540
North West	6,900	9,300	48,240	46,130	15,860	3,990	1,150	6,140	137,700
Scotland	2,790	3,140	22,650	19,360	6,470	1,320	240	4,170	60,140
South East	7,120	15,160	38,960	43,390	14,420	3,190	760	8,270	131,270
South West	5,500	9,910	32,020	28,870	8,840	1,810	510	6,370	93,830
Wales	2,880	3,970	17,430	17,130	5,640	1,370	290	3,500	52,210
West Midlands	4,850	7,490	25,160	28,830	10,140	2,770	890	5,750	85,890
Yorkshire and the Humber	6,430	7,020	30,740	30,140	10,260	2,560	610	7,820	95,600
Couple	460	1,910	52,530	97,930	40,730	11,830	4,230	9,890	219,520
Female	21,030	21,200	91,160	215,370	68,080	15,310	3,730	21,270	457,150
Male	31,700	68,070	176,800	18,330	4,790	1,010	270	29,660	330,630
Gender not recorded	1,100	1,080	2,240	1,800	540	100	20	1,150	8,030
In employment	7,570	10,140	49,020	124,220	43,040	9,630	2,650	6,250	252,520
Not in employment	46,720	82,120	273,710	209,220	71,080	18,620	5,600	55,730	762,810
on PCGC	-	6,390	39,980	4,660	1,220	410	170	6,420	59,260
on IS	6,430	9,840	57,140	136,270	44,270	11,640	3,530	12,280	281,390
on JSA(IB)	29,490	39,870	88,800	33,200	12,930	3,370	1,010	13,100	221,770
on ESA(IR)	3,270	5,480	20,830	8,230	3,730	1,110	350	3,900	46,890
others	15,100	30,680	115,980	151,060	51,980	11,730	3,190	26,280	406,020
County Durham UA	530	190	3,420	3,470	1,280	340	50	340	9,610
Darlington UA	160	140	900	910	320	90	20	130	2,670
Hartlepool UA	110	50	950	940	350	90	40	80	2,610
Middlesbrough UA	300	260	1,300	1,470	510	140	40	180	4,190
Northumberland UA	270	150	1,710	1,390	480	110	20	150	4,280
Redcar and Cleveland UA	110	120	890	910	360	70	20	120	2,600
Stockton-on-Tees UA	180	120	1,210	1,370	480	110	30	210	3,710
Gateshead	140	140	940	980	270	60	20	270	2,810
Newcastle upon Tyne	450	490	1,150	1,130	410	120	40	240	4,030
North Tyneside	170	180	1,280	910	280	50	20	130	3,010
South Tyneside	140	90	880	820	220	40	10	160	2,350
Sunderland	180	160	2,000	1,990	710	220	70	380	5,700
Blackburn with Darwen UA	100	90	1,050	1,070	430	120	20	270	3,160
Blackpool UA	510	990	5,870	3,350	1,250	350	100	270	12,680
Cheshire East UA	180	260	1,260	1,500	460	110	30	170	3,960
Cheshire West and Chester UA	230	400	1,220	1,570	430	100	20	260	4,210
Halton UA	90	120	650	790	240	70	20	120	2,080
Warrington UA	120	160	770	830	260	50	10	120	2,310
Allerdale	30	110	250	230	80	20	-	70	790
Barrow-in-Furness	100	60	550	560	160	40	10	70	1,550
Carlisle	90	100	380	440	130	20	-	60	1,230
Copeland	40	30	220	200	50	10	-	50	590
Eden	-	10	200	120	40	10	-	10	390
South Lakeland	30	120	340	280	80	10	-	100	970
Bolton	230	230	1,740	1,600	570	170	40	160	4,740
Bury	110	110	960	1,030	390	100	20	110	2,830
Manchester	910	1,040	3,410	3,150	1,150	390	170	410	10,630
Oldham	160	160	1,250	1,560	560	110	50	140	3,990
Rochdale	160	250	1,360	1,620	570	150	40	390	4,540
Salford	280	980	1,490	1,750	660	220	100	400	5,870
Stockport	120	220	1,090	1,530	500	110	30	80	3,680
Tameside	140	200	1,150	1,560	540	100	30	280	4,010
Trafford	90	190	720	830	280	70	20	60	2,250
Wigan	200	200	1,580	1,800	600	120	30	140	4,670
Burnley	150	90	1,190	970	310	70	10	80	2,860
Chorley	40	50	350	420	130	20	-	70	1,090
Fylde	50	90	690	390	130	30	10	160	1,560
Hyndburn	140	110	950	830	300	60	20	70	2,480
Lancaster	170	210	1,430	1,030	320	100	20	150	3,430
Pendle	120	60	970	760	250	90	20	110	2,380
Preston	140	200	650	710	220	40	20	80	2,050

Table 5: HB (LHA) caseload, March 2010	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	Information not available	LHA caseload
	under 25*	over 25*							
	Ribble Valley	-							
Rossendale	70	60	510	440	150	30	10	60	1,330
South Ribble	30	40	250	390	130	20	10	80	950
West Lancashire	90	90	360	510	180	50	10	180	1,450
Wyre	70	100	920	750	220	60	10	120	2,230
Knowsley	90	80	820	1,310	420	110	20	120	2,960
Liverpool	900	910	5,180	3,840	1,320	370	100	570	13,200
Sefton	300	450	2,080	1,940	660	130	40	220	5,810
St. Helens	170	220	1,340	1,350	500	110	30	30	3,760
Wirral	460	520	2,880	2,990	1,140	260	90	270	8,610
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	240	330	1,840	1,660	680	140	30	2,310	7,220
Kingston upon Hull, City of UA	480	340	2,550	2,160	780	190	50	310	6,870
North East Lincolnshire UA	370	330	1,390	1,800	720	190	40	2,130	6,960
North Lincolnshire UA	200	250	710	880	340	90	20	120	2,600
York UA	220	370	540	600	140	30	-	80	1,990
Craven	10	20	230	170	50	10	-	60	560
Hambleton	20	70	210	240	90	20	10	40	670
Harrogate	80	160	730	690	180	40	-	170	2,060
Richmondshire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	510	510
Ryedale	-	10	220	150	60	10	-	10	460
Scarborough	180	160	1,300	900	270	70	10	170	3,050
Selby	30	40	310	320	100	20	-	50	870
Barnsley	260	250	1,370	1,580	520	120	20	70	4,200
Doncaster	390	520	1,810	2,350	720	150	40	340	6,300
Rotherham	180	190	1,050	1,470	540	110	30	110	3,680
Sheffield	560	670	1,590	1,670	530	140	40	130	5,340
Bradford	640	740	3,400	3,800	1,410	380	100	660	11,130
Calderdale	330	310	1,410	1,480	460	130	30	40	4,200
Kirklees	500	390	2,560	2,090	720	180	50	170	6,670
Leeds	1,500	1,680	5,970	4,390	1,490	450	130	130	15,740
Wakefield	230	190	1,580	1,730	460	90	20	240	4,540
Derby UA	280	290	1,320	1,260	450	120	40	390	4,150
Leicester UA	380	510	1,810	2,240	930	350	180	230	6,620
Nottingham UA	550	790	1,830	1,840	600	160	60	480	6,320
Rutland UA	10	-	100	90	30	10	-	10	240
Amber Valley	70	70	590	630	170	40	10	80	1,650
Bolsover	60	40	450	540	190	40	10	60	1,380
Chesterfield	90	100	680	500	110	30	10	80	1,590
Derbyshire Dales	10	10	250	170	50	10	-	20	530
Erewash	90	90	640	690	190	50	10	50	1,810
High Peak	100	80	570	450	120	30	10	60	1,430
North East Derbyshire	20	20	270	210	70	20	-	30	640
South Derbyshire	50	40	350	470	170	30	10	100	1,220
Blaby	20	40	190	370	130	30	10	40	820
Charnwood	110	120	360	570	160	40	10	120	1,470
Harborough	20	30	220	220	80	10	-	40	620
Hinckley and Bosworth	70	90	340	440	120	30	10	50	1,130
Melton	10	30	150	160	60	10	-	20	440
North West Leicestershire	30	30	250	350	120	20	-	80	890
Oadby and Wigston	20	40	150	230	70	20	-	130	660
Boston	40	80	230	360	120	30	10	50	910
East Lindsey	240	270	1,350	980	340	80	20	320	3,590
Lincoln	10	70	920	620	190	30	10	150	2,000
North Kesteven	40	60	320	350	120	30	10	120	1,040
South Holland	100	140	290	380	140	40	-	100	1,180
South Kesteven	110	130	570	670	190	40	10	140	1,840
West Lindsey	70	60	640	510	190	60	20	90	1,630
Corby	70	150	280	420	120	40	10	120	1,210
Daventry	20	50	210	220	80	20	-	40	630
East Northamptonshire	30	70	280	290	110	20	-	60	850
Kettering	100	140	420	510	210	40	10	30	1,470
Northampton	250	520	930	1,430	490	120	30	320	4,100
South Northamptonshire	10	20	140	190	60	10	-	40	480
Wellingborough	60	130	270	340	130	30	10	50	1,010
Ashfield	80	40	430	580	180	30	-	50	1,400
Bassetlaw	70	50	490	610	230	50	10	160	1,670
Broxtowe	80	110	410	450	150	30	-	70	1,310
Gedling	80	90	480	620	180	40	-	90	1,580
Mansfield	80	110	500	720	210	50	10	140	1,820
Newark and Sherwood	40	60	350	480	170	30	10	150	1,280
Rushcliffe	50	80	290	250	70	20	10	90	850
Herefordshire, County of UA	120	260	680	660	190	40	10	130	2,090

