



Newcastle Tenants and  
Residents Federation

BRIEFING SHEET – FEBRUARY 2013

## Under Occupation and Housing Benefit



**From April 2013, some social housing tenants who live in homes that are bigger than Government considers they need will receive less Housing Benefit. Almost 7,000 YHN households in Newcastle are likely to be affected.**

Only people who are claiming **HOUSING BENEFIT** and are of **WORKING AGE** will be affected by this.

**(If you are of pension age - 61½ years old at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 – don't worry, you will not be affected by this change).**

These new rules allow a room for each of the following:

- Single person or couple
- Any other person aged 16 or over
- Two children of the same sex under the age of 16
- Two children aged under 10, regardless of their sex
- A child aged 10 or over with no siblings of the same sex
- A non-resident carer providing overnight care for the claimant or their partner

**Newcastle Tenants and Residents Federation**  
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Registered in England and Wales - Registration Number: 7872914  
Registered Office: Fourth Floor, MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8XS  
Charity Registration Number: 1146632  
Approved provider of OCN Credit4Learning @ Ltd  
Funded by Newcastle City Council





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For those people affected, Housing Benefit will be reduced according to the number of extra rooms the household has:

- One extra bedroom – Housing Benefit **reduced by 14%**  
(\* rent of £60 per week = Housing Benefit reduced by £8.40)
- Two or more extra bedrooms – Housing Benefit **reduced by around 25%**  
(\* rent of £60 per week = Housing Benefit reduced by £15)

*\* These amounts are estimates based on an average rent in Newcastle and will vary according to individual circumstances.*

### What options do tenants have?

Tenants have some options, but you will need to prepare before the changes in April 2013. You can:

- **Pay the difference** and stay where you are.
- **Consider moving** to a property with the appropriate number of bedrooms for your family size.
- **Take a sharer in** to use the extra bedroom/s.
- **Find paid employment** or increase working hours to make up shortfall.

### How Your Homes Newcastle is helping to support people

YHN officers are visiting all (nearly 7,000) of the households affected when, amongst other things they will:

- Identify if your household should be exempt
- Identify whether you may be entitled to receive council administered Discretionary Housing Payment
- Identify and offer budgeting, debt and other financial advice and support
- Identify whether you want to move and offer rehousing and housing options support
- Offer employment support

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