

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



[Consultancy Line](#)



[Housing Debt Casework](#)



[Training](#)

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#### Stats & Government Updates

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-spending-power-final-local-government-finance-settlement-2016-to-2017> In addition here is the link to the [Core Spending Power: Visible Lines](#) Funding spreadsheet, the funding within Core Spending Power is un-ring fenced but this spreadsheet provides visibility for a number of named elements, including homelessness prevention, within the local government finance settlement. This visibility is intended to signal the priority attached to these issues and encourage local prioritisation.
- [Statutory homelessness, England: October to December 2015 \(published 23 March\)](#)
- [Mortgage and landlord possession statistics: October to December 2015](#)
- [Rough sleeping in England: autumn 2015](#)
- [Universal Credit transition to full service](#)
- [Benefit cap: planning estimates of number of households in scope for lower benefit cap levels](#)
- [Housing Benefit subsidy circulars 2016 – S1/2016 DHP contributions 2016/17](#)
- [Use of Discretionary Housing Payments: April to September 2015](#)

The Government has announced a year-long exception for all tenants of supported accommodation in the social rented sector to limit social sector payments to LHA rates. This will only apply to these tenancies from April 2017, rather than April 2016. This will include refuges for those fleeing domestic abuse, homeless provision, housing for ex-offenders, as well as supported housing for older and disabled people and will also extend to housing co-operatives, alms houses and Community Land Trusts.

[Go to the written statement: HCWS563](#)

- [Letter from Lord Freud](#)
- [Annex](#)

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#### DCLG Consultation

The DCLG has launched a technical consultation focusing on the amount and proposed distribution of the new 'Former ILF Recipient Grant', which compensates for the cost pressures caused by the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF). The consultation invites comments on the proposed methodology for the value of the grant and the allocation of the funding. The consultation closes on 26 March 2016.

[Former Independent Living Fund recipient grant consultation](#)

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## Debt

### Better money behaviours – a tool kit



The toolkit offers practical advice to Housing Associations who want to get better at helping residents with debt problems. The toolkit was developed by the London Housing Financial Inclusion Group and project partner Behaviour Change

[Better money behaviours – a tool kit \(pdf\)](#)

### GOV.uk - Debt relief restrictions orders and undertakings

The Insolvency Agency publication "Debt relief orders: restrictions orders" has been replaced with new guidance entitled "[Debt relief restrictions orders and undertakings](#)". If the official receiver decides a person with a debt relief order has been dishonest, the court can make a debt relief restrictions order.

From 6 April 2016, debtor bankruptcy petitions will no longer be made to the courts; instead, applications will be submitted online via the central UK Government website, to an adjudicator within the Insolvency Service.



[Free debt and financial services guide and resource from Central and East Northamptonshire Citizens Advice](#)

### Loan Shark newsletter

The National Trading Standards England and Wales Illegal Money Lending Teams have issued their 2016 [newsletter](#), covering funding updates, the outcomes of recent court cases, details of the team's work in the community and advice on how to spot a loan shark.



MONEY AND  
MENTAL HEALTH POLICY  
INSTITUTE

### Money and Mental Health Policy Institute

Financial guru Martin Lewis has recently launched the [Money and Mental Health Policy Institute](#), which

aims to research and formulate policy solutions, then work with banks, lenders, regulators, health service providers and government to help people with mental health problems protect themselves from financial difficulties and get out of debt.

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### Welfare reform

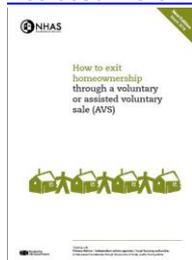
The Children's Society have published a [The Future of Family Incomes: How key tax and welfare changes will affect families to 2020](#). The briefing uses case studies to show how the overall income of different families will be affected by welfare, tax and benefit changes introduced in the coming 5 years.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has updated its online guidance for private and social landlords and tenants. The guides include an FAQ for private and social landlords and a social landlord support pack: [DWP: Universal credit and rented housing](#)

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## [Assisted Voluntary Sale AVS guide](#)



### **The NHAS has relaunched the AVS guide.**

The guide will help clients who are unable to manage or maintain their mortgage and may as a final option need to consider using a voluntary or assisted sale.

## **Housing Debt Casework**

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 the next round of welfare reform changes, due to start in April 16.

For NHAS members wishing to discuss a case or make a referral email [hdc@shelter.org.uk](mailto:hdc@shelter.org.uk).

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## **Events**



**Crisis Annual Conference – Innovation & Devolution 2016** will take place on 21 April 2016 in London.

[Find out more about the Crisis conference](#)

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## **Recently published**

- New research by Centrepoin examines why some families experience relationship breakdown to such an extent that a young person faces homelessness: [Families Under Pressure: Preventing Family Breakdown And Youth Homelessness](#)
- MoD - Suggestions of best practice and good ideas for your armed forces covenant: [What does the armed forces covenant mean for businesses?](#)
- [The work of the Immigration Directorates](#): Home Affairs Committee report warning of impending shortage of asylum seeker accommodation
- On International Women's Day, the Home Office published an overview of the wide range of actions the government will be taking towards [its strategy of ending violence against women and girls between 2016 and 2020](#)
- [A picture of Over-Indebtedness](#) - The Money Advice Service & CACI model gives every UK adult a statistical likelihood of being over-indebted, based on a number of factors

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## **Case Law**

- [R \(M&A\) vs Islington LBC](#) - High Court case – Children's Services and Housing Authorities to cooperate in the interests of children in need
- [Jones v London Borough of Southwark](#) - this impacts upon councils, which have agreements with water suppliers and where the council will collect water charges from their tenants

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## **S21 Cases – how NHAS can help**

In a recent communication to Local Authorities, Brandon Lewis outlined his concern about some authorities advising tenants to remain in their property beyond the notice period, which may lead to landlords going to court to obtain possession, potentially resulting in significant cost.

Our team of housing consultancy advisers are on hand to help you with any queries or doubts concerning s21 notices.

In addition, we have a 3 hour in-house briefing that will support your knowledge around s21 notices: **Tenancy Deposit Protection issues and S21 notice changes to AST's from 2015-2018 (3 hour)**

You can also receive S21 training at your desk through our webinars: Advising & Assisting: Non Priority Households – what’s happening in your area? (75 mins)

- Assured Shorthold Tenancies: S21 Notices – overview (75 mins)
- Section 21 notices – new tenancies post 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 (90mins)

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

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• **Forthcoming Training for Local Citizens Advice and voluntary agencies:**

Course	Date	Location
Homelessness advice – next steps	23 March 16	Leeds
Housing Advice & Relationship Breakdown	13 April 16	Manchester
Housing and Welfare Reform	22 March 2016	London
Housing and Welfare Reform	08 April 2016	Birmingham
Housing Foundation (2 day)	24 & 31 March 2016	Manchester
	12 & 13 April 2016	Birmingham
	12 & 13 April 2016	South Holland
	12 & 19 April 2016	Newcastle
Rented Housing Next Steps	01/04/2016	Birmingham

Our Citizens Advice & Voluntary Agency members can book their place on the [Online Booking System](#).

• **Forthcoming Training for local authorities:**

**Out of Area Placements - Discussion Forum**

When: Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 2pm – 3.15pm

Who: Local Authority Housing Options team leaders/Managers/Review officers/Temporary accommodation officers

This discussion forum is an opportunity for local authorities to share information and good practice in light of the recommendations of the Nzolameso decision in an increasingly challenging financial environment. For more information or to book your place email [nhaswebinars@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhaswebinars@shelter.org.uk)

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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.

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