Table 5: HB (LHA) caseload, March 2010	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	Information not available	LHA caseload
	under 25*	over 25*							
Shropshire UA	160	400	1,040	890	320	60	10	200	3,070
Stoke-on-Trent UA	330	300	1,710	1,750	530	130	20	330	5,110
Telford and Wrekin UA	200	270	700	1,420	560	160	40	160	3,490
Cannock Chase	60	70	470	580	170	30	10	70	1,450
East Staffordshire	130	100	530	710	240	60	20	130	1,910
Lichfield	40	80	230	240	70	20	10	40	730
Newcastle-under-Lyme	50	70	310	400	150	30	-	150	1,170
South Staffordshire	10	20	180	230	80	10	-	70	610
Stafford	90	150	280	320	120	20	10	60	1,040
Staffordshire Moorlands	50	40	300	280	80	10	-	40	810
Tamworth	80	140	200	330	100	30	10	60	940
North Warwickshire	30	40	220	260	80	20	10	30	680
Nuneaton and Bedworth	140	150	650	800	240	60	10	50	2,090
Rugby	90	160	370	400	140	30	-	90	1,280
Stratford-on-Avon	30	70	380	380	90	20	-	70	1,050
Warwick	70	130	480	430	120	20	-	70	1,330
Birmingham	1,360	2,310	5,510	6,290	2,290	780	330	2,200	21,060
Coventry	400	800	3,040	3,230	1,410	420	170	230	9,700
Dudley	250	290	1,190	1,400	510	120	40	180	3,970
Sandwell	230	280	1,420	1,980	680	180	60	340	5,160
Solihull	70	110	540	890	310	60	20	70	2,070
Walsall	210	190	1,290	1,510	530	170	40	220	4,160
Wolverhampton	300	340	1,520	1,540	560	170	50	280	4,760
Bromsgrove	20	40	170	190	60	10	-	40	530
Malvern Hills	30	80	220	180	50	10	-	40	620
Redditch	70	160	250	330	100	30	10	20	970
Worcester	100	220	460	430	130	20	10	120	1,490
Wychavon	40	120	280	270	80	20	-	50	860
Wyre Forest	80	140	560	530	140	40	10	190	1,690
Bedford UA	160	250	700	760	270	70	20	160	2,380
Central Bedfordshire UA	70	130	680	810	250	60	10	140	2,140
Luton UA	240	340	1,350	1,600	570	150	60	130	4,440
Peterborough UA	300	590	840	1,190	450	160	50	180	3,760
Southend-on-Sea UA	350	720	1,910	1,840	660	160	30	200	5,870
Thurrock UA	160	190	680	1,110	340	60	20	110	2,670
Cambridge	100	220	190	130	50	10	-	160	860
East Cambridgeshire	30	60	240	210	70	20	-	30	660
Fenland	100	130	520	630	210	40	10	160	1,780
Huntingdonshire	50	260	310	470	170	40	10	120	1,430
South Cambridgeshire	20	40	170	250	80	20	-	100	690
Basildon	130	240	530	770	290	70	20	100	2,140
Braintree	60	140	500	570	200	40	10	90	1,600
Brentwood	20	50	150	210	70	20	-	20	540
Castle Point	50	60	320	560	220	50	10	320	1,580
Chelmsford	90	150	390	510	170	30	10	150	1,490
Colchester	140	280	740	900	330	80	20	220	2,710
Epping Forest	30	70	330	480	150	40	10	100	1,200
Harlow	90	200	330	410	140	20	10	20	1,220
Maldon	20	40	260	240	100	20	-	50	730
Rochford	20	40	160	320	130	30	10	80	790
Tendring	230	270	1,660	1,480	610	160	30	270	4,710
Uttlesford	20	40	170	190	70	20	-	40	550
Broxbourne	40	90	310	530	180	40	10	60	1,250
Dacorum	80	180	410	420	150	20	10	60	1,330
East Hertfordshire	30	110	290	300	90	20	10	50	890
Hertsmere	10	30	340	400	120	20	10	50	960
North Hertfordshire	60	70	390	290	90	20	-	50	970
St Albans	40	110	230	310	60	20	-	100	870
Stevenage	70	140	200	280	100	20	-	120	930
Three Rivers	10	40	140	290	80	20	-	50	650
Watford	70	220	390	470	110	20	10	140	1,430
Welwyn Hatfield	40	60	140	210	60	10	-	100	620
Breckland	90	130	560	550	210	50	10	60	1,660
Broadland	20	60	290	340	140	30	10	60	960
Great Yarmouth	170	240	980	870	280	80	20	320	2,960
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	80	140	600	640	260	60	10	210	2,000
North Norfolk	-	10	720	450	120	30	10	60	1,390
Norwich	250	440	940	620	130	40	10	380	2,810
South Norfolk	40	80	690	460	190	40	10	50	1,560
Babergh	30	40	300	290	100	20	-	40	830
Forest Heath	50	100	290	260	90	20	-	30	830
Ipswich	150	240	830	920	270	50	10	390	2,860

