

This property will be let at an 'Affordable Rent'



What is an Affordable Rent?

The government is making changes to the levels of rent charged for some social housing. All housing associations receiving development funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) will have to charge what is called Affordable Rent on a proportion of new tenancies.

There is a desperate need for additional affordable housing in the UK. Until recently, the government has supported housing associations in building new homes by providing grants. This has changed and housing associations are now expected to fund new homes mainly from their future rental income, with limited grant support.

An "Affordable Rent" can be up to 80% of the market rent. This means the rent charged will be less than the amount charged for a similar property by a private landlord but will be more than a traditional housing association rent (known as a Social Rent).

What about Housing Benefit?

Tenants of Affordable Rent properties can still apply for Housing Benefit as normal and claims will be assessed based on household circumstances. As with Social Rent, if Housing Benefit does not cover the full rent, tenants will have to pay the difference.

Will every new tenant pay the Affordable Rent?

Landlords have been given the flexibility to decide some of the rules they wish to apply so each landlord's approach may be different.

For example, some landlords may advertise just a proportion of their homes with an Affordable Rent charge whilst others have decided to charge the Affordable Rent for all new lets. Some Housing Associations have built in protection for existing tenants who transfer and who will pay the lower, Social Rent charge. There may also be other reasons why particular properties or types of property are exempt from Affordable Rent charges.

Information on rent charges will be included on each Home Options advertisement. Applicants who receive an offer of accommodation should check what the rent charge will be if they are not clear.

Saffron Housing Trust will let all 'general needs' new development (unless planning restrictions apply) and a proportion of 're-lets' each year at Affordable Rents. Some properties will continue to be let at lower 'social rents'.

Where can I get more information?

If you are a current social housing tenant and have any questions about how Affordable Rent may affect you, please contact Saffron on 01508 532042.

In the meantime, further information about Social Housing Reforms is available from the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/socialhousing/>