

All you need to know about...



the bedroom tax

A guide for tenants produced by tenants



The facts

From April 2013:

If you are a tenant of working age and receiving housing benefit and you have one or more spare bedrooms, you could have your benefits reduced.

Also, your council tax may increase and even if you are on benefits, you may be expected to pay towards this.

How it may affect you

If you are under 61 and a half years on 1 April 2013, receiving housing benefit, and have more bedrooms than your household fully occupies, your housing benefit will be cut by:

14% of your rent if you have one spare bedroom

25% of your rent if you have two or more spare bedrooms.

This will mean you'll get less housing benefit than you did before. Some people may lose all of their housing benefit, particularly if they were only getting a small amount to start with.

A bedroom doesn't have to be empty to be 'spare'. Under the new rules, two children of the same sex are not entitled to their own room until they reach 16. Two children of opposite sexes must share a room until their 10th birthday.

This means you need to think about how you can find the additional money to pay the rent or what other options are available to you. Your landlord may already have been in touch about how they can help.

Help is available

If you think that this will affect you, **contact your landlord** for advice and guidance on:

- Options and opportunities to move to a smaller place at a lower rent
- Taking in lodgers to help pay the rent
- Accessing benefits
- Budgeting and money advice

..... and what your council tax contribution is likely to be.

Pass this leaflet on to neighbours, friends and family who may also be affected but might not know yet about the changes.

Don't be afraid to ask

If you think you may be affected, it's important that you get advice and support as soon as possible. You don't want to have to struggle to pay for food, heating, bills and rent.

Some landlords have put information on their websites or in tenant newsletters and have specialist support workers who will be able to help.

Contact your landlord if you have any questions.

What is ARCH?

ARCH (Association of Retained Council Housing) is an association of councils in England who have retained ownership and management of their council homes. We're here to make sure that a positive future for all the local authorities who own their homes is secured.

What does the ARCH tenants' group do?

The 18 strong ARCH tenant group is elected every other year from the ARCH membership of 64 councils across England. The group meet four times a year to discuss policy affecting council tenants nationally and represent the tenant's voice to the ARCH executive.

Contact info@arch-housing.org.uk for more information.



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