Table 5: HB (LHA) caseload, March 2010	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	Information not available	LHA caseload
	under 25*	over 25*							
	Mid Suffolk	20							
St Edmundsbury	40	170	220	340	90	30	-	60	950
Suffolk Coastal	50	70	490	400	160	40	10	70	1,290
Waveney	120	100	900	750	250	60	10	160	2,340
Camden	170	490	1,250	730	230	50	30	90	3,040
City of London	-	10	20	-	-	-	-	40	70
Hackney	490	1,600	2,130	1,690	550	170	160	120	6,910
Hammersmith and Fulham	150	660	950	700	150	40	20	120	2,790
Haringey	440	1,150	2,910	2,250	740	240	100	590	8,430
Islington	170	510	1,220	620	140	40	20	180	2,890
Kensington and Chelsea	60	210	1,200	620	150	40	10	200	2,490
Lambeth	370	1,270	1,740	1,520	440	100	30	180	5,640
Lewisham	470	1,390	2,780	2,900	1,070	310	130	100	9,150
Newham	250	800	1,640	2,610	1,180	300	120	880	7,770
Southwark	280	690	930	840	220	40	20	240	3,250
Tower Hamlets	310	840	970	990	350	80	30	530	4,100
Wandsworth	230	1,070	1,880	2,190	880	330	180	170	6,930
Westminster	100	370	2,490	1,360	550	140	50	110	5,160
Barking and Dagenham	130	290	780	1,760	670	140	40	120	3,940
Barnet	260	850	2,260	2,890	1,020	320	130	570	8,290
Bexley	90	230	690	1,270	440	100	30	60	2,910
Brent	400	1,270	2,730	3,180	1,340	500	240	150	9,800
Bromley	140	370	1,010	1,290	380	70	30	120	3,400
Croydon	580	1,060	2,820	3,320	1,070	300	90	430	9,680
Ealing	300	1,250	1,760	2,590	1,040	300	150	260	7,640
Enfield	400	820	2,370	3,460	1,510	400	130	680	9,760
Greenwich	150	450	890	1,140	420	120	50	160	3,380
Harrow	180	550	970	1,940	1,060	340	120	110	5,270
Havering	100	240	740	1,170	420	110	20	90	2,890
Hillingdon	210	580	980	1,890	720	220	90	120	4,800
Hounslow	140	570	960	1,750	630	200	70	150	4,470
Kingston Upon Thames	100	280	480	730	300	90	30	160	2,180
Merton	120	370	760	1,080	440	130	40	140	3,080
Redbridge	140	410	1,240	1,880	950	340	150	280	5,400
Richmond Upon Thames	40	190	580	630	170	40	10	40	1,710
Sutton	150	310	740	1,070	350	70	20	50	2,750
Waltham Forest	300	860	1,720	2,640	830	230	80	160	6,810
Bracknell Forest UA	50	130	250	380	100	30	10	140	1,080
Brighton and Hove UA	810	2,230	5,460	3,040	830	160	30	600	13,150
Isle of Wight UA	260	350	1,370	1,170	410	60	10	140	3,770
Medway UA	210	390	1,590	2,020	770	210	60	970	6,220
Milton Keynes UA	340	780	1,170	1,860	790	230	60	270	5,480
Portsmouth UA	430	830	1,520	1,550	500	110	20	220	5,180
Reading UA	280	500	870	1,200	330	70	20	210	3,470
Slough UA	100	340	710	1,270	500	140	70	40	3,170
Southampton UA	460	820	1,410	1,470	510	110	40	140	4,960
West Berkshire UA	40	100	310	520	160	20	10	180	1,330
Windsor and Maidenhead UA	50	160	230	350	140	30	-	40	990
Wokingham UA	40	110	210	380	110	20	10	100	960
Aylesbury Vale	100	200	430	540	170	30	-	50	1,540
Chiltern	20	30	160	180	40	10	-	30	470
South Bucks	10	40	90	130	50	20	10	30	370
Wycombe	120	220	390	540	180	40	10	50	1,550
Eastbourne	160	340	1,090	1,000	350	60	10	120	3,130
Hastings	270	340	1,660	1,120	360	70	30	170	4,010
Lewes	60	160	540	640	230	60	10	90	1,780
Rother	60	100	550	550	190	50	10	120	1,610
Wealden	30	90	460	610	230	50	10	130	1,610
Basingstoke and Deane	70	160	280	460	150	20	10	110	1,250
East Hampshire	20	40	250	250	80	20	-	60	710
Eastleigh	60	110	300	460	130	30	10	50	1,160
Fareham	30	80	220	320	130	40	10	70	900
Gosport	100	140	410	540	190	30	10	40	1,470
Hart	20	40	110	180	80	10	-	20	470
Havant	100	140	410	600	230	50	10	60	1,600
New Forest	40	130	530	680	210	30	10	120	1,750
Rushmoor	140	340	290	410	140	40	-	30	1,390
Test Valley	30	70	220	350	100	20	-	70	870
Winchester	40	60	180	190	70	10	-	220	770
Ashford	60	150	350	620	230	50	10	100	1,570
Canterbury	220	750	210	740	210	60	10	200	2,400
Dartford	60	70	330	460	120	20	10	80	1,150

Table 5: HB (LHA) caseload, March 2010	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	Information not available	LHA caseload
	under 25*	over 25*							
	Dover	100							
Gravesham	60	90	520	580	240	80	10	100	1,680
Maidstone	100	230	570	590	200	50	20	120	1,880
Sevenoaks	20	50	190	260	90	10	10	80	700
Shepway	130	220	990	960	340	80	20	220	2,950
Swale	120	120	800	1,100	400	100	20	100	2,760
Thanet	330	340	2,170	1,660	630	160	30	290	5,610
Tonbridge and Malling	20	60	240	270	100	20	-	110	820
Tunbridge Wells	40	90	370	350	100	20	-	80	1,050
Cherwell	100	220	460	710	200	30	10	120	1,850
Oxford	200	490	410	640	200	60	30	200	2,230
South Oxfordshire	40	80	210	330	100	30	10	80	870
Vale of White Horse	30	80	210	280	80	20	-	60	770
West Oxfordshire	40	90	290	300	120	20	-	60	920
Elmbridge	30	110	300	480	140	30	10	50	1,140
Epsom and Ewell	100	80	150	250	110	20	10	50	770
Guildford	80	200	370	510	170	30	10	110	1,500
Mole Valley	10	50	180	220	60	20	-	60	600
Reigate and Banstead	50	140	310	460	120	20	-	80	1,190
Runnymede	30	60	180	260	70	20	10	130	750
Spelthorne	40	110	240	430	130	20	10	30	1,010
Surrey Heath	30	110	130	190	70	20	-	30	570
Tandridge	10	70	170	290	80	20	10	80	720
Waverley	30	40	270	300	90	10	-	30	790
Woking	30	130	210	410	120	20	10	60	980
Adur	40	120	230	360	110	20	-	50	920
Arun	130	290	1,080	1,110	310	50	10	230	3,190
Chichester	40	70	420	400	140	30	10	110	1,220
Crawley	100	240	350	620	250	60	20	120	1,740
Horsham	40	80	360	370	90	20	-	60	1,030
Mid Sussex	30	130	360	420	130	20	-	60	1,150
Worthing	110	260	930	740	160	30	10	100	2,330
Bath and North East Somerset UA	140	250	650	630	160	30	10	120	1,980
Bournemouth UA	390	980	2,560	1,790	480	90	20	440	6,750
Bristol, City of UA	840	1,600	2,990	2,360	650	140	60	860	9,500
Cornwall UA	670	1,260	3,950	3,760	1,220	260	60	920	12,100
North Somerset UA	230	250	1,660	1,290	440	90	20	330	4,310
Plymouth UA	510	720	2,020	1,470	440	90	10	330	5,600
Poole UA	170	390	740	1,160	320	80	20	90	2,960
South Gloucestershire UA	160	220	790	1,200	310	50	10	210	2,950
Swindon UA	330	520	1,050	1,220	380	80	20	190	3,770
Torbay UA	350	410	2,460	1,560	530	100	30	260	5,710
Wiltshire UA	200	360	1,290	1,470	460	100	20	350	4,260
East Devon	100	190	690	640	200	30	10	90	1,940
Exeter	150	340	620	540	150	30	10	180	2,020
Mid Devon	50	80	320	350	110	30	10	90	1,040
North Devon	110	220	760	680	220	40	10	190	2,220
South Hams	30	90	390	400	100	20	10	60	1,090
Teignbridge	10	60	1,370	1,320	320	110	90	130	3,420
Torridge	70	120	610	450	160	30	-	80	1,520
West Devon	20	50	290	230	70	10	10	40	720
Christchurch	10	50	250	270	90	20	-	40	730
East Dorset	20	50	220	240	110	30	10	90	750
North Dorset	10	60	180	180	80	10	-	40	570
Purbeck	10	30	180	260	80	20	-	40	620
West Dorset	30	70	380	320	120	20	10	60	1,000
Weymouth and Portland	140	230	740	560	170	20	10	80	1,960
Cheltenham	100	230	580	510	160	20	10	90	1,690
Cotswold	20	40	270	220	70	10	-	50	690
Forest of Dean	10	20	490	320	120	20	-	40	1,030
Gloucester	170	270	820	950	310	50	20	210	2,800
Stroud	50	130	480	390	120	20	10	110	1,300
Tewkesbury	30	40	220	300	100	20	10	120	840
Mendip	100	160	600	510	170	40	-	60	1,630
Sedgemoor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100
South Somerset	110	190	620	640	220	40	10	120	1,950
Taunton Deane	130	190	520	500	150	30	10	120	1,650
West Somerset	30	60	270	220	70	20	-	30	690
Isle of Anglesey / Ynys Môn	50	40	360	320	120	30	10	60	980
Gwynedd / Gwynedd	80	150	520	380	130	30	-	140	1,430
Conwy / Conwy	110	220	1,800	960	320	100	10	130	3,640
Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych	120	180	980	750	250	80	30	100	2,470

