



Local Housing Allowance

a guide



Local Housing Allowance (LHA) will be paid instead of Housing Benefit where you rent your home from a private landlord.



If you already get Housing Benefit you will only transfer to the new LHA if you move.

From April 2008, LHA will be paid to you directly if your combined income and savings fall below a certain level. It will be paid to you rather than your landlord. The new system has been introduced as it is fairer and more straightforward.

LHA will still be calculated on the basis of how much you can pay towards your rent.

You can find out the standard local allowance for your area (based on the number of people in the household). You can get this information from the Housing Benefit department at the Council.



You can claim LHA in the same way as claiming Housing Benefit by filling in a form which you can get from the Council Offices or online at www.spelthorne.gov.uk/housingbenefit www.runnymede.gov.uk/housingbenefit www.elmbridge.gov.uk/housingbenefit

Important things to remember:

- Fairness:** this will mean that if you live in a similar area in similar circumstances to someone else, you will be paid the same.
- More choice:** If you choose to live somewhere where your rent is less than the LHA, you get to keep the difference, up to £15 per week.
- Open:** You can find out more easily how much of your rent could be covered by LHA
- Personal responsibility:** You can take more responsibility for budgeting and paying your rent yourself. This is easier and cheaper via a bank account.

If you want to find out more, please contact the Housing Benefit office at Spelthorne, Runnymede or Elmbridge Borough Councils.