

Rent Consultation– April 2009 – Frequently Asked Questions from Tenants

The following are a set of Frequently Asked Questions to provide some guidance for tenants seeking information on the rent increase consultation.

1. Why are you asking my opinion on Rents?

The government tells the Council how much rents should 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.

Rents could increase in April next year by an average of 6.1% or £4.78 per week if the Government's formula for calculating rents is applied.

The council is anxious to know tenants' opinions about the proposed increase and various ways it can be calculated.

2. What does Option 1 mean?

The government asks councils to set rents according to a formula called 'Rent Restructuring'. The idea of this is that similar homes in the same area will have similar rents regardless of whether they are Council homes or from Housing Associations and other social landlords.

The rent is calculated taking account of how much the home is worth if it were sold and the number of bedrooms. It also takes account of earnings in London relative to the rest of the country.

The rent for each home is calculated individually.

If you want to know more about how your rent is calculated contact the Finance Team.

3. What does Option 2 mean?

This is similar to option 1 but we will limit the increase to £6.00. Some tenants will pay a little more than they would under option 1 to pay for the restriction on some bigger increases. But no one will pay more than an extra £6.00.

4. What does Option 3 mean?

Every tenant will pay an extra 6.1% on their existing rent. This will be calculated a 6.1% flat rate increase on the existing rent paid. Therefore tenants who currently have a higher rent will pay more than those with a lower rent.

5. What will my new rent be?

Every rent is different and some pay more and some pay less. On average rent would rise by £4.78 per week to £82.95 per week. If you want to know what your rent will be under each of the options proposed you can contact the Finance Team.

6. 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**.

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

Visit the website www.homesforharingey.org

We will need to ask you your name and address to check that you are council tenants.

7. 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

8. 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.

9. When will the higher rent start?

From the first Monday in April 2009 (6th April 2009)

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. When can I give my opinion?

All responses need to be received on or before **Monday 12 January 2008** in order to be included in the decision-making process.

13. 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.

14. 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, ring **020 8489 2409**