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Housing Benefit / Universal Credit

Discretionary Housing Payment guidance

What is a Discretionary Housing Payment?

If you currently receive Housing Benefit, or the housing element of Universal Credit, but still have a shortfall to pay and this causes you hardship, you may be able to get extra help.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are payments to help with housing costs. Housing costs generally means rent.

Housing costs also means help with rent deposits, rent in advance and other lump sums associated with housing needs such as removal costs.

The Government has set limits on how much the Council can spend on these payments, but allows the Council to decide how it will spend this money.

Where help will be given

The Council can only help with Rent payments where you already receive some Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit.

This means that you cannot get any help to pay your rent, rent deposits, rent in advance and moving costs if you do not already get Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit.

We cannot help with some parts of your rent, for instance if meals, heating, hot water or water rates are included.

Discretionary Housing Payments cannot help with Council Tax. If you need help with your Council Tax please call us on 0300 300 8306.

How to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment

If you want to apply for extra help please fill out the application attached. The form will allow you to write down the reasons why you think you need extra help.

If you need help filling in this form please contact us – email benefits@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, call **0300 300 8306** or visit us at any of the offices listed below:

Biggleswade

73 High Street (located within Jobcentre Plus), Biggleswade, Beds, SG18 0JH

Dunstable

Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF

Leighton Buzzard (Monday, Wednesday & Thursdays only)

Bossard House, West Street, Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 1DA

Shefford

Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ

Examples of who we want to help

The following are examples of the categories of people the Council wants to help:

- People where they or a member of their household is disabled, they have more bedrooms than Housing Benefit ,or Universal Credit allows and
 - Their home has been adapted for their disablement needs or
 - Due to the nature of their disability they cannot share a bedroom or
 - There is an issue related to their disability which makes it difficult to move to a smaller or cheaper property

(By disabled, we mean a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and negative affect on their ability to do normal daily activities)

- Foster Carers who have more bedrooms than Housing Benefit or Universal Credit allows
- People fleeing domestic violence
- Families with children at a critical point in their education
- Young people leaving local authority care
- Staying Put Carers with children in care and care leavers respectively
- Families with kinship care arrangements
- Families with a child in temporary care who is expected to return home
- Families with a social service intervention or are part of a Supporting Families Programme
- Where someone in the household is expecting a baby/to adopt a child and this future change will increase the level of bedrooms Housing Benefit or Universal Credit allows
- Ex-homeless people being supported to settle in the community
- People threatened with homelessness
- People with health or medical problems, particularly where they need to access medical services or support not available elsewhere
- People with medical conditions who receive informal care which would not be available in a new area
- Single people under 35 who cannot live in shared accommodation due to an illness or other issue such as HIV
- Elderly and frail people who have lived in their home for a long time and would find it difficult to establish support networks in a new area
- People who live near their jobs because they work unsocial hours/split shifts/inadequate public transport
- People who as a consequence of a move have additional travel to work costs
- People who need to move to cheaper/smaller accommodation and need help with a rent deposit and/or rent in advance for their new home or lump sum costs associated with the move i.e. removals
- People who are affected by reductions in Housing Benefit entitlement following changes to Local Housing Allowance rates from April 2011 and need additional time to find cheaper accommodation
- People who are affected by reductions in Housing Benefit following the April 2013 under-occupancy rules in social housing properties and are actively working with their housing provider to find a smaller home or need additional time to adjust to the change
- People affected by the Benefit Cap that cannot immediately move into work because of complex challenges such as child protection
- People, who are not in the aforementioned, however have special circumstances that are such that warrants DHP



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Housing Benefit / Universal Credit

Discretionary Housing Payment application

Customer Accounts

Central Bedfordshire Council
Watling House
High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1LF

Please complete this form and return it to the address above. If you have any questions, please contact us:

Telephone 0300 300 8306
Email benefits@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Section 1 – About you

First name	<input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	Postcode: <input type="text"/>
National Insurance number	<input type="text"/>
Daytime telephone	<input type="text"/>
Mobile telephone	<input type="text"/>
Email address	<input type="text"/>

Are you receiving / have you applied for Universal Credit?

Yes – Receiving Universal Credit since:

Yes – Applied for Universal Credit on:

No

Do you need help with your:
(Please tick all that apply)

Rent

Rent deposit

Rent in advance

Overlap of tenancy

Moving Costs

Section 2 – Reasons for application

If you are applying for help with your rent, how long do you anticipate you will need Discretionary Housing Payments?

