



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: opening hours 9am – 6pm



[Consultancy Line](#)



[Housing Debt Casework](#)



[Training](#)

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#### Stats & Government Updates

- [Statutory homelessness January to March 2016 and homelessness prevention and relief 2015 to 2016: England](#)

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#### The immediate implications of Brexit

Following the vote to leave the European Union it is not yet fully clear what this will mean for people's day to day lives and it will be some time before we know the details of any changes. We expect that frontline organisations may see an increase in demand for advice, because people are likely to have questions about what the outcome means for them.

[Read the NHAS Brexit update](#)

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#### Homelessness

##### Cambridge City Council report on homelessness in their area



Cambridge City Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee received a report outlining the extent of homelessness in Cambridge which is increasing and the strategy for addressing it.

Read the report: [Homelessness and Strategic Approach to Homelessness in Cambridge City](#)

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#### Out of Area Good Practice Guide

Recognising the challenges faced by local authorities the NHAS good practice guide provides members with advice and information to consider when placing families out of area. You can also view guide by logging in to [www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk). The guide is supported by [Shelter research](#).

- [Placing homeless households out of area: local authority guidance and best practice](#)

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#### Crisis Help to Rent Funding Programme

Crisis has launched a two year funding programme offering a total of £150k to local projects supporting homeless people or those at risk of homelessness to rent a home.



The [Help to Rent](#) programme is open to statutory and voluntary services working with people not normally eligible for help from their council. Projects can apply for sums of up to £30k per year for two years. The deadline for expressions of interest is 1 August 2016, with funding for successful applicants to commence on 1 October 2016.

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## Welfare reform

### Discretionary Housing Payments

The DWP has produced a factsheet for claimants of Housing Benefit explaining what Discretionary Housing Payments are and how to claim.

[Claiming Discretionary Housing Payments – Housing Benefit Claimant Factsheet](#)

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### Discretionary Housing Payment Expenditure

York Law School & the University of York have produced a social rights blog and have included interactive charts detailing the [Discretionary Housing Payment returns data](#) for the financial year 2015/16

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### Housing Benefit - Temporary Absence rules 2016

The new legislation regarding temporary absence rules from Great Britain was laid before Parliament last week and will now come into effect on 28 July 2016. On this basis local authorities will need to make relevant changes to all letters, notifications, leaflets, guidance and websites as soon as possible.

- [The Housing Benefit and State Pension Credit \(Temporary Absence\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

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### Welfare reform and other policy changes

We've produced a table detailing the changes in Welfare reform. In addition a further table detailing other housing & policy legislation changes has also been produced. This can also be found on the members' area of the NHAS website.

- [Welfare reform changes](#)
- [other policy changes](#)

You can also attend our welfare reform course:

- **For Local Authorities:** Welfare Reform for occupiers in rented accommodation – an overview of the welfare reform changes which affect tenants in rented housing and explore ways in which local authority housing options teams can assist clients and tenants.
- **For Citizens Advice and voluntary agencies:** Housing and Welfare Reform - an overview of how welfare reform changes may impact on housing advice.

For more information, email [nhas@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhas@shelter.org.uk)

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## Mortgage possession

NHAS carried out further analysis of the [MOJ's Mortgage and Landlord statistics Jan-Mar 2016](#) (released 12 May 2016) and have provided the following observations about mortgage possession:

In January to March 2016, 4,738 mortgage possession claims were recorded in county courts, down 16% compared to the number issued in the same quarter last year.

There were 3,208 orders for possession, 4,836 warrants of possession and 1,355 repossessions by county court bailiffs in January to March 2016; down 28%, 24% and 18% respectively compared to the same quarter last year, following the long-term downward trend seen since 2009.

[Read more – MOJ Mortgage and Landlord statistics](#)

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## Debt

### StepChange Debt Charity briefing: The 'Help-to-Save' scheme



In March, the Government announced in the Queen's Speech the introduction of a Help-to-Save (HTS) scheme aimed at lower-income families. It intends Help To Save accounts to be available no later than April 2018.

The [Government Help to Save consultation in implementation](#) provides more detail about the scheme. The consultation will run until the 21<sup>st</sup> July. [Stepchange](#) has produced a briefing which summarises the main details of the proposal.

- [Stepchange Help to Save briefing](#)

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### Housing Debt Casework Service



As a mortgage debt and rent arrears advice service, the NHAS Housing Debt Casework team will be able to help clients who find that their ability to pay their housing costs are affected by welfare reform changes.