Table 5: HB (LHA) caseload, March 2010	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	Information not available	LHA caseload
	under 25*	over 25*							
Flintshire / Sir y Fflint	90	150	500	670	230	60	10	120	1,830
Wrexham / Wrecsam	60	150	410	520	150	30	10	520	1,850
Powys / Powys	10	10	690	400	150	30	10	110	1,410
Ceredigion / Ceredigion	120	230	380	350	130	20	10	90	1,330
Pembrokeshire / Sir Benfro	120	150	1,180	690	270	60	20	80	2,560
Carmarthenshire / Sir Gaerfyrddin	190	210	1,020	940	370	90	10	210	3,030
Swansea / Abertawe	280	340	1,210	1,130	410	100	20	200	3,690
Neath Port Talbot / Castell-nedd Port Talbot	170	170	940	930	280	80	20	110	2,700
Bridgend / Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr	130	210	820	1,030	300	70	10	130	2,700
The Vale of Glamorgan / Bro Morgannwg	130	120	800	880	290	60	10	130	2,410
Cardiff / Caerdydd	460	710	1,890	1,980	630	180	50	420	6,320
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff / Rhondda, Cynon, Taf	260	180	1,360	1,840	560	140	20	130	4,480
Merthyr Tydfil / Merthyr Tudful	50	20	320	360	120	20	10	480	1,380
Caerphilly / Caerffili	110	130	740	940	340	80	10	90	2,430
Blaenau Gwent / Blaenau Gwent	80	30	470	500	120	40	10	90	1,340
Torfaen / Tor-faen	60	280	80	430	110	30	-	50	1,040
Monmouthshire / Sir Fynwy	30	50	280	280	110	20	10	50	810
Newport / Casnewydd	190	270	690	850	240	70	20	50	2,380
Aberdeen City	80	70	260	230	50	10	-	110	820
Aberdeenshire	20	30	350	290	140	50	10	150	1,030
Angus	50	20	440	360	160	40	-	60	1,130
Argyll and Bute	70	60	960	300	120	20	-	60	1,590
Clackmannanshire	30	10	190	180	70	20	-	20	520
Dumfries and Galloway	70	80	600	450	140	40	-	110	1,500
Dundee City	200	100	960	880	270	40	10	350	2,820
East Ayrshire	10	10	760	510	180	40	10	60	1,590
East Dunbartonshire	20	20	240	230	70	20	-	60	660
East Lothian	30	40	320	280	110	20	10	40	840
East Renfrewshire	10	-	140	190	70	20	-	20	450
Edinburgh, City of	410	1,070	3,470	3,300	1,130	240	50	550	10,210
Eilean Siar	20	20	50	30	10	-	-	20	150
Falkirk	-	-	510	290	110	20	-	30	970
Fife	240	170	1,480	1,290	500	110	20	150	3,950
Glasgow City	660	740	2,990	2,650	850	190	30	1,040	9,150
Highland	60	150	630	430	120	30	10	190	1,620
Inverclyde	60	20	520	450	130	10	-	110	1,300
Midlothian	20	30	170	270	90	20	-	80	680
Moray	-	10	350	190	80	10	-	80	730
North Ayrshire	120	50	930	750	230	40	10	90	2,200
North Lanarkshire	30	30	1,370	1,330	390	80	10	80	3,320
Orkney Islands	10	-	80	30	20	-	-	-	150
Perth and Kinross	40	50	510	410	120	30	-	160	1,330
Renfrewshire	110	60	800	660	200	30	10	100	1,970
Scottish Borders	60	30	530	280	120	20	10	70	1,110
Shetland Islands	-	-	30	10	-	-	-	-	40
South Ayrshire	110	100	680	550	170	30	10	70	1,710
South Lanarkshire	190	110	1,190	1,300	420	70	10	100	3,400
Stirling	30	50	180	180	70	10	-	40	570
West Dunbartonshire	40	20	300	250	80	10	-	80	770
West Lothian	-	10	680	810	250	50	10	70	1,870

Notes:

- Source: Based on the March 2010 Single Housing Benefit Extract.

- Figures are rounded to the nearest ten.

- No information is available for the Isles of Scilly.

\* Note that the breakdown into the columns "shared accommodation under 25", "shared accommodation over 25" and "1-bedroom" are based on an estimated breakdown produced by DWP as described earlier.



Table 6: Average HB awards for those assessed under the LHA arrangements.

Table 6: Average HB (LHA) awards, March 2010, £ per week	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	All bedrooms
	under 25*	over 25*						
National (Great Britain)	64	70	102	122	149	188	251	113
East Midlands	56	57	80	93	108	134	155	87
East of England	64	67	99	119	142	178	214	109
London	87	90	176	204	262	326	425	189
North East	54	54	81	91	105	130	158	87
North West	57	61	85	97	113	137	159	92
Scotland	62	64	85	104	127	155	184	97
South East	69	74	110	134	162	201	262	120
South West	63	64	95	113	136	168	193	101
Wales	52	55	79	94	108	133	157	86
West Midlands	58	60	88	101	117	139	157	95
Yorkshire and the Humber	58	60	81	92	105	130	143	86
Couple	67	74	92	116	150	188	251	122
Female	63	70	101	124	149	188	251	120
Male	65	70	106	126	155	189	248	97
Gender not recorded	63	71	102	110	128	163	198	97
In employment	45	54	80	103	135	175	243	104
Not in employment	67	72	106	134	158	195	255	116
on PCGC	-	73	108	135	171	216	282	106
on IS	67	70	109	136	160	198	262	134
on JSA(IB)	67	74	110	133	157	189	245	106
on ESA(IR)	66	72	110	131	155	193	247	114
others	55	65	90	106	137	176	239	103
County Durham UA	56	56	78	87	99	119	136	85
Darlington UA	52	54	77	83	101	125	142	83
Hartlepool UA	49	48	83	93	106	132	175	91
Middlesbrough UA	48	49	83	95	108	132	151	88
Northumberland UA	60	62	71	82	99	121	124	78
Redcar and Cleveland UA	49	49	83	94	105	132	145	89
Stockton-on-Tees UA	49	48	83	92	105	133	173	89
Gateshead	58	61	87	93	112	142	150	88
Newcastle upon Tyne	55	57	85	94	115	142	173	88
North Tyneside	58	58	85	92	109	138	161	87
South Tyneside	58	58	87	95	112	136	159	89
Sunderland	43	43	86	97	108	133	170	92
Blackburn with Darwen UA	48	51	77	82	99	120	130	85
Blackpool UA	60	61	85	105	123	146	165	94
Cheshire East UA	64	65	86	99	124	146	214	96
Cheshire West and Chester UA	59	61	92	107	127	150	206	98
Halton UA	55	57	90	99	117	137	176	97
Warrington UA	54	57	88	94	112	136	176	91
Allerdale	52	69	74	80	97	113	-	77
Barrow-in-Furness	49	51	72	83	107	131	148	79
Carlisle	55	52	78	85	106	123	-	81
Copeland	53	54	73	86	96	109	-	78
Eden	-	55	71	82	102	124	-	79
South Lakeland	60	62	80	85	111	127	-	81
Bolton	48	49	81	87	104	124	134	86
Bury	51	53	84	89	106	133	154	89
Manchester	61	62	94	106	121	148	171	97
Oldham	55	57	84	94	112	131	147	92
Rochdale	57	64	86	94	111	134	149	94
Salford	61	81	94	104	117	142	168	101
Stockport	62	63	93	108	132	156	196	104
Tameside	58	64	85	93	112	133	156	92
Trafford	62	63	94	104	122	152	204	100
Wigan	59	59	77	86	100	117	121	83
Burnley	55	54	73	79	94	117	119	77
Chorley	43	48	83	95	109	130	-	89
Fylde	56	58	83	99	117	143	145	88
Hyndburn	49	51	77	81	98	122	104	80
Lancaster	53	53	87	101	119	128	147	91
Pendle	55	55	73	78	94	115	129	78
Preston	46	47	85	99	113	130	130	88
Ribble Valley	-	-	71	84	93	120	-	78
Rossendale	51	53	75	82	96	118	149	81
South Ribble	44	46	83	95	108	134	154	94
West Lancashire	61	60	80	94	110	132	137	89
Wyre	60	60	82	101	118	145	162	92
Knowsley	55	53	88	101	110	138	152	99

