

Forthcoming changes to Housing Benefit and other benefits – summary

(NB Only “new” changes are included. Any changes already in-train (eg LHA Cap, PIP, etc) are excluded here.

Changes expected this year (2016-17)

Change	Date of change	Comment
Change in the Benefit Cap from £26,000 to £23,000 (couples & families) and £18,200 to £15,410 (single). Note: lower caps apply outside London.	Expected autumn 2016	Welfare Reform and Full Employment Bill is not law at time of writing (8/3/16). The Council and DWP will identify the families affected and work with them.
People on Carer’s Allowance to become exempt from Benefit Cap	April 2016?	Announcement from Sec. of State. I have not seen anything in law yet.
RBKC Discretionary Housing Payment funding £1.3 million 2016/17	April 2016	Previous year (2015/16) was £1.1 million.
Limit on backdating to 1 month in Housing Benefit.	April 2016	Working age only. Regulations have been made. See DWP circular A3/2016 .
Family Premium removed from new claims in Housing Benefit	1 st May 2016	Regulations have been made. See DWP circular A3/2016 .
Temporary absence from Great Britain limited to 4 weeks in Housing Benefit and Pension Credit.	April 2016?	Regulations have not been made yet, at the time of writing.
4-year benefit freeze from 2016/17 for many benefits.	2016 onwards	In Welfare Reform and Full Employment Bill: not law at time of writing (8/3/16).
New State Pension and changes to Pension Credit	April 2016	Dee (DWP) has already covered this on 8/3/16.
Social rent 1% reduction.	April 2016	In Welfare Reform and Full Employment Bill: not law at time of writing (8/3/16).
People in the ESA “work group” will have their ESA paid only at the basic rate (i.e. the same amount as JSA).	April 2016	This will only apply to new ESA claims.
Working Tax Credit: Threshold for disregarding in-year changes reduced from £5000 to £2500	April 2016	Other proposed changes to Working Tax Credit abandoned.

Changes expected 2017 and beyond

Change	Date of change	Comment
New Temporary Accommodation subsidy scheme.	April 2017	No details of how national funding pot will be allocated yet.

18-21 years will not get Housing Element of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit if out-of work	April 2017	
2 children limit in HB, Universal Credit and Tax Credit.	April 2017	This will apply to a third or subsequent child born after April 2017, or new claims made after that date where there are already three or more children. There will be some exceptions for exceptional circumstances.
Pay-to-Stay.	2017	DCLG announced in December this would be a voluntary scheme for Housing Associations
LHA rates in social rented sector from 2018 – only for tenancies that start from April 2016. No detail yet. Will pensioners and supported accommodation be exempt?	2018	Lord Freud announced on 1/3/16 that supported accommodation tenancies would only be brought into this scheme if they began after April 2017.

Universal Credit progression

- The Digital Service (as opposed to current “Live” service) will be rolled out as follows:
 - Hammersmith Jobcentre June 2016
 - Fulham and Shepherd’s Bush Jobcentres December 2016
 - North Kensington Jobcentre will be sometime between Jan 2017 and mid-2018
- The main migration on to Universal Credit is expected to happen during the period June 2018 to c.2021.