



## Rent and Service Charges Consultation April 2012-13: Frequently Asked Questions

### Why are you asking my opinion on rents?

Each year, the Government tells the Council how much rents should increase. The average increase for tenants from April 2012 is 7.5% and the Council would like to know tenants' opinions about the proposed increase before the decision is finalised on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

The rent takes account of the type and size of house or flat a tenant occupies. As there are many different properties in the borough, there are many different rents that tenants can pay.

### What will my new rent be?

Every rent is different and some pay more and some pay less. The proposed new rent is included on the consultation document sent to tenants in December 2011.

### Why is the rent being increased when council tax is not?

The government wants to reduce the amount of money they give to Haringey Council for the purpose of providing housing services. The increase is to make up for the shortfall. The money the Council receives from rents is ring-fenced, which means it can only be used for providing housing services to residents such as property repairs and tenancy management.

### How do I get more information on how the rents are calculated?

- You can call us on **020 8489 2409**
- You can email us your questions at: **[finance@homesforharingey.org](mailto:finance@homesforharingey.org)**
- Visit our website at: **[www.homesforharingey.org](http://www.homesforharingey.org)**

When you phone us we will need to ask you some questions to verify your identity. This is because we cannot discuss information regarding tenancies with anyone other than with the tenant.

### Will housing benefit cover any rent and service charge increases?

This will depend on the individual tenant's personal circumstances. You may already be aware that the government is planning changes to housing benefit but many of these changes will not be introduced until next year. However, if you are presently in receipt of full housing benefit and your circumstances do not change then, it is likely any increase will be paid by housing benefit.

If you want further clarification on your entitlement to benefits, please contact Housing Benefits as follows:

- Haringey Council's website: [www.haringey.gov.uk](http://www.haringey.gov.uk)
- Email: [benefits@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@haringey.gov.uk)
- Call Haringey Council on **0845 071 2800**
- Write to: **Benefits Service, PO Box 10505, Wood Green, N22 7WJ**

### **What extra services do I get for this increase?**

The Council is continually working to improve all services to residents. Homes for Haringey's services were inspected in 2010 by an independent body and we were considered to have good services. Any increases to service charges are as a result of increased costs in gas, electricity and other services. However, the proposed increase to rent is mainly to make up for a reduction in money that the government will give Haringey Council.

### **What are the service charges included on the document?**

Tenants who receive specific services will receive a service charge for these services in addition to their rent. Below is a list of service charges we levy:

Caretaking	Street sweeping
Concierge	Digital TV aerial
District heating	Estate road maintenance
Grounds maintenance	Water rates
Communal lighting	

Service charges are set to cover the estimated cost of providing services and are only charged where you receive the service.

### **Why are there increases to some service charges?**

Energy prices have been increasing and we are unable to keep the service charge at last year's level. If you receive Housing Benefit to pay for the services then it is likely that you will continue to receive benefit to cover the new charges (excluding heating and water charges which is not eligible for housing benefit). For clarification on this please contact Housing Benefits using the details shown above.

### **Why do I now have a service charge when I didn't have one before?**

Some tenants will have recently been notified of new services charges that they are liable to pay for. We regularly review the services that each property receives to ensure that only those receiving the service are charged.

### **When will the new rent and service charges start?**

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012 (the first Monday in April 2012).

## **Why is the consultation late this year?**

There was a delay in the government's announcement about proposals for new rents for next year.

## **I think my rent is too high at the moment, what can I do about it?**

Because the government's rent policy tells the Council what each rent should be, we cannot change the rent for individual properties. If you have concerns about the affordability of your current rent you should speak with your Income Collection Officer.

## **How do I give my opinion?**

- You can speak to a member of staff on telephone number **020 8489 2409**
- You can email **finance@homesforharingey.org**
- You can post back the slip at the end of the consultation letter and return it to Homes for Haringey (either by hand to a Housing office or Customer Services Centre, or by posting to **Rent Consultation Freepost RRXB-SACU-YERY, Homes for Haringey, Alexandra House (9th floor), 10 Station Road, London N22 7TR**

When you contact us by phone we will need to ask you some questions to verify your identify. This is because we cannot discuss information regarding tenancies with anyone other than with the tenant.

**You need to send your response to us before Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2012.**

## **Can anybody give an opinion?**

**No.** Only the person who holds a council tenancy can be included in the consultation. If you contact us by phone we will need to ask you some questions to verify your identify. This is because we cannot discuss information regarding tenancies with anyone other than with the tenant and to ensure that they only express one opinion.

## Translation and interpreting services

This is an important letter about your home, from Homes for Haringey.  
To get a free copy in your own language, please complete and return the form.

**Albanian**

Kjo është një letër e rëndësishme mbi shtëpinë tuaj, nga Homes for Haringey. Për të marrë një kopje falas në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutem plotësoni dhe ktheni formularin.

**Arabic**

هذه رسالة مهمة بشأن منزلك مرسله من قبل "مساكن هرنغيه".  
للحصول على نسخة مجانية بلغتك الأصلية، الرجاء أملء  
الاستمارة وارجعها.

**Bengali**

এটা আপনার ঘরের ব্যাপারে হোমস ফর হ্যারিংয়ে-র কাছ থেকে একটা জরুরী চিঠি। এটা আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চাইলে, দয়া করে এই ফর্মটা ভর্তি করুন আর ফেরত পাঠান।

**French**

Voici une lettre importante de "Homes for Haringey" concernant votre logement. Pour en obtenir un exemplaire gratuit dans votre langue, veuillez remplir et nous renvoyer le coupon.

**Greek**

Η σημαντική αυτή επιστολή αφορά το σπίτι σας και είναι από τον οργανισμό «Homes for Haringey» (Κατοικίες για το Χάριγκεϋ). Αν θέλετε δωρεάν αντίγραφο στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλούμε συμπληρώστε και επιστρέψτε τη φόρμα.

**Kurdish**

Ev name girîng e û li ser mala we ya ku Homes for Haringey daye we ye. Ji bo kopîyeke wê bi zimanê we, ji kerema xwe formê tije bikin û bi şûn ve bişînin.

**Portuguese**

Essa é uma carta importante sobre seu lar, de Homes for Haringey (Lares para Haringey). Para obter uma cópia gratuita em sua própria língua, por favor complete e retorne o formulário.

**Romanian**

Aceasta este o scrisoare importantă de la „Homes for Haringey”, în legătură cu locuința dvs. Pentru a obține o copie gratuită în limba dvs, vă rugăm completați și returnați formularul.

**Somali**

Tani waa warqad muhiim ah oo ku saabsan guri-gaaga, taas oo ka socota Homes for Haringey. Si aad u hesho koobbi lacag la'aan ah oo luqaddaada ku qoran, fadlan buuxi oo soo celi foomka.

**Turkish**

Bu, Homes for Haringey adlı kurumdan, evinize ilişkin önemli bir mektuptur. Kendi dilinizde ücretsiz bir kopyası için lütfen formu doldurup gönderiniz.

Please tell us if you would like a copy of this letter in another language that is not listed above or in any of the following formats, and send the form to the Freepost address below.

In large print

On audio tape

In Braille

In another language

Which language? \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: **Freepost RLXS-XZGT-UGRJ Haringey Council,  
Translation and Interpretation Services, 8th Floor, River Park House,  
225 High Road, London N22 8HQ**



Homes for Haringey uses recycled paper as part of its commitment to improving the environment.

Homes for Haringey offers this translating and interpreting service to Haringey residents. We can translate this document into one language per resident ONLY.