Table 6: Average HB (LHA) awards, March 2010, £ per week	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	All bedrooms
	under 25*	over 25*						
	Liverpool	53						
Sefton	58	61	88	103	114	143	158	94
St. Helens	56	57	86	93	107	130	137	91
Wirral	60	61	87	103	122	146	155	98
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	50	62	67	81	97	118	128	75
Kingston upon Hull, City of UA	50	50	71	80	95	115	125	77
North East Lincolnshire UA	53	54	70	83	89	113	130	79
North Lincolnshire UA	53	55	69	79	91	111	129	74
York UA	59	62	91	101	121	177	-	88
Craven	60	57	76	86	102	120	-	82
Hambleton	63	73	80	91	106	160	202	89
Harrogate	64	66	95	107	132	159	-	100
Richmondshire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88
Ryedale	-	64	77	90	107	141	-	85
Scarborough	48	47	74	94	106	129	137	81
Selby	62	63	96	105	120	140	-	102
Barnsley	58	57	75	82	92	118	126	79
Doncaster	53	53	76	85	99	122	120	80
Rotherham	58	58	75	87	98	121	126	84
Sheffield	60	61	84	98	110	131	151	87
Bradford	64	67	81	91	103	115	126	89
Calderdale	62	63	81	93	106	129	137	87
Kirklees	57	59	80	94	109	131	149	86
Leeds	62	62	94	107	124	161	182	97
Wakefield	51	51	92	96	106	133	137	93
Derby UA	47	47	78	93	111	135	161	89
Leicester UA	57	57	83	98	113	135	159	94
Nottingham UA	60	61	85	98	113	134	156	91
Rutland UA	68	-	84	95	107	105	-	91
Amber Valley	49	49	78	91	112	137	163	86
Bolsover	52	53	75	89	99	116	156	84
Chesterfield	52	51	83	89	105	126	153	84
Derbyshire Dales	66	64	81	96	124	147	-	91
Erewash	60	60	82	94	109	131	144	89
High Peak	62	59	86	96	114	133	153	90
North East Derbyshire	53	53	81	93	107	125	-	86
South Derbyshire	64	62	80	91	110	124	139	88
Blaby	55	58	83	94	111	152	176	94
Charnwood	55	56	82	94	106	140	171	87
Harborough	55	60	81	94	113	151	-	88
Hinckley and Bosworth	63	62	82	95	113	143	167	89
Melton	52	58	80	93	105	149	-	87
North West Leicestershire	58	57	80	96	113	148	-	90
Oadby and Wigston	56	57	83	96	111	128	-	89
Boston	55	55	75	82	98	121	141	79
East Lindsey	64	63	71	85	99	119	114	75
Lincoln	47	49	64	85	102	126	149	77
North Kesteven	48	50	75	86	103	122	147	80
South Holland	57	57	81	89	106	136	-	83
South Kesteven	57	57	75	91	108	143	151	86
West Lindsey	48	50	77	88	99	121	119	82
Corby	57	58	82	94	104	133	158	86
Daventry	49	64	88	100	122	157	-	94
East Northamptonshire	58	60	83	92	110	141	-	86
Kettering	56	58	82	95	112	138	178	89
Northampton	52	52	92	106	120	149	182	95
South Northamptonshire	70	64	102	111	125	167	-	107
Wellingborough	55	57	84	91	111	136	176	87
Ashfield	55	56	74	86	99	124	-	82
Bassetlaw	55	56	71	82	95	124	145	79
Broxtowe	61	61	85	94	105	137	-	88
Gedling	61	62	80	94	108	144	-	88
Mansfield	53	56	72	83	95	119	132	79
Newark and Sherwood	53	55	73	87	98	134	116	83
Rushcliffe	61	62	82	95	105	139	188	86
Herefordshire, County of UA	64	64	84	97	116	129	152	88
Shropshire UA	67	73	82	94	113	136	130	87
Stoke-on-Trent UA	53	54	76	88	105	126	149	83
Telford and Wrekin UA	67	67	84	100	120	149	178	98
Cannock Chase	69	68	86	97	116	129	150	93
East Staffordshire	65	65	81	92	111	141	146	90
Lichfield	66	68	85	97	114	144	170	90
Newcastle-under-Lyme	53	54	76	85	96	125	-	86
South Staffordshire	60	57	86	93	103	140	-	87
Stafford	65	68	86	92	108	126	183	87
Staffordshire Moorlands	53	51	76	80	97	125	-	77
Tamworth	68	68	89	99	114	144	137	91

Table 6: Average HB (LHA) awards, March 2010, £ per week	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	All bedrooms
	under 25*	over 25*						
	North Warwickshire	61						
Nuneaton and Bedworth	60	62	84	98	114	136	141	91
Rugby	62	66	83	95	121	145	-	91
Stratford-on-Avon	63	57	97	110	132	182	-	100
Warwick	59	60	99	119	142	155	-	105
Birmingham	57	57	94	109	120	141	159	100
Coventry	56	57	94	102	116	136	153	98
Dudley	54	54	84	98	113	137	145	91
Sandwell	55	55	87	100	115	138	150	96
Solihull	69	66	98	117	134	166	214	112
Walsall	54	54	86	100	112	134	148	95
Wolverhampton	54	53	85	100	115	140	147	95
Bromsgrove	61	61	89	102	118	160	-	93
Malvern Hills	62	87	91	103	125	163	-	96
Redditch	58	60	84	104	116	150	173	92
Worcester	60	63	92	100	127	144	167	91
Wychavon	69	87	93	100	127	144	-	96
Wyre Forest	57	60	85	101	116	129	184	87
Bedford UA	66	68	95	111	137	177	238	103
Central Bedfordshire UA	62	64	101	119	140	170	184	111
Luton UA	57	57	107	117	141	167	191	112
Peterborough UA	64	65	89	102	118	158	188	95
Southend-on-Sea UA	68	71	104	130	161	199	246	117
Thurrock UA	71	71	115	141	164	197	273	129
Cambridge	68	71	111	112	123	176	-	96
East Cambridgeshire	74	72	113	109	122	188	-	108
Fenland	60	61	83	101	115	142	175	94
Huntingdonshire	63	82	89	104	120	164	222	98
South Cambridgeshire	66	70	113	121	145	194	-	114
Basildon	71	72	114	138	163	218	234	127
Braintree	77	72	102	123	151	194	225	115
Brentwood	66	70	117	141	160	208	-	131
Castle Point	70	70	107	134	167	201	290	122
Chelmsford	75	75	114	129	160	203	185	118
Colchester	60	61	95	112	141	167	207	105
Epping Forest	73	73	131	161	193	234	279	146
Harlow	72	75	111	131	167	210	273	118
Maldon	68	73	116	132	158	198	-	123
Rochford	68	70	102	129	156	196	257	120
Tendring	61	61	98	117	145	182	220	109
Uttlesford	71	74	114	130	162	193	-	124
Broxbourne	74	73	126	152	187	220	349	145
Dacorum	78	80	129	158	182	238	312	137
East Hertfordshire	73	73	112	135	161	203	230	121
Hertsmere	76	79	114	165	200	275	365	151
North Hertfordshire	70	76	107	126	155	164	-	112
St Albans	76	78	131	161	175	271	-	138
Stevenage	74	73	114	131	163	179	-	115
Three Rivers	70	82	134	162	195	267	-	152
Watford	77	80	132	156	188	279	271	140
Welwyn Hatfield	71	72	121	139	169	186	-	123
Breckland	56	59	81	94	112	148	162	89
Broadland	52	55	83	96	111	147	188	91
Great Yarmouth	62	61	80	94	106	132	148	85
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	59	60	81	99	116	147	178	92
North Norfolk	-	54	79	97	106	140	131	88
Norwich	51	53	82	98	113	148	150	87
South Norfolk	58	53	86	97	112	144	153	91
Babergh	70	61	88	99	120	161	-	97
Forest Heath	69	71	98	113	129	134	-	101
Ipswich	55	55	87	97	111	140	179	95
Mid Suffolk	55	60	84	98	118	156	-	93
St Edmundsbury	68	83	92	110	129	168	-	101
Suffolk Coastal	58	56	85	96	116	144	176	91
Waveney	60	61	80	95	108	135	156	87
Camden	108	112	226	314	425	540	673	245
City of London	-	130	291	-	-	-	-	208
Hackney	96	98	199	255	309	382	556	203
Hammersmith and Fulham	106	111	208	268	349	500	745	209
Haringey	85	85	154	189	246	324	403	167
Islington	104	103	205	291	413	482	672	215
Kensington and Chelsea	124	125	290	422	633	804	1,024	328
Lambeth	86	86	158	195	253	324	429	158
Lewisham	81	82	158	187	230	290	355	168
Newham	74	78	149	169	221	256	294	172
Southwark	83	83	156	190	239	320	407	152
Tower Hamlets	93	100	211	262	316	353	421	199

