

## ■ Changes in the registration of social housing in England

Our Housing Benefit legislation has been amended, to taking into account the changes to the registration process for providers of social housing in England.

As Registered Social Landlords, we understand that you have now transferred automatically to the new register, held by the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), and you are now know as Registered Providers, as opposed to Registered Social Landlords.

Please could you let us let us know, if any housing offered to your tenants is profit making accommodation? If this is the case, then we would need to treat the claims in a different way from the standard Registered Provider, non-profit making properties.

## ■ Welfare reform

As you can imagine, we are keeping a close eye on proposed changes to reduce the cost of social security spending.

Most of the immediate changes will affect customers within the privately rented sector. These proposals include capping of the maximum level of Local Housing Allowance, changing the Local Housing allowance from the median rate to the 30% percentile, and the removal of the £15 excess.

However, the new rules will allow for an extra bedroom for disabled claimants whose condition requires a live in carer.

There is discussion around introducing size criteria rules for working age claimants living in the social rented sector. This is currently under consultation; it may be something that you would like to keep a watchful eye on!

The one change that will directly affect you from April 2011 will be the non-dependant charges. These charges have been unchanged for a number of years now and the proposals are to increase these charges in line with uprating since 2001. This could potentially show quite large charges, we will keep you informed as soon as we hear any more.

## ■ Landlord Survey

It's that time of year again when I would really appreciate your feedback! Included in the newsletter is a survey - please can you complete and return it to me - we really appreciate any feedback that we receive, as it helps us to shape our service in the way that you want it to be!

## **Reporting Changes of Circumstances**

Please remember to keep us informed if you are aware of change of circumstances with your tenants. If you think there has been a change in the household composition, the tenant may have had a change of income or any circumstance that may affect the amount of Housing Benefit they are entitled to, please tell us.

You can notify us of any changes by e mail to: [benefits.enquiries@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:benefits.enquiries@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

## **Fraud awareness**

Fraud against Reigate & Banstead Borough Council is taken very seriously. If you suspect that someone is committing fraud you can contact us anonymously on 01737 276 483 or email [fraudstoppers@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:fraudstoppers@reigate-banstead.gov.uk) Alternatively you can download a fraud referral from the internet by clicking [here](#) and sending it to Corporate Anti Fraud Team, Town Hall, Castlefield Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0SH.

If you would like fraud awareness training delivered to your teams, please contact Chrissie Harwood, Corporate Fraud Manager on 01737 276487 e mail [Chrissie.Harwood@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:Chrissie.Harwood@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

## **Contacting us by e-mail**

If you would like to contact us by e-mail with a query about a benefit claim, you can e-mail [benefits.enquiries@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:benefits.enquiries@reigate-banstead.gov.uk). Your e-mail will be forwarded to the relevant officer to reply to you.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding our service, or would like to set up regular liaison, please contact Louise Stone - telephone 01737 276491, e-mail [louise.stone@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:louise.stone@reigate-banstead.gov.uk) or alternatively, you can write to us at the Town Hall, Castlefield Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0SH. If I am not available and you would like a named contact here, please contact Simon Evans on 01737 276481.