

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS REGARDING CHANGES IN HOUSING BENEFIT.**

As from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 the rules on Housing Benefit will change.

Claimants receiving Housing Benefit for Council Housing will have the amount of benefit they can receive restricted based on the number of bedrooms their household requires.

Housing Benefit rules allow one bedroom for each of the following:-

- a couple
- a person who is not a child (aged 16 or over)
- two children of the same sex aged under 16
- two children who are under 10 regardless of their sex
- any other child, (other than a foster child or child whose main home is elsewhere)
- a carer ( or group of carers) providing overnight care

If you are or intend occupying a property that is larger than your needs, in terms of the bedroom requirements detailed above, then the eligible rent used to calculate your Housing Benefit entitlement will be reduced. This reduction will be 14% of the eligible rent if you under occupy by one bedroom and by 25% if you under occupy by two or more bedrooms

You will be expected to meet this shortfall in addition to any other rental liability.

Aberdeen City Council's allocation policy is more flexible in the determination of the ages/sexes of who is eligible to a bedroom. You could find yourself occupying a property that the DWP rules state is too large and will have your benefit reduced.

It should be noted that where separated families have child(ren) who stay some nights of the week with each parent, Housing Benefit will only allow an additional bedroom(s) for the child(ren) for the parent that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.

**It is recommended that if you intend to claim Housing Benefit, that before you complete a housing application or accept an offer of accommodation you should discuss the impact of these changes with the Benefits Advice Section. They can be contacted on Aberdeen (01224) 522709.**