Table 6: Average HB (LHA) awards, March 2010, £ per week	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	All bedrooms
	under 25*	over 25*						
	Wandsworth	104						
Westminster	133	126	309	423	622	784	969	372
Barking and Dagenham	70	72	138	170	206	235	298	162
Barnet	86	92	168	205	278	341	433	196
Bexley	75	78	138	167	195	237	275	157
Brent	93	95	193	232	307	391	536	223
Bromley	76	78	140	166	195	260	314	150
Croydon	81	81	140	170	219	275	329	158
Ealing	91	90	178	198	264	334	468	190
Enfield	87	89	161	201	260	306	373	189
Greenwich	75	78	138	167	196	244	280	151
Harrow	84	85	156	185	247	287	339	188
Havering	67	70	139	170	201	246	289	157
Hillingdon	83	84	148	178	222	261	304	169
Hounslow	87	88	162	185	234	294	350	179
Kingston Upon Thames	78	88	160	198	246	316	419	185
Merton	85	84	136	165	221	285	327	160
Redbridge	74	80	141	169	209	274	321	170
Richmond Upon Thames	77	94	172	200	257	335	374	184
Sutton	78	81	136	165	209	259	328	151
Waltham Forest	72	72	141	167	215	257	294	155
Bracknell Forest UA	82	79	131	148	175	233	239	130
Brighton and Hove UA	76	79	129	161	202	240	298	131
Isle of Wight UA	62	64	89	109	134	158	185	97
Medway UA	63	64	100	119	133	172	199	116
Milton Keynes UA	68	70	111	130	157	200	239	120
Portsmouth UA	67	68	104	125	153	180	240	109
Reading UA	76	77	133	155	176	216	365	136
Slough UA	83	83	141	161	201	272	414	162
Southampton UA	66	68	107	124	152	193	216	109
West Berkshire UA	69	70	109	135	161	229	233	125
Windsor and Maidenhead UA	79	83	137	165	196	265	-	148
Wokingham UA	77	78	130	153	183	220	274	138
Aylesbury Vale	74	75	104	127	159	196	-	115
Chiltern	69	74	115	146	182	258	-	131
South Bucks	76	86	127	160	195	307	501	151
Wycombe	76	78	118	146	188	213	258	131
Eastbourne	66	68	102	128	151	188	222	112
Hastings	58	60	86	104	137	166	198	94
Lewes	72	80	122	149	190	211	287	138
Rother	59	61	85	107	136	172	208	99
Wealden	69	71	104	129	161	194	325	121
Basingstoke and Deane	66	71	112	132	156	204	238	119
East Hampshire	72	73	107	118	153	198	-	113
Eastleigh	67	69	102	129	152	195	242	116
Fareham	65	67	105	121	141	184	230	116
Gosport	65	67	98	118	144	167	207	108
Hart	82	73	114	134	164	149	-	123
Havant	67	68	102	125	156	188	219	116
New Forest	68	68	107	125	156	200	265	116
Rushmoor	77	79	116	140	169	216	-	117
Test Valley	65	65	105	123	151	181	-	116
Winchester	68	71	116	138	167	224	-	115
Ashford	69	68	100	114	136	170	198	109
Canterbury	67	90	104	127	152	192	248	109
Dartford	67	68	110	126	146	186	251	117
Dover	59	58	83	106	129	141	110	96
Gravesham	70	71	106	126	144	166	207	119
Maidstone	71	72	103	125	155	186	221	113
Sevenoaks	68	69	113	137	156	217	303	122
Shepway	56	60	86	106	129	151	196	97
Swale	64	64	101	119	136	163	187	112
Thanet	57	59	85	106	133	157	164	96
Tonbridge and Malling	64	71	111	127	160	206	-	123
Tunbridge Wells	71	70	119	141	173	237	-	127
Cherwell	71	74	104	118	146	173	177	110
Oxford	76	77	140	160	199	251	319	136
South Oxfordshire	72	79	122	151	172	211	234	133
Vale of White Horse	73	75	119	148	169	230	-	129
West Oxfordshire	69	75	122	136	170	199	-	126
Elmbridge	83	87	146	180	237	284	378	168
Epsom and Ewell	79	79	140	163	205	283	342	147
Guildford	79	82	140	165	207	267	343	147
Mole Valley	81	81	132	158	195	243	-	140
Reigate and Banstead	75	79	130	146	190	265	-	135
Runnymede	79	87	146	169	232	272	413	150
Spelthorne	85	86	144	172	222	296	431	162

Table 6: Average HB (LHA) awards, March 2010, £ per week	Shared accommodation*							All bedrooms
	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	
	under 25*	over 25*						
Surrey Heath	79	79	123	148	181	255	-	130
Tandridge	80	79	134	163	196	258	348	151
Waverley	74	83	128	166	215	178	-	148
Woking	81	83	136	171	230	269	412	157
Adur	75	79	117	144	177	218	-	129
Arun	68	69	105	126	153	186	213	113
Chichester	62	69	111	138	167	213	214	125
Crawley	77	76	117	142	168	203	228	131
Horsham	71	75	123	141	171	223	-	127
Mid Sussex	74	76	119	143	165	205	-	128
Worthing	66	70	105	127	149	192	215	110
Bath and North East Somerset UA	66	68	111	138	147	204	169	115
Bournemouth UA	67	67	111	128	162	214	266	111
Bristol, City of UA	59	59	106	124	146	184	248	105
Cornwall UA	62	63	93	110	128	162	173	97
North Somerset UA	65	66	96	113	136	171	184	103
Plymouth UA	62	63	88	104	125	163	195	91
Poole UA	65	68	109	132	162	193	227	118
South Gloucestershire UA	60	60	102	117	138	175	211	108
Swindon UA	68	67	100	112	133	162	174	102
Torbay UA	59	60	90	110	134	163	208	98
Wiltshire UA	60	61	94	109	137	170	201	102
East Devon	68	69	92	110	129	157	191	99
Exeter	68	74	98	109	136	166	190	99
Mid Devon	71	68	88	105	122	152	166	100
North Devon	60	65	83	97	115	141	156	89
South Hams	60	61	86	104	126	169	188	95
Teignbridge	54	59	84	100	121	139	143	95
Torridge	63	64	85	99	114	142	-	90
West Devon	62	69	86	100	118	153	162	92
Christchurch	65	65	103	129	162	199	-	118
East Dorset	66	66	107	128	159	199	243	115
North Dorset	75	73	88	97	124	152	-	95
Purbeck	56	67	105	125	155	174	-	116
West Dorset	59	62	92	109	136	158	197	101
Weymouth and Portland	62	67	97	120	140	161	197	102
Cheltenham	59	63	100	120	150	178	237	104
Cotswold	61	63	98	118	138	210	-	105
Forest of Dean	60	62	83	107	127	150	-	97
Gloucester	62	63	90	106	132	168	202	100
Stroud	63	62	88	107	128	165	203	95
Tewkesbury	58	61	96	111	135	180	197	103
Mendip	60	60	91	109	136	148	-	97
Sedgemoor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
South Somerset	62	64	83	102	130	151	166	92
Taunton Deane	64	65	91	101	123	155	178	94
West Somerset	60	66	89	102	120	148	-	94
Isle of Anglesey / Ynys Môn	56	55	74	93	111	129	156	85
Gwynedd / Gwynedd	51	55	68	84	97	114	-	74
Conwy / Conwy	53	54	75	92	111	127	150	82
Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych	54	55	76	93	112	133	143	85
Flintshire / Sir y Fflint	60	58	77	95	113	132	183	92
Wrexham / Wrexams	57	56	76	90	103	134	152	81
Powys / Powys	49	65	63	82	94	117	118	73
Ceredigion / Ceredigion	55	63	80	91	103	133	137	80
Pembrokeshire / Sir Benfro	52	54	78	94	114	138	149	85
Carmarthenshire / Sir Gaerfyrddin	52	50	79	88	100	124	129	82
Swansea / Abertawe	52	53	84	93	100	128	172	86
Neath Port Talbot / Castell-nedd Port Talbot	52	52	83	94	102	124	156	86
Bridgend / Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr	53	56	81	94	107	128	139	87
The Vale of Glamorgan / Bro Morgannwg	53	54	96	115	132	157	154	104
Cardiff / Caerdydd	53	53	96	114	137	169	207	102
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff / Rhondda, Cynon, Taf	46	46	67	83	92	119	125	76
Merthyr Tydfil / Merthyr Tudful	45	47	65	77	86	109	131	71
Caerphilly / Caerffili	50	50	71	86	97	123	125	80
Blaenau Gwent / Blaenau Gwent	46	46	66	79	90	103	107	73
Torfaen / Tor-faen	54	69	72	89	100	126	-	83
Monmouthshire / Sir Fynwy	58	60	80	99	116	143	188	92
Newport / Casnewydd	58	58	82	100	115	134	169	89
Aberdeen City	63	63	96	117	138	149	-	100
Aberdeenshire	65	66	93	110	130	139	164	107
Angus	52	56	75	97	119	142	-	91
Argyll and Bute	69	67	82	92	112	118	-	86
Clackmannanshire	64	66	80	99	117	138	-	92
Dumfries and Galloway	59	61	71	82	89	111	-	77
Dundee City	52	53	76	95	124	155	186	91
East Ayrshire	64	63	80	96	110	128	145	92

