

# STOP TENANT EVICTIONS REDUCE PRIVATE SECTOR RENTS!



Private tenants all over London are being hit by government Housing Benefit cuts, high rents and insecure tenancies. With over 20,000 privately renting households in Haringey, this a key issue.

Tenants affected by cuts to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) are facing eviction now. If landlords want to increase rents above LHA rates, tenants need support. With solidarity actions, we can all try and stop individual evictions.

## But what is the Council doing to support private tenants?

Haringey Council has funding to support people facing housing benefit cuts, including help with *'renegotiating rents, finding affordable property and ensuring they get the support they are entitled to'*. However, we have seen little evidence of support so far. Instead, private tenants have been told they will get no help negotiating with landlords, because 'landlords have a mortgage to pay'. They are told to look for properties in the local papers, but most local letting agents are now refusing to deal with people claiming housing benefits. They also face high rents and extortionate letting agent 'fees'.

## WE WANT:

### **Private sector rents to be reduced to LHA levels or below**

Birmingham council has negotiated reduced rates with letting agents and landlords covering 500+ properties. Haringey must do this too.

### **No evictions for tenants who cannot cover rent increases**

The council aims for *'early intervention and the prevention of homelessness'*, and so should do everything they can to support tenants threatened with eviction. The council should cover court costs for tenants facing eviction, and for those in 'priority need', re-house them *before* their eviction date.

### **Decent, genuinely affordable, secure housing for everyone**

The council must ensure landlords provide long term tenancies for all.

## We must speak out, support each other, and organise to fight for our collective interests

*Fatima: I'm 25 yrs old and seeking somewhere to live since my previous tenancy came to an end, and am currently staying on people's floors whilst I look. Very few landlords and letting agents accept me as I receive Housing Benefit and those that do have high rents which are not covered by my HB. The council offers no support because I am not in priority need. I don't know where to go for help.*

*Patricia: I have three children and pregnant with a fourth and currently going through an eviction process. My current landlord has not given any reason and I would really like to stay. The council have stated that they will only help me on the day of my eviction, which allows no time to sort out childcare, household items, nor considers my pregnant situation. With a family to care for, I need a longer term tenancy so I don't have to move every 6 months when a landlord chooses to put rents up or change tenants.*

*Mohammed: I live with my 3 yr old daughter in a room in a shared house with 4 other strangers sharing kitchen and bathroom. I receive Housing Benefit to cover my rent, but after the cuts, my rent is now more than my HB, meaning I struggle to pay bills. The council said if I found a two bedroom flat that I would be entitled to more HB, but I cannot find anything within the maximum limit, and many have stopped accepting people on HB at all. I cannot continue to pay the difference and I worry what will happen.*

## Tell us what you want the council to do for you

Do you have any suggestions for how the council can improve its service for private tenants? Let us know and we can take all suggestions to the Housing Advice Manager to see what she has to say.

## Protest called by Haringey Housing Action Group

Haringey Housing Action Group meet regularly to give and receive support on housing problems and campaign for better housing. Our next meeting is Saturday 11th August 11am, North London Community House, Moorefield Road, behind Bruce Grove Station. All welcome.

housingaction@haringey.org.uk 0845 223 5270

[www.haringeyhousingaction.org.uk](http://www.haringeyhousingaction.org.uk)

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