For NHAS members wishing to discuss a case or make a referral email [hdc@shelter.org.uk](mailto:hdc@shelter.org.uk) or phone 0300 330 0517 Monday to Friday - 9am to 6pm

**Please remember to complete the short feedback survey accessed by the link on your confirmation of advice email.**

**Your feedback helps us to ensure that our service meets your needs and also to plan improvements to the service where required**

[More about the free Housing Debt Casework](#)

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### Recently published

- The Home office has released [a short guide to right to rent](#) - guidance to help landlords, letting agents and tenants understand right to rent checks
- [Comparing private rented sector policies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland](#) – this Commons Library briefing paper summarises the different approaches adopted in regard to some key areas of private rented sector policy.
- [Client Report 2015](#) – CAP UK publish their client report providing an insight into debt and poverty, and how their service is meeting the needs of the most vulnerable.
- [Life Chances Funding](#) - £80 million boost for to transform lives across the UK through Social Impact Bonds
- [Update on the expansion of Universal Credit](#) - in 5 more areas
- The House of Commons Library has published a research briefing: [Statutory Homelessness](#)
- [Reforms to support social sector tenants](#) – Lord Freud at CIH conference

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### Focus on eligibility training:

Local Authority staff that would like an overview of the legislation affecting persons from abroad and their rights to housing can arrange for the **Persons from Abroad and Housing Options** course to be delivered in-house. Course aims include:

- Recognise the status of EEA Nationals
- Identify who is subject to immigration control and who is 'another person from abroad'
- Outline LA duties and potential housing options for clients
- For full learning objectives [read the LA PFA course aims](#)

Or for our citizens advice and voluntary agency members that need to identify whether statutory duty is owed for a client from abroad that is making a homeless or social housing application, then we can provide a **Housing Assistance for Persons from Abroad** course. It covers:

- Jobseeker's Allowance – 'new residence requirement'
- Retaining worker status
- Changes to jobseeker status – A2 and Croatian nationals
- For full learning objectives read the [agency PFA course aims](#)

For all members interested in an overview on **EEA nationals and returning residents' eligibility** then our 3 hour briefing can be arranged in house. View the [full details of the EEA Briefing](#), or to book an in-house course email [nhas@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhas@shelter.org.uk).

Finally, the **Persons from Abroad and changes to benefit entitlement webinar** is for all audiences and will give you an update at your desk on the recent changes and how they impact on access to housing and benefits for persons from abroad in 90 minutes. It will include:

- Jobseeker's Allowance – 'new residence requirement'
- Changes affecting EEA nationals – minimum earnings threshold for workers and self-employed people;
- For full learning objectives read the [PFA/benefit entitlement webinar outline](#)

### Case Law

- [Alexander \(representative of the 'Property118 Action Group'\) v West Bromwich Mortgage Company Ltd \[2016\] EWCA Civ 496](#)
- [Housing Association rent increases - and a potential defence to possession](#) - article by Prof. Ian Loveland published on [nearlylegal.co.uk](http://nearlylegal.co.uk)

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### NHAS Symposiums – Autumn 2016

The NHAS will be running 3 events in September providing case law update, workshops, updates on welfare reform and NHAS service information.

Further details will be circulated in due course. To keep up to date with the latest on our symposiums you can subscribe to our mailing list. Email [nhas@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhas@shelter.org.uk).

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### NHAS Updates



[Q2 Webinar Calendar](#) available to download, including three new webinar topics:

- Introduction to Homelessness and LA duties (**Local Authority Staff Only**)
- S.184 process: getting it right from the start (**Local Authority Staff Only**)
- Suitability and out of area placements (**all members**)

For more information about the free training available to you, email [nhas@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhas@shelter.org.uk)

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Our Citizens Advice & Voluntary Agency members can identify and book training on the [Online Booking System](#). The following courses are taking place in the next 4-6 weeks and have availability (for Citizens Advice and voluntary agencies only)

<b>Mortgage Arrears &amp; Possession Process</b>	21/07/2016		Eastleigh
<b>Housing Advice &amp; Relationship Breakdown</b>	22/07/2016		Thanet
<b>Mortgage Arrears &amp; Possession Process</b>	26/07/2016		Norwich
<b>Homelessness Advice Next Steps</b>	28/07/2016		Chelmsford
<b>Housing &amp; Welfare Reform</b>	11/08/2016		London
<b>Housing Foundation</b>	23/08/2016	30/08/2016	London

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The NHAS brochure has been updated. The brochure details all the services that local authorities, local citizens advice and voluntary sector members can access.

- [NHAS brochure](#)

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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.