Table 6: Average HB (LHA) awards, March 2010, £ per week	Shared accommodation*		1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	All bedrooms
	under 25*	over 25*						
	East Dunbartonshire	63						
East Lothian	66	72	101	120	157	204	278	115
East Renfrewshire	63	-	86	101	122	131	-	100
Edinburgh, City of	67	67	101	125	161	195	243	114
Eilean Siar	61	64	83	89	83	-	-	82
Falkirk	-	-	79	99	128	156	-	92
Fife	57	58	76	89	109	136	150	85
Glasgow City	65	66	93	114	134	161	186	104
Highland	63	64	82	88	107	126	139	87
Inverclyde	54	53	79	92	116	137	-	91
Midlothian	60	70	102	126	164	203	-	119
Moray	-	61	75	87	108	109	-	85
North Ayrshire	63	63	82	96	117	130	158	91
North Lanarkshire	66	65	79	96	116	156	153	93
Orkney Islands	60	-	80	98	106	-	-	85
Perth and Kinross	55	56	76	91	113	147	-	93
Renfrewshire	54	55	79	92	112	132	142	88
Scottish Borders	56	53	67	82	97	119	160	78
Shetland Islands	-	-	83	107	-	-	-	89
South Ayrshire	60	61	81	91	113	126	144	86
South Lanarkshire	63	64	81	96	118	151	174	92
Stirling	62	63	80	96	127	158	-	92
West Dunbartonshire	74	73	85	98	119	129	-	101
West Lothian	-	66	83	109	125	159	192	103

Notes:

- Source: Based on the March 2010 Single Housing Benefit Extract.

- Figures are rounded to the nearest pound.

- No information is available for the Isles of Scilly.

\* Note that the breakdown into the columns "Shared accommodation under 25", "Shared accommodation over 25" and "1-bedroom" are based on an estimated breakdown produced by DWP as described earlier.

## References

29. Documents relating to the LHA changes coming into effect before the proposed changes to the shared accommodation rate can be found at:
- “Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12” (published 23 July 2010)  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/local-authority-staff/housing-benefit/claims-processing/local-housing-allowance/impact-of-changes.shtml>
  - Equality impact Assessment (revised; published 30 November 2010)  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-eia-nov10.pdf>
  - Impact Assessment (published 30 November 2010)  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/lha-impact-nov10.pdf>
  - Legislation laid in Parliament on 30 November 2010  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/local-authority-staff/housing-benefit/claims-processing/local-housing-allowance/regulations/>
30. Current LHA rates, now set at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of local rents can be found at:
- <http://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk>

**2011 No.**

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

**The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011**

*Made* - - - - - \*\*\*  
*Laid before Parliament* \*\*\*  
*Coming into force* - - - - - *1st January 2012*

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 123(1)(d), 130A(2) to (5), 137(1) and 175(1), (3) and (4) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992<sup>(1)</sup>.

In accordance with section 172(1) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992, the Secretary of State has referred these Regulations to the Social Security Advisory Committee.

In accordance with section 176(1)<sup>(2)</sup> of that Act, the Secretary of State has consulted with organisations appearing to him to be representative of the authorities concerned.

**Citation and commencement**

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and come into force on 1st January 2012.

**Amendment of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006**

2.—(1) The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006<sup>(3)</sup> are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 2(1)<sup>(4)</sup> (interpretation) in the definition of “young individual” for “25 years”, substitute “35 years”.

(3) In regulation 12M(4)<sup>(5)</sup> (transitional protection – reduction in LHA) for “Where”, substitute “Subject to paragraph (4A), where”.

(4) After regulation 12M(4) insert—

“(4A) Where on the date when the eligible rent ceases to apply because of paragraph (3)(a), the claimant is a young individual who has attained the age of 25 years—

---

<sup>(1)</sup> 1992 c.4. Section 130A was inserted by section 30 of the Welfare Reform Act 2007 (c.5). Section 137(1) is an interpretation provision and is cited for the meaning of the word “prescribed”.

<sup>(2)</sup> 1992 c.5. Section 176(1) was amended by paragraph 23 of Schedule 9 to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (c.14), paragraph 3(4) of Schedule 13 to the Housing Act 1996 (c.52) and section 69(6) of the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 (c.19).

<sup>(3)</sup> S.I. 2006/213.

<sup>(4)</sup> Relevant amending instruments are S.I. 2007/2868 and 2010/2835.

<sup>(5)</sup> Regulation 12M was inserted by S.I. 2010/2835.



(a) the eligible rent will be the maximum rent (LHA) which would apply if the relevant authority were to determine one by reference to that date, but

(b) the LHA date for the purposes of regulation 13C will remain the date by reference to which the local housing allowance used in the determination referred to in paragraph (1)(b) was identified.”

**Amendment of the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006**

3.—(1) The Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006<sup>(6)</sup> are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation) omit the definition of “young individual”.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

	<i>Name</i>
	Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
	Department for Work and Pensions
Date	

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

Regulation 2(2) of these Regulations amends the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 (S.I. 2006/213) (“the Housing Benefit Regulations”) so as to extend the definition of “young individual” to include single claimants who are under the age of 35, rather than 25 as at present.. Where a person falls within the definition of “young individual” the effect is that their housing benefit is limited to the rate applicable to a room in shared accommodation, rather than the rate applicable to one-bedroom self-contained accommodation, unless they benefit from an exemption.

Regulation 2(3) and (4) make amendments to regulation 12M of the Housing Benefit Regulations. Regulation 12M was inserted by the Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 2010/2835) and provides for a period of up to 9 months during which certain existing claimants in the private rented sector are protected from reductions which that instrument and the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Amendment Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/2836) make to housing benefit in cases covered by the local housing allowance. Regulation 12M provides that, at the end of the 9 month period, most claimants’ housing benefit will revert to that which would have been set but for this transitional protection. However regulation 2(3) and (4) amend regulation 12M to provide that, for existing claimants who become “young individuals” as a result of this instrument (i.e. single claimants who have reached 25 but are under 35 years old) their housing benefit will change to the rate applicable at the end of the 9 month period to a room in shared accommodation. However this will not change the date at which their housing benefit subsequently falls to be reassessed.

Regulation 3 omits a redundant definition in regulation 2(1) of the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 (S.I. 2006/214).

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as it has no impact on the private sector or civil society organisations.

---

<sup>(6)</sup> S.I. 2006/214.

Ms Gill Saunders  
Secretary  
Social Security Advisory Committee  
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London WC2N 6HT

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9 May 2011

Dear Gill,

**The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2011**

I am writing following the Social Security Advisory Committee's consideration of these draft regulations at their meeting on 4 May 2011. The Committee identified several areas where they would like to see further information not fully covered in the Equality Impact Assessment and Explanatory Memorandum.

As discussed, I have amended the text in the Explanatory Memorandum under the child poverty and rural impacts headings and attach such supplementary information that is available on the following areas:

- unfurnished and furnished tenancies;
- types of disability;
- people with children living elsewhere;
- urban and rural split of impact of shared accommodation rate changes.

Please let me know if you require any further clarification.

Yours sincerely

*By e-mail*

Nina Young  
Housing Policy Division

Email                    [nina.young@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nina.young@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)  
Direct line            0207 449 5351

## Shared accommodation rate: Additional information for the Social Security Advisory Committee

### Unfurnished and furnished tenancies

The Committee asked for information on the split between unfurnished and furnished tenancies.

