



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about Housing Benefit and the private rented sector.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) determines the maximum financial support available for renters in the private rented sector. It applies to claims for Housing Benefit and the housing element of Universal Credit. The LHA policy is kept under regular review and rates are reviewed annually by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

In April 2020, the Government boosted investment in the LHA by nearly £1 billion, providing 1.5 million claimants with around £600 more housing support in 2020/21 than they otherwise would have received. The Government has maintained LHA rates at their increased levels for 2023/24 so that everyone who benefitted from the increase will continue to do so. However, it is worth noting that LHA rates are not intended to meet all rents in all areas.

While three-quarters of private renters have no difficulties in keeping up with their rent, I understand that affordability may be an issue for some and that they may require additional support. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are available to those entitled to Housing Benefit or the Housing element of Universal Credit who face a shortfall in meeting their housing costs. Since 2011, the Government has provided around £1.6 billion in DHPs to local authorities.

I also welcome the Chancellor's announcement in the Autumn Statement 2022 that the Government will provide £1 billion of extra funding by extending the Household Support Fund for another year, bringing the total of the fund to £2.5 billion.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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