



Preventing homelessness and improving housing through expert advice, training and support to those working at the frontline

Here to help local authorities and advice agencies on 0300 330 0517



[Consultancy Line](#)



[Housing Debt Casework](#)



[Training](#)

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- **New CEO at Shelter** - On 21 February 2017 the housing and homelessness charity [Shelter announced that Polly Neate, will become the new CEO of Shelter](#). Polly, formerly the CEO of Women's Aid will take up her position on 14 August 2017.
  - **[NHAS Improving Outcomes for Young People](#)** designed to help frontline advisers, local authorities and their partners work together to prevent and tackle youth homelessness.

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#### Stats/Updates/etc

- The government, via the DWP, is going to go ahead with removing housing benefit (or rather the 'housing costs element' of Universal Credit) from anyone under the age of 22. Further details of the exemptions are on [www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk). Log in and go to the Welfare Reform pages. You can also [view the regulations](#).
- [Latest news on the Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-17](#) Committee stage: House of Lords - 10.03.2017
- Homelessness statistics - [UK Statistics Authority publish a letter in response to a complaint by Baroness Grender](#) concerning homelessness statistics released by the DCLG. The authority has expressed concern about potentially misleading figures for homelessness.
- [English Housing Survey 2015 to 2016](#): DCLG publishes the headline report from their national survey of people's housing circumstances, and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England.
- [Government support for more than 19,000 victims of domestic abuse](#) - Seventy-six projects across the country will receive a share of £20 million to support victims of domestic abuse.
- Forces Help to Buy scheme – [latest statistics for the Forces Help to Buy scheme](#) for January 2017

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#### Broken promises: What has happened to support for low income working families under universal credit?



This briefing from CPAG focuses on changes to universal credit since it was first legislated in 2012 and their effects on family incomes, work incentives and poverty rates. It also includes the effect of real-terms cuts to child benefit which took place during the same period.

[Read the CPAG Broken Promises briefing](#)

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## GOV.uk

- [Universal credit and rented housing](#) - a new version of the Social Landlord Support Pack was published in February, the pack has material for local authorities and social landlords considering undertaking some preparation for direct payment of housing costs under Universal Credit. Information for Social Rented Sector landlords in relation to April 2017 rent changes was added in March.
- [HB Bulletin G2/2017](#) contains information about: Optional Real Time Information; new policy to limit benefit payable to two children; Personal Details Verification Report; cases with the Upper Tribunal; and statutory instruments.
- [Housing Benefit caseload statistics - summary tables](#) showing the number of Housing Benefit claimants and average weekly spare room subsidy amount withdrawal

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## Recently published

- [Local Housing Allowance freeze](#) – Analysis from Shelter identifies the shortfalls in housing benefit experienced by households living in the private rented sector in England.
- [Anti-social behaviour in social housing \(England\)](#) This Commons Library briefing paper provides an overview of the remedies available to social landlords to deal with tenants who exhibit anti-social behaviour.
- **Supported housing** – [Homelessness Link launches ‘five core principles’](#) that, it says, are necessary to secure a sustainable future for supported housing services.

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## Case Law

- [R \(on the application of Osman\) v London Borough of Harrow \[2017\] EWHC 274 \(Admin\)](#)  
Application by a private sector tenant for judicial review of the local authority’s decision to place her in a lower priority band as part of its amended housing allocation scheme.

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## New funding improves support for the most vulnerable people in local communities



The Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition – formed of the national charities Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind – has today welcomed £2.78 million in new funding from the Big Lottery Fund to significantly expand support for people with multiple needs across England over the next five years.

Working together, the MEAM coalition charities support local areas across England to develop effective, coordinated approaches to multiple needs that can increase wellbeing, reduce costs to public services and improve people’s lives.

[Read more about the MEAM funding from BLF](#)

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## Launch of the new Standard Financial Statement

Co-ordinated by the Money Advice Service, [the new Standard Financial Statement](#) will be adopted by all major debt advice providers across commercial and not-for-profit sectors. This includes Citizens Advice, Money Advice Trust, StepChange and Payplan. The Insolvency Service will also start using the new format and spending guidelines in March and Creditors have started building the SFS into their collections practices.

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## Consultations

[Benefit cap Enquiry](#) - The Work and Pensions Committee launched an inquiry into the benefit cap and how it is affecting British households. **Deadline: 7 April 2017.**

[Fixing our broken housing market](#) - Part of the housing white paper, this consultation is on changes to planning policy and legislation in relation to planning for housing, sustainable development and the environment. **Deadline: 2 May 2017.**

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## NHAS Updates

- **Housing Debt Casework can help you with any housing debt or welfare benefit enquiries you may have. To discuss a case contact the HDC 2<sup>nd</sup> tier service on 0300 330 0517. Here's an example of 2 recent enquiries:**
  - [Case Study 1: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Enquiry](#) – Benefit Cap
  - [Case study 2](#): and [case law example](#): an example of case law on the issue of Housing Benefit and no recourse to public funds



### Webchat Facility

Access to housing consultancy via Webchat is a popular way for members to get free advice. Webchat is accessed by going to [www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk) and clicking on the 'live chat' button.

## Training update

- New courses: Private Rented Sector: Assured Shorthold Tenancies (available now) and Social Housing Next Steps (coming soon)
- Persons from Abroad webinar has been updated and renamed: **An introduction to benefits entitlement for EEA nationals**, covering what it means to be habitually resident and to have a right of residence; the importance of having a right of residence for EEA nationals; the types of right of residence an EEA national might have; and the impact of all of these rules on eligibility for benefits for EEA nationals
- **Free housing training at your desk**: dates for April to June are available to view online, [log in to view the calendar](#). Our webinars usually take between 75 – 90 minutes of your time, and with no software to download are quick and easy way to receive training in housing. There is no booking fee but webinars will **incur telephone charges when you dial in**.
- [Online bitesize training](#) – online learning sessions that can be used by individual learners at any time. Our bitesize sessions usually take about 30 minutes to an hour to work through.

If you'd like to be added to or removed from our distribution list, or have problems accessing any of the materials in the bulletin, please email [nhas@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhas@shelter.org.uk).

Regards,  
The NHAS Team  
[www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk)

NHAS is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government. We support the prevention of homelessness by enabling frontline providers to deliver good quality housing and homelessness advice.

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