

Appendix 7 – Affordability

This Appendix sets out Enfield’s approach to the affordability of social rented homes.

Currently (November 2012) around 70% of existing Council and housing association tenants receive full or partial housing benefit to help cover the cost of their rent.

Government welfare reforms will cap total benefit entitlement to households from April 2013, and reduced government funding for building new homes is likely to result in increased rents in the social rented sector in Enfield. Housing applicants will no longer be able to assume that housing benefit will pay their rent in full or partially. Benefit-dependent housing applicants will have to pay their rent from one pot of money paid to them 4 weeks in arrears by the DWP.

These changes in Government policy will make it **essential** that existing and prospective tenants of Council and housing associations homes who have priority on the Housing Register consider whether they have enough income from benefits or earnings to afford available social rented homes.

Budgeting tools are available on the internet which applicants can use to calculate whether they can afford the rents of available social rented homes. Examples can be found here:

- The Citizens Advice Bureau on www.adviceguide.org.uk, click on England and enter “budgeting tool” in the search box
- The This is Money website on www.thisismoney.co.uk, enter “household budget calculator” in the search box

Enfield Council reserves the right to refuse a bid for an available social rented home from a housing applicant whom it believes will not be able to afford the rent.