

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is here

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is a way of working out new claims for Housing Benefit for tenants renting accommodation from a private landlord. It also affects tenants already getting Housing Benefit who move into private rented accommodation from April 7, 2008.

If you live in council accommodation, housing association or other social housing Local Housing Allowance will not affect you.

LHA is a flat rate amount calculated on property size, the area it's in and the circumstances of the tenant after taking into account income and savings. Tenants can shop around with their allowance and choose the type of property they wish to live in.

The Rent Service sets the rates and confirms them on a monthly basis and the rates are advertised in the council offices, library and Citizens' Advice Bureau. Private tenants will be paid the allowance directly into their bank account and leaflets are available on opening bank accounts.

The Council knows that some tenants may have difficulty managing money, so it has a policy in place to safeguard vulnerable people so they are not placed at risk of losing their home.

There are also safeguards to protect the interests of landlords — these include direct payment to landlords where the tenant is proven to be eight weeks or more in arrears, or where the Council thinks that a tenant is unlikely to pay their rent.



If you have questions about the new LHA scheme please contact:

The Benefits Section, Surrey Heath Borough Council, Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3HD. Tel 01276 707121, Fax 01276 707664, email benefits@surreyheath.gov.uk or visit www.surreyheath.gov.uk/benefits.

A rich mix from Surrey Heath Museum

Surrey Heath Museum will continue to offer its rich mixture of exhibitions, activities and outreach work to residents from its current Surrey Heath House home following a decision by the Council's Executive in December.

The council is happy to confirm that, although there will be a number of internal changes, the service to the public will remain largely as it is now. The future changes include the use of more voluntary assistance from support groups to cover the reception desk, an appointment system for research and change of the museum opening days from five to four. Until the end of June, the museum is open Tuesday to Saturday 11am to 5pm. After that time, revised opening hours, to be advertised, will apply. Admission is free.

Surrey Heath Museum
Knoll Road, Camberley
GU15 3HD
01276 707284
museum@surreyheath.gov.uk

EXHIBITIONS

WHAT'S IN STORE? — Wednesday, April 9 to Saturday, April 27

A chance to see some of the highlights of the museum's collection and the stories behind them. Which celebrated Camberley bird-painter walked round with a hawk on his shoulder and was still illustrating books into his 90s? What's the story behind the china parrot? Who were Billy and Charley and is there a secret to the toy tank?

SHOPPING AROUND — Saturday, May 18 to Saturday, August 9

This exhibition draws on material across Surrey Heath to display what we bought and where we bought it in days gone by. On show is a wide range of objects displayed in reconstructed shop windows, with an old fashioned shop-counter scene as the centrepiece, complemented by a wealth of local photographs and reminiscences. A good chance for some retail therapy without spending money!

EVENTS

PENNY CHEWS & PARAFFIN — Thursday, June 26 at 3pm

An illustrated talk about local shops and shopping in the past using photos and reminiscences by museum curator Sharon Cross.

MRS PANK'S EMPORIUM — Saturday, May 17 10.30am to 4pm

A day of special activities for Museums and Galleries Month to link in with our shops exhibition. Come and meet our Edwardian shopkeeper and 'purchase' a sweet reward from her store with genuine old money. With quizzes and activities there'll be lots to see, do and learn.