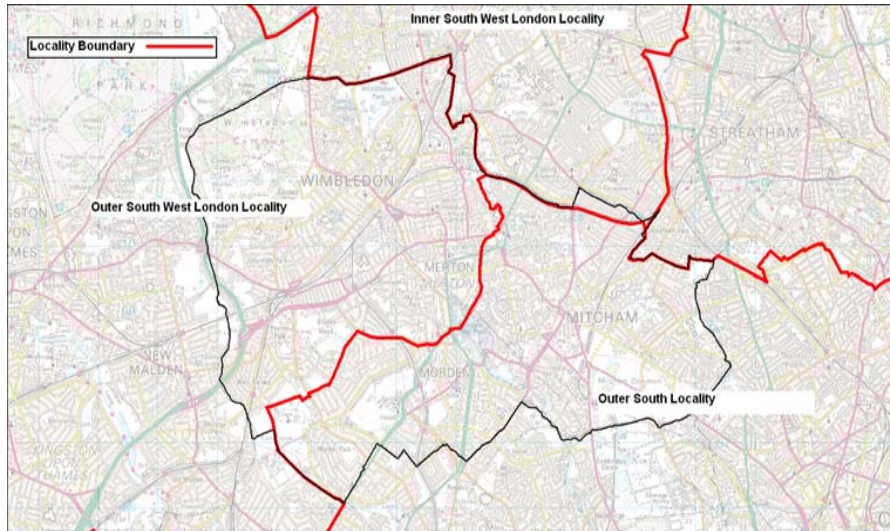


London Borough of Merton Housing Benefit

Local Housing Allowance: a guide to Broad Rental Market Areas



April 2008

What is Local Housing Allowance?

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is a:

- more simple,
- fairer, and
- faster way to pay Housing Benefit (HB) for private tenants.

It does not affect you if you rent:

- from a registered social landlord
- from a registered housing association
- in a hostel, or
- certain board and lodging accommodation.

If you need more detailed information on what LHA is and how you qualify please read our leaflet called ***Working out your Local Housing Allowance.***

How does where you live affect how much Housing Benefit LHA you can get?

The area that you live in will affect the level of LHA that you can get. The Rent Service has decided that Merton has three areas, called Broad Rental Market Areas (BRMAs), that are different in terms of:

- Health
- Education
- Recreation
- Banking and
- Shopping

In the main, the borders between two different areas follow natural boundaries like the Wandle River and the Tooting Railway Line. They sometimes follow borough boundaries, like the north of Wimbledon Village and Wimbledon Park, where Merton meets the London Borough of Wandsworth. The Rent Service gives us a monthly set of LHA rates for the BRMAs. See page 4 of this leaflet on how to obtain the London Borough of Merton ***Local Housing Allowance rates.***

What are the three Broad Rental Market Areas for Merton?

BRMA boundary ———

Merton Council boundary ———



Outer South London

This covers the eastern wards in Merton. These are: Cricket Green, Pollards Hill, Figges Marsh, Graveney (south of the Tooting Railway Line), Lavender Fields, Longthornton, Ravensbury and St. Helier.

Outer South West London

This covers the western wards in Merton. These are: Abbey, Cannon Hill, Dundonald, Hillside, Lower Morden, Merton Park, Trinity, Wimbledon Park and Wimbledon Village.

Inner South-West London

This is the smallest area, north of the railway line from Tooting Station. This is the Merton part of Tooting Graveney.

If you are not sure which BRMA you live in or are going to move to, you can search by postcode on the LHA website at:

<http://lha-direct.therentservice.gov.uk/>

Can the Broad Rental Market Areas ever change?

It is possible for them to change. The Rent Service will carry out a review of them every year. If significant factors like new shopping centres, transport links are built, they could influence The Rent Service to change the boundary of a BRMA.

How can I check which Broad Rental Market Area I live in or I am going to move to?

There are a few streets in Merton, where the boundary of two BRMAs divide a road or are close to the path a road follows. You may also, not be familiar with Merton because you are thinking of moving here.

In order to check please:

- visit our website www.merton.gov.uk/benefits/hb-ctb ; or
- visit the LHA website;: <http://lha-direct.therentservice.gov.uk/> ;or
- phone us on 020 8274 4903; or
- visit us at Merton Link, ground floor Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX; or
- email Housing.Benefits@merton.gov.uk

How do I know how my Local Housing Allowance will be worked out?

You need to work out how many bedrooms you and your household are entitled to under the LHA rules. Please read our leaflet called **Working out your Local Housing Allowance**. Then you will need the current London Borough of Merton **Local Housing Allowance rates**. You can get both of these by contacting in the ways stated above.