

**Local Housing Allowance Final  
Evaluation:  
Case studies of implementation and  
delivery in each of the nine  
Pathfinder areas**

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## Glossary

This report, and the others in the Evaluation Report Series, use the following terminology:

**Automated Credit Transfer (ACT)** – A method of paying money directly from the Local Authority to the recipient’s bank or building society account.

**Appropriately-occupy** – Claimants whose accommodation matches the DWP size criteria (see size criteria below).

**Contractual rent** – The rent charged to the tenant by the landlord for a property.

**Deficit** – Claimants have a ‘deficit’ if their Housing Benefit amount (i.e. the amount they receive after adjustments for income or non-dependents) is less than their contractual rent.

**Direct payments/paid direct** – Refer to payments made to the claimant (not the landlord).

**Eligible rent** – the maximum amount of Housing Benefit (see below) a claimant could receive based on the circumstances of the tenant, the locality in which they live and a range of restrictions applied by a Rent Officer (i.e. before adjustments for income or non-dependents). In the Pathfinders the LHA is equal to maximum eligible rent.

**Excess** – When LHA (i.e. the maximum eligible rent before income and non-dependent based adjustments) is more than contractual rent a claimant is said to have an excess.

**Gain/Gainers** – Gainers are claimants whose eligible rent is higher under the LHA assessment than it would have been under the non-LHA assessment of eligible rent. The size of the gain is the difference between the two assessments.

**Housing Benefit** – Sometimes called rent rebate or rent allowance. It is a benefit that is paid by local authorities to assist people to pay their rent. The amount that claimants receive depends on their financial and personal circumstances. It may not cover all of their rent. In Pathfinder areas, claimants are paid the reformed benefit i.e. LHA.

**Housing Benefit amount** – Refers to the amount of LHA or Housing Benefit that claimants receive after adjustments for income or non-dependents.

**Housing Benefit in Payment** – This is the amount of Housing Benefit received by the claimant after Income and Non-Dependent Deductions have been made from Eligible Rent.

**Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate** – This is a flat-rate allowance towards rent costs that is calculated on the basis of the circumstances of the tenant and the broad area in which they live. It is the maximum amount of Housing Benefit a claimant could receive, before any income or non-dependent based adjustments are made. Set at maximum eligible rent in the Pathfinders.

**Management Information (MI)** – Statistics collected by DWP from Local Authorities for LHA evaluation.

**New first-time claimants** – Claimants who claimed Housing Benefit under LHA for the first time.

**New repeat claimants** – Claimants who were not receiving Housing Benefit immediately before being switched to LHA, but who had received Housing Benefit in the past.

**No gainer** – A claimant is a no gainer if their eligible rent is the same under the LHA and non-LHA assessments.

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**Notional loss/losers** – A claimant has a ‘notional loss’ if their eligible rent is lower under the LHA assessment than it would have been under the non-LHA assessment of eligible rent. The size of the notional loss is the difference between the two amounts. These claimants are described as notional losers. Existing claimants who would have lost when the LHA was introduced are transitionally protected and continue to be entitled to the higher amount of eligible rent, frozen at the time of introduction of the LHA.

**Over-occupy** – Claimants who live in property that is deemed to be smaller than their entitlement under the DWP size criteria (see size criteria, below).

**Rooms** – The number of ‘rooms’ is the number of habitable rooms in the property (excluding kitchens, bathrooms and toilets) that the tenant has access to. In cases of shared accommodation, this does not include rooms that are used solely by the other tenants.

**Shared room rate** – Under the LHA a single person under 25 will receive the LHA rate set for rent for a single room with a shared living room, kitchen, bathroom and toilet whether or not they occupy a property of this type, except where a non-dependant lives with them, they qualify for the severe disability premium or they are a care leaver under 22. Single people over 25 and childless couples receive the shared room rate if they occupy shared accommodation.

**Single room rate** – single people under the age of 25 with no partner, no dependents and who do not qualify for a severe disability premium in their housing benefit have their rent restricted to the level that a Rent Officer determines is halfway between the lowest rent that is not exceptionally low, and the highest rent that is not an exceptionally high, amount paid in the locality for a single room with a shared living room, kitchen, bathroom and toilet.

**Shortfall** – When LHA (i.e. the maximum eligible rent before income and non-dependent based adjustments) is less than contractual rent, a claimant is said to have a ‘shortfall’.

**Size criteria** – The ‘size criteria’ are applied by the Rent Officers to calculate the number of bedrooms and living rooms that a claimant is entitled to. LHA rates are based on this entitlement.

The conditions are as follows. One room is allowed as a bedroom, for:

- a married couple;
- a single person aged 16 or more;
- two children of the same sex under the age of 16;
- two children ( of the same or opposite sex) under the age of 10;
- a child under the age of 16.

In addition, living rooms are allocated as follows:

- one, if there are one to three occupiers;
- two, if there are four to six occupiers;
- three, if there are seven or more occupiers.

**Surplus** – Claimants have a ‘surplus’ if their Housing Benefit amount is more than their rent.

**Top up** – A rent ‘top up’ is paid by a claimant whose Housing Benefit amount is less than their rent.

**Transitionally Protected** – A Transitionally Protected HB claimant is a person whose eligible rent under the LHA assessment would have been less than under the non-LHA assessment when the LHA was introduced. They continue to be entitled to the higher amount of eligible rent, frozen at the time of introduction of the LHA.

**Under-occupy** – Claimants who live in property that is deemed to be larger than their entitlement under the DWP size criteria (see size criteria, above).