



FAQs on Tenant Rent and Service Charges Consultation – April 2010

1. Why are you asking my opinion on rents?

The Government tells the Council how much rents should increase. The average increase for tenants is 1.3% and the Council is anxious to know tenants' opinions about the proposed increase. The rent takes account of how much tenants can pay and the type of house or flats that they live in. As there are many different properties in the borough, there are many different rents that tenants can pay.

2. 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 documents sent.

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

You can speak to a member of staff on telephone number **020 8489 2409**. We will need to ask you your name and address to check that you are council tenants.

You can email finance@homesforharingey.org with your questions.

Visit our website at www.homesforharingey.org, then go to "Information for tenants" and "Paying rent and services charges".

Will the increase be covered by Housing Benefit?

Yes. If you are presently in receipt of full housing benefit and your circumstances do not change then the any increase will be paid by housing benefit. Housing Benefits can be contacted as follows.

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

What extra services do I get for this increase?

The Council is continually working to improve all services to residents. Homes for Haringey has had its services inspected by an independent body and we were considered to have good enough services to receive some £200 million in investment. However, the increase 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. Service charges are set to cover the estimated cost of providing services and are only charged where you receive the service.

Why have some Service Charges been reduced?

Gas and electricity prices have reduced and we expect energy costs to be lower next year. This means that the charges for light and power (communal lighting) and district heating (where charged) will be reduced from April 2010. If you receive Housing Benefit to pay for the services you will continue to receive benefit to cover the new charges (excluding heating and water charges which is not eligible for housing benefit).

Why have I now got a service charge when I did not have one before?

Some tenants will have recently been notified of new services charges that they are eligible to pay for. This follows a review of what each tenant should be paying in service charges.

When will the new rent and service charges start?

From the first Monday in April 2010 (5th April 2010).

Why is the consultation late this year?

There was a six-week delay in government proposing new rents for next year.

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 you want me to 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 leaflet and return it to the Council (either by hand to a Housing office or Customer Services Centre, or by posting to Freepost RRXB-SACU-YERY, Rents Consultation, Homes for Haringey, River Park House (6th floor), 225 High Road, London N22 8HQ

We will need to ask you your name and address to check that only council tenants give their views.

When can I give my opinion?

All responses need to be received on or before **Monday, 1st February, 2010** in order to be included in the decision-making process.

Can anybody give an opinion?

No. Only the person who holds a council tenancy can be included in the consultation. We have to ask the name and address of each tenant giving an opinion to make sure they are who they say they are and that they only express one opinion.

What if I cannot read the leaflet and information that you have provided?

The information has been translated into your language and we can send you this translation. Get someone to ring **020 8489 2409** if you need the translation.

If you want someone to read the leaflet to you or explain any part of it, call us on **020 8489 2409**.