



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](#)

Stats & Government Updates

- [Mortgage & landlord Possession statistics: Jan to March 2016 \(published 12 May\)](#)
 - [Statistics on Universal credit claims: 29 April 2013 to 7 April 2016](#)
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NHAS – Our consultancy line opening hours are changing. With effect from 4 May 2016 our free specialist housing advice will be available between 9am to 6pm.

**Monday to Friday
9am to 6pm
0300 330 0517**

If our phone lines are busy, email NHASConsultancy@shelter.org.uk and we'll call you back within 1 working day

The homelessness legislation: an independent review of the legal duties owed to homeless people



An [independent review of homelessness legislation](#), published by Crisis, has concluded that the legal assistance owed to people threatened with homelessness must be made more inclusive.

The review, conducted by a panel of independent experts, proposes changing the law along the lines of [new legislation introduced in Wales](#) over a year ago. The Crisis study is not the only review of homelessness legislation going on. The Government has pledged to continue its financial support to councils, and is currently conducting its own review of how to tackle homelessness. A [Parliamentary Select Committee](#) has also been established and is tasked with looking into the issue

Advice Services Transition Fund – Lessons Learned

At the end of the ASTF funding programme, along with a final seminar, the Learning and Support team produced 2 reports, reflecting on the ASTF experience. You can access the reports here:

- [ASTF Lessons Learned Reports](#)
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Debt

The Money Advice Trust – Improving Outcomes for Vulnerable Customers



Improving Outcomes for Vulnerable Customers outlines some of the recommendations of the BBA's Financial Services Vulnerability Taskforce.

The reports includes case studies, good practice and areas for improvement for firms and sets out nine high-level principles and recommendations to help the banking industry offer better support for vulnerable customers.

Fair For you

Fair for You is a not for profit lender, providing small loans to lower income households to purchase essential items for their home, and specifically seeking to challenge the highest impact, high cost lending of the rent to own companies such as Bright House, Perfect Home and Buy as You View.



Owned by a registered charity and established as a CIC, Fair for You is a new solution to a wide problem that is a major part of the poverty premium. The current range includes kitchen appliances, beds and cots, and old items are removed either free, or for a mattress for a small fee that can be added to the loan. Loans are flexible – with many customers opting to overpay to clear the loan early and save cost or buy further items in the future.

This is an effective on line service available 7 days a week including evenings, and has no marketing budget – so is working with the social sector to reach those who are using high cost credit to fund essential purchases.

- [Fair For you bulletin](#)

Pay Plan – Supporting Self-employed clients

Payplan provides support to self-employed clients, who can have access to:

- A full range of debt solutions and personalised debt advice
- Access to a specialist case officer



You can refer your self-employed client to PayPlan where they will conduct an initial assessment prior to providing advice on the business and then help to support the individual with casework if a debt solution is required.

- [Payplan – how do you support those whose job it is to support themselves? \(poster\)](#)
- [Agency Unique PayPlan Secure Referral Form – How to save to your desktop](#)

Addressing Financial Abuse

Published by Citizens Advice on behalf of the Addressing Financial Difficulty Group, the [Addressing Financial Abuse report](#) shows how firms and charities are working together to improve how they respond to some of the problems faced by people in vulnerable situations.

Welfare reform

Local Housing Allowance changes

Find out more about the [local housing allowance changes](#), exemptions for certain household types and commencement dates on our website.

Applicable amount 2016/17

With effect from 1 May 2016, reg 2 of the Housing Benefit (Abolition of the Family Premium and date of claim) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 SI 2015/1857 abolishes the family premium when calculating the housing benefit applicable amount. An existing claimant who already qualifies for the family premium will be entitled to continue to have it included in their applicable amount. If such a claimant subsequently ceases to qualify for the family premium they cannot qualify for it again at a later date.

- [HB Circular A3/2016](#) contains related guidance.

[Additional new burdens to meet the costs of implementing welfare reform changes in 2016/17](#) - additional funding of **£16.5 million** will be allocated to local authorities (LAs) to support the costs of implementing welfare reform changes in 2016.

To find out more about our recently updated welfare reform course, email nhas@shelter.org.uk

[Are You Worried about Your Mortgage leaflet update](#)



This leaflet provides step-by-step information to help owner occupiers to begin to sort out their money worries and to make other arrangements for paying your mortgage and keeping your home.

Please ensure any old versions of the leaflet are removed from your website and replace it with the link below to avoid out of date PDF versions

- [Are you worried about your mortgage?](#)

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 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

Events:

Homeless Link: Under One Roof - annual conference 2016



5-6 July, Hinckley Leicester

[The Homeless Link Under One Roof](#) conference will include two days of networking, learning and debate on the homelessness and supported housing issues affecting homeless organisations the most.

Recently published

- [How to apply for a covenant fund grant](#): The Ministry of Defence is rolling out a new grant funding programme to support the armed forces community
- [Forces Help to Buy loans £100m for new homes in the first 2 years](#) – more than 8,600 ex service personnel have used the home-buying scheme since it commenced in April 2014. Statistics on applications and payments are provided in the [Forces Help to Buy Scheme monthly statistics: 2016](#)
- [Rent Standard Guidance](#) – updated May 2016

- [Full list of fees applicable in the Civil and family Courts \(from 21 March 2016\)](#)
- DePaul publish their [Stepping Stones and Danger Zones](#) report on hidden homelessness
- [Resolution Foundation – Universal Challenge – making a success of universal credit](#)
- The House of Commons has released a briefing focusing on [legal aid for victims of domestic abuse](#)
- [Support for Mortgage Interest \(SMI\) scheme](#)
- [Guidance to Bankruptcy](#) - This guide tells you how to apply to be made bankrupt and what happens when the bankruptcy order has been made. (updated May 2016)

Case Law

- [R \(H and others\) v Ealing LBC \[2016\] EWHC 841 \(Admin\)](#) - The High Court has held that **Ealing's Allocation Policy** which ring-fenced 20% of available lettings for working households and 'model tenants' was discriminatory and unlawful. The judgment has important implications for all councils with housing responsibilities, who have to manage very high demand for social housing.
- [R \(On the application of The Public Law Project\) \(Appellant\) v Lord Chancellor \(Respondent\)](#) - the Supreme Court found the **Government's proposed Residence Test for Legal Aid** to be unlawful. The test would have meant that every claimant requiring Legal Aid would have needed to produce a minimum of 3 different pieces of evidence to prove their residence in the UK for 12 months.

Health & Safety Executive

- [Accrington landlord in Court for gas safety failing](#)



NHAS Updates

- We have updated a number of our housing factsheets. Find them online at <http://nhas.org.uk/factsheets>
- The NHAS Consultancy Line is available **9am – 6pm**: our team of housing consultancy advisers are on hand to help you with any queries or doubts concerning any housing related query
- Two extra webinar dates for Right to Rent Immigration Checks have been published. Find out more about this, and our other webinars on our [Q1 webinar calendar](#).

For more information about the free training available to you, email nhas@shelter.org.uk

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

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.

Regards,
The NHAS Team
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.