

SEPTEMBER 2011

HOUSING BENEFIT SHARED ACCOMMODATION RATE CHANGES

On 19 July 2011, changes were made to the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR) for young individuals aged between 25 years and 35 years old. The regulations state that any single claimant under the age of 35 from 1 January 2012 (unless they are exempt) will have the maximum Housing Benefit which they can claim reduced to the local SAR rate. There are currently no plans for any transitional protection for claimants who will be affected by this change.

BENEFITS ADVICE SERVICE

Our Benefits Advice Service provides free confidential advice to Carlisle residents. They can help and advise on any type benefit, from initial claims and entitlement, up to and including representation at Appeal Tribunal and Commissioners.

The Benefit Advice Service can be contacted on **01228 817400** Monday to Thursday 2pm to 4pm and by e mailing:bac@carlisle.gov.uk.

RUBBISH AND RECYCLING REMINDER!

A reminder to Landlords to please make sure your tenants have a copy of their waste collection calendar(s), showing when we will collect their rubbish and recycling as well as the relevant recycling containers. We can deliver **additional greenboxes or greenbags free of charge** – just contact us on **01228 817200** or email the details to: recycling@carlisle.gov.uk

Purple refuse sack collection

Tenants can only place out a **maximum of two purple rubbish sacks each week** (unless otherwise agreed) by 7am on the date of collection, or the night before (but no sooner than this). Rubbish placed out too early causes a nuisance and will be treated as flytipping, which can attract a fixed penalty fine of £100.

Grey refuse wheeled bin collection

Please do not leave sacks beside your rubbish bin. We will only empty the contents of your rubbish bin.

Rear Lanes – Waste Accumulations

Fly tipping and waste material being deposited in rear lanes is becoming a major concern. Landlords should be aware that if waste material is identified as coming from a particular property legal action can be taken against the occupier or the owner, which in turn could result in a fine or prosecution.

If you need help with your rubbish, please contact us on **01228 817200** or email recycling@carlisle.gov.uk and we will send you an application form to request assistance.

NATIONAL LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION IN CUMBRIA (NLA)

The NLA is the UK's leading organisation for private-residential landlords. It has over 20,000 paid members, ranging from full-time landlords with large property portfolios to those with just a single letting. NLA membership helps landlords make a success of their lettings business by providing a wide range of

information advice and services. The NLA campaigns for the legitimate interests of landlords by seeking to influence decision-makers at all levels of government and by making landlords' collective voice heard in the media. It seeks to raise standards in the private-rented sector while aiming to make sure landlords are aware of their statutory rights and responsibilities.

NLA Cumbria hold regular branch meetings for local landlords who bring ideas, issues and offload landlord stress. Experts on particular topics are invited to speak to answer landlord questions. The next meeting dates are 20 September and 29 November 2011 held at the University of Cumbria, Fusehill Street, Carlisle at 7pm. For more information please call on **01273 421048** or email [**nlacumbria@landlord.org.uk**](mailto:nlacumbria@landlord.org.uk)

WHAT'S NEW IN PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING SERVICES IN CARLISLE

LANDLORDS WITH LICENSED HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUAPTION

Is your property currently licensed in one name but owned jointly? If so you need to make sure that the licence document and application form is amended to cover both parties. In the event of the death of the licence holder, a temporary exemption notice is automatically issued for three months. After this the City Council will need a new licence application and fee if the original licence holder has made no mention of any joint ownership in the original application form.

If the licence holder has mentioned a joint owner, then the City Council will reissue the licence under a legal variation at a small administrative cost to the joint owner. If this applies to you, then please let us know in writing, and a note will be made on your property file for future reference.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ACCREDITED LANDLORDS

We will soon be launching a service to help accredited landlords advertise their vacant properties. Through our website [**www.carlisle.gov.uk**](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk), we will be introducing an online service for landlords wishing to advertise vacant rental properties. The service will be free for the first three months and then a small charge will be introduced.

If you would like to join the accreditation scheme or you are an existing member and you would like to express an interest in using the service, contact us on 01228 817127. Further information on joining the landlord accreditation scheme can be found at [**www.carlisle.gov.uk**](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk)

LANDLORD AND TENANT SURGERY

We will soon be introducing a Landlord and Tenant Surgery. The surgery will be held on the first Wednesday of the month from 12noon until 2pm in our Customer Contact Centre. The surgery is an opportunity for landlords and tenants to drop in and speak to our private sector housing services officers about any aspect of rental property. This will include tenancy advice, information on registering for choice based lettings, overcrowding assessments, housing conditions, energy efficiency advice and all rental aspects of housing legislation.

LARGER PROPERTIES WANTED TO LET

There is currently a shortage of larger rental properties in Carlisle. A turn in the property market has seen landlords beginning to give notice for vacant possession. In the last few months we have seen an increase in the number of families asking us for housing advice. If you have a vacant three or four bedroom house and would consider letting to a family, then please contact Housing Services on **01228 817079**. Please also tell us if you are willing to receive Local Housing Allowance.