

# Rent Officers and Lettings Information

*~ Help us to help you, and your tenants ~*

Hopefully many landlords in the area will have already had some contact with Rent Officers. As part of the Government's wider Welfare Reform agenda Rent Officers were heavily involved in the implementation of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) which took effect for new claimants in April 2008. It applies to private sector tenants who make a new claim for benefit and for existing customers on Housing Benefit who change address or move into private sector accommodation.

Local Housing Allowance is based on rents achieved in the local Private Rented Sector (PRS). It is not dependent on the opinion of Rent Officers. LHA is a median figure calculated from a list of rents gathered across a geographic area known as a Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA). Local Authorities apply the allowance according to the number of bedrooms a claimant is entitled to.

To ensure the LHA follows the market we continually gather lettings information from all available sources. **As landlords you can make an impact by providing examples of properties let on the form provided.** The more comprehensive the list of rents the more accurately the LHA will track the market so tenants receive an appropriate level of benefit.

**There are three ways in which you can send information to us:**

## **Lettings Information Form:**

There is a copy enclosed with this newsletter which you can fax to: 0191 220 7010

Or send to: [Mr.J.B.Richardson](#), Lettings Research Officer, Valuation Office Agency, Eagle Star House, Regent Centre, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE3 3TW

Further copies available on request and shortly from our new parent website [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk)  
You can also email us at: [nsohelpdesk@voa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nsohelpdesk@voa.gsi.gov.uk).

## **Telephone/Email:**

Contact our Gosforth office on [0191 220 7306](tel:01912207306) and speak to [John Richardson](mailto:John.Richardson@voa.gsi.gov.uk) or send him a email on [John.B.Richardson@voa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:John.B.Richardson@voa.gsi.gov.uk) . We are happy to receive information over the phone, arrange a visit or attend local landlord forums.

## **Bulk Data Transfer:**

We can accept larger amounts of information electronically.  
Please call: **0845 0264 696** to discuss this option further.

The Valuation Office Agency (Rent Officer Functions) ensures the collection, storage, use and disposal of any lettings information is strictly controlled to comply completely with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. Rent Officers do not share this information with anyone else.

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