

Questions from Hayes Town Centre Estate Residents

Private Tenants

Most of the key facts that you need can be found in the Landlord Offer and the Guides, but we have set out below answers to questions we have been asked in the run up to the ballot as you might find them useful. If your question is not covered here please do contact us for a one to one discussion.

If you require this information in another format or need support understanding this material, please contact us on 0800 994 9323.

Please note this is a live document and will be updated

1. Why are private tenants being asked to pay 'London Affordable Rent' if they get a new council home – isn't that 80% of market rent?

Private tenants are currently charged **full market rent** by their landlord for their home. Where private tenants cannot afford this rent in full, they may be accessing Housing Benefit or Universal Credit which meets some or all of their accommodation costs.

Local Authorities do not have a duty to provide private tenants with new council homes.

However, as part of a local lettings plan for the new estate the council intends to help those private tenants in the most demonstrable housing need, who are **Band A & B** on the housing register, by reserving the "surplus" rented properties for them.

On this redevelopment scheme existing secure tenants will return to new properties let at social rent. However as new tenants, private renters will be charged 'London Affordable Rent'. The London Affordable rents are set by the Mayor of London per house type. As an example, a four-bed maisonette at the Mayor's London Affordable Rent would be £187 per week. This is well below 80% of full market rent. Charging the new 'London Affordable Rent' to new tenants enables the council to build more new council homes, therefore benefitting more people on the housing register.

If you are getting help now in paying your rent through either Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, you can continue to get help. Your claim will be reassessed based upon your new rent.

You need to simply tell the Housing Benefit Team or Universal Credit [the Department of Works and Pensions] depending upon which one is helping you pay your rent, of the new weekly rent. They will reassess your claim, based upon this new rent figure.

If you are not currently receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit to help with your housing costs, the Council would always advise you to make a claim. This is particularly the case if your circumstances change e.g. your income reduces or your rent increases. If you need any support with a claim, or experience any difficulties paying your rent in future, we have dedicated staff to support you. Please contact 01895 556666.

2. Private tenants will also be inconvenienced in having to move, will they be compensated for this?

As a private tenant on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy you could be asked to move at any time by your landlord with relatively short notice - in normal times this would be 2 months' notice.

As part of this redevelopment, the council has agreed to provide practical support to private renters including providing tailored advice and may provide financial assistance to cover reasonable moving costs, where there is financial hardship.

Private renters on Band A and B are receiving the additional benefit of priority banding for one of the new homes.

The council will pay a homeloss payment to those who are legally entitled to one.

3. What help do I get to move off the estate if I am Band A or B?

The council will buy the property back from your landlord in line with the phased programme. If your landlord chooses to sell their property back to the council earlier than planned and you are currently in Band A or B, you will be placed in **high priority banding to bid for alternative social housing away from the estate** using the Choice Based Letting system, LOCATA. If you make a move off the estate, you will pay the rent as set out on the Choice Based Letting system for that particular property.