If you want the Discretionary Housing Payment backdated, please give the date you want it to start.

If you need extra help to pay your rent, please explain why.

- You may find it helpful to look at the list of examples under the section **Examples of who we want to help**, in the guidance at the beginning of this form.
- Please give us as much information as possible, such as reasons why you cannot move to cheaper/smaller accommodation and continue on a separate piece of paper if needed.

If you need help for a rent deposit, rent in advance, overlap of tenancy or moving costs, please explain what you need and why.

- You may find it helpful to look at the list of examples under the section **Examples of who we want to help**, in the guidance at the beginning of this form.
- Please give us as much information as possible and continue on a separate piece of paper if needed.
- If you have evidence of the costs, please enclose this with your application.

Section 3 – Additional information

Do you have rent or Council Tax arrears?

Yes – please tell us how much below.

No

Rent arrears: £

Council Tax arrears: £

Have you tried to find suitable alternative accommodation?

Yes – please give details below.

No

For example, if you have looked for cheaper or smaller properties, or if you have asked your landlord to help you move into a property with fewer bedrooms.

Have you sought any housing advice from the Council's Housing and Homelessness sections or other organisations?

Yes – please give details below.

No

If you (or your family) have a physical or mental disability or a health problem, please explain what it is here.

If you have supporting medical evidence it may be helpful to provide it with your application.

Section 3 – Additional information (continued)

If you have had a previous Discretionary Housing Payment award, what steps have you taken to improve your situation since your last application was granted?

Please use this space to tell us about anything else you feel is relevant to your application. Please continue on a separate piece of paper if needed.

If you would like us to contact a support worker or helper, who may be able to help support your application, please provide their name and contact details below.

Name of contact

Relationship to you

Address

Postcode:

Daytime telephone

Mobile telephone

Email address

Section 5 – Rent information for Universal Credit claimants

Only complete this section if you receive Universal Credit or waiting for an award of Universal Credit. Otherwise, please go straight to Section 6.

Payment details

If you are a private tenant, **You**
would you prefer DHP
payments to yourself or **Your landlord**
your landlord?

Local authority tenants will have their DHP payable directly to their rent account.

Please provide details of the Bank or Building Society account you would like your DHP paid into:

Name of Bank or Building Society	<input type="text"/>
Branch address	<input type="text"/>
	Postcode: <input type="text"/>
Sort code	<input type="text"/>
Account Number	<input type="text"/>
Name(s) of Account Holder(s)	<input type="text"/>
Roll Number (Building Society Accounts only)	<input type="text"/>

Landlord's details

Full name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	Postcode: <input type="text"/>
Daytime telephone	<input type="text"/>

Rent details

How much rent are you charged, and how often? £ every

Does your rent include money for other services? **Yes** – please give details below. Please specify amounts, if known.
For example, water rates, heating, etc. **No**

Section 5 – Rent information for Universal Credit claimants (continued)

Is there any food or meals included in your rent? **Yes** – please give details below.
 No

Is there anything else included in your rent that has not been mentioned above? **Yes** – please give details below.
 No

Section 6 – Declaration

Please read this declaration carefully before you sign and date it.

I understand the following:

- **I declare** that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete as far as I know and believe.
- **I understand** that if I knowingly give information that is incorrect or incomplete, I may be liable to prosecution or other action.
- **I agree** that you will use the information provided to process my claim for Discretionary Housing Payments. You may check some of the information with other sources as allowed by the law.
- **I understand** that you may use any information I have provided in connection with this and any other claim for state benefits that I have made or may make. You may give some information to other organisations, such as government departments, local authorities and private-sector companies such as banks and organisations that may lend me money, if the law allows this.
- **I know** that I must let the Council's Customer Accounts section know straight away in writing about any change in my circumstances, or the circumstances of anyone living with me, which might affect my claim.

Applicant's signature

Name (print name)

Date

If this form has been partly or fully filled in by someone other than the applicant, please complete the following declaration:

As far as possible, I have confirmed with the applicant that the information given on this application is correct and complete, and if I knowingly give information that is incorrect or incomplete I may be liable to prosecution or other action.

Signature of the person completing the form

Name (print name)

Date

Relationship to applicant