Table A below gives estimates of the split of tenancy types and accommodation arrangements amongst single, childless private renters of working age, regardless of whether or not they are in receipt of Housing Benefit. This shows that where people are living alone tenancies tend to be unfurnished, and that where accommodation is shared tenancies are more likely to be furnished.

**Table A**

<b>Single, childless, working age private renters</b>	<b>Unfurnished tenancy</b>	<b>Furnished tenancy</b>
Not shared	71%	29%
Shared accommodation arrangements	21%	79%
All	52%	48%

Source: Family Resources Survey 2008/09

Note that the definition of shared accommodation arrangements used in the Family Resources survey is that multiple adults are living as a single household (ie sharing some meals), on an equal basis. This will not always correspond to the definition used in setting the Local Housing Allowance shared accommodation rate, which is based only on shared access to rooms. For example, someone living in a bedsit, who shares a kitchen with other tenants but lives as a separate household would not be regarded as sharing under the FRS definition, but would receive the shared accommodation rate.

### Types of disability

The Committee asked about the types of disability involved where people affected by the policy are in receipt of some form of disability benefit but do not meet the criteria for exemption from the shared accommodation rate.

We do not have this information available specifically for Housing Benefit claimants, but the Department does publish quarterly statistics on Incapacity Benefit and Employment Support Allowance which allow for tabulation by age group and by the nature of the incapacity.

Table B below gives this information for the 25-34 year old age group in August 2010. Only a fraction of these claimants will be single, childless and

claiming LHA, but it is likely that where IB or ESA recipients are affected, the commonest reason receipt of IB or ESA will be mental or behavioural disorders.

**Table B: Summary disease codes for Incapacity Benefit and Employment Support Allowance claimants aged 25 to 34.**

Conditions of IB and ESA claimants aged 25 to 34, August 2010	Incapacity Benefit	Employment Support Allowance
Other	18%	22%
Mental and Behavioural Disorders	63%	52%
Diseases of the Nervous System	8%	4%
Diseases of the Circulatory or Respiratory System	2%	2%
Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue	6%	9%
Injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	4%	11%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study tabulation tool<sup>1</sup>

### People with children living elsewhere

The Committee also asked for information on benefit claimants who do not have dependent children included in their assessment unit but who do have regular overnight visits from a child living elsewhere.

Based on the 2008/09 Family Resources Survey we estimate that 18% of 25-34 year old single Housing Benefit claimants without dependent children are absent parents. This result should be treated with some caution, as the sample size is small, and 2008/09 was the first year that this question was asked in the Family Resources Survey.

The Families and Children Survey<sup>2</sup> indicates that over half of children with an absent parent have fairly regular contact (at least once a fortnight), but we do not know the extent to which this involves overnight stays.

### Urban and rural split of impact of shared accommodation rate changes

<sup>1</sup>

[http://83.244.183.180/100pc/ib/icdgpsumm/cnage/a\\_carate\\_r\\_icdgpsumm\\_c\\_cnage\\_aug10.html](http://83.244.183.180/100pc/ib/icdgpsumm/cnage/a_carate_r_icdgpsumm_c_cnage_aug10.html)

[http://83.244.183.180/100pc/esa/icdgpsumm/age/a\\_carate\\_r\\_icdgpsumm\\_c\\_age\\_aug10.html](http://83.244.183.180/100pc/esa/icdgpsumm/age/a_carate_r_icdgpsumm_c_age_aug10.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep656.pdf> table 15.7

The table below splits the effects in England, as already set out in the impact assessment, by the ONS rural/urban classification<sup>3</sup> at Local Authority level.

This shows that nearly two thirds of those affected are in Major Urban or Large Urban local authorities, and that around a fifth are in more rural areas (Significantly Rural, Rural-50 or Rural-80).

The scale of the weekly reductions in benefit entitlement does not vary a great deal across the different types of local authority, apart from the significantly larger figure for Major Urban areas, which is skewed by the very high rents charged in London.

**Table C: Claimants affected in England, by rural/urban Local Authority classification**

	<b>Number affected</b>	<b>Average loss per week</b>
Major Urban	25,030	-£57
Large Urban	9,620	-£34
Other Urban	9,010	-£31
Significant rural	4,860	-£33
Rural-50	4,380	-£28
Rural-80	2,590	-£33
England total	55,500	-£43

Simple classifications of Welsh and Scottish local authorities are not available, so in the time available it is only possible to conduct this analysis for England.

The rural/urban classifications of Local Authorities are as follows:

1. *Major Urban*: districts with either 100,000 people or 50 per cent of their population in urban areas with a population of more than 750,000
2. *Large Urban*: districts with either 50,000 people or 50 per cent of their population in one of 17 urban areas with a population between 250,000 and 750,000
3. *Other Urban*: districts with fewer than 37,000 people or less than 26 per cent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns
4. *Significant Rural*: districts with more than 37,000 people or more than 26 per cent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/geography/products/area-classifications/rural-urban-definition-and-la-classification/rural-urban-local-authority--la--classification/index.html>

5. *Rural-50*: districts with at least 50 per cent but less than 80 per cent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns
6. *Rural-80*: districts with at least 80 per cent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns

## Appendix 2

### List of Respondents to the Consultation Exercise (in order of date received)

1. Janet Curwen	
2. Steve Cole	
3. Cllr Susan Murray	Lewes District Green Party
4. Janice Hartzell	
5. Jo Westlake	
6. Carl McMurtry	
7. David Watkins	Housing Law Practitioners Association
8. Fiona Johnson	South Somerset District Council
9. Christine Hay	
10. Tina Cross	
11. Sarah Radcliffe	National AIDS Trust
12. Alison Cole	
13. John Madden	City of York Council
14. Stephanie Butterworth	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
15. Sharon Caddell	Middlesbrough Council's Homelessness Forum
16. Lisa Smith	Torbay Supporting People Team
17. Derrick Thompson	Bristol Supported Housing Forum
18. Laura Niwa	Law Centre (NI)
19. Robert Aldridge	Scottish Council for Single Homeless
20. Heather Cook	
21. Megan Wilson	Sense Scotland
22. Phil Hanns	National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers
23. Alice Evans	Homeless Link
24. Fiona Douglas	Housing Rights Service
25. Georgina Ryan White	Simon Community Northern Ireland
26. R.O. Jones	Residential Landlords Association
27. Thembela Duri	Equality and Human Rights Commission
28. Mark Gillmore	EK Services
29. Carol O'Bryan, Ricky Rowledge	Voluntary Sector Housing Policy Forum
30. Diane Barkley	Greater Manchester Supported Housing Forum
31. Ged Millar	Scottish Government Housing Benefit Reform Project
32. Annabel Kennedy	Housing Law Practitioners Association
33. Lynn Johnson	Positive East
34. Christopher Williamson	NIFHA
35. John Weetman	Manchester Reducing Re-offending Theme group
36. George Quinn	Council for the Homeless NI
37. James Hall	Centrepont
38. John Montes	Croydon Council
39. Helen Armstrong	Cadwyn
40. Caroline Lucas MP	
41. Catherine Murphy	Terrence Higgins Trust

42. Kate Webb	Shelter
43. Sam Lister	Chartered Institute of Housing
44. Kevin Wright	First Housing Aid & Support Service
45. Jane Kelly	Lifeways Ltd
46. Christie Silk	Citizens Advice
47. Mike Heiser	
48. Daniel Dumoulin	St Mungo's
49. Phil Rimmer	Bolton Council
50. Julian Clokie	
51. Theresa Rowe	Richmond AID
52. Robert Aldridge	Scottish Council for Single Homeless
53. Rosemary Brotchie	Shelter Scotland
54. Lisa Doe	Vale of Glamorgan Council
55. Katharine Sacks-Jones	Crisis
56. Tom Younespour	British Property Federation
57. Caroline Davey	Gingerbread



## **Appendix 3**

### **THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

#### **List of Members**

Mr Deep Sagar  
Mr Kwame Akuffo  
Mr Les Allamby  
Mr John Andrews  
Mr Simon Bartley  
Mrs Brigid Campbell  
Dr Angus Erskine  
Ms Carolyn George  
Professor Elaine Kempson  
Ms Maureen Reith  
Ms Pat Smail  
Ms Nicola Smith  
Professor Janet Walker  
Professor Robert Walker







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