



### Why do Swan have a Welfare Benefits Team?

We found that many of our residents are not receiving the full amount of state benefits that they are entitled to. As a result many are living below the poverty line.

One of the big reasons that people do not receive the benefits that they should do is because the benefit system can be very complicated. People often do not realise how to claim their benefits or even that they are entitled to them. This is why Swan have a team of Welfare Benefits Officers who are there to help our residents to receive all the benefits that they are entitled to.

### How do we help you to claim the benefits that are rightfully yours?

Our Welfare Benefit Officers will call or visit you and provide advice and assistance specific to your situation. We will identify unclaimed benefits, assist you in claiming benefits, if needed, and when appropriate we will represent you at the appeal tribunals.

In addition to the above we provide information to our residents via the Communicator magazine which we send to every resident bi-monthly. In this way you are kept informed of relevant changes in the benefit system.

### When should I contact the Welfare Benefits Team?

If you have a change of circumstance in your family set-up or income then this may effect your eligibility for benefits and you can contact the Welfare Benefits Team to get the advice you need.

#### Some changes which affect your benefit:

- Starting or leaving work
- Any increase or decreases in your income
- A child turning 18 years of age
- An illness which effects one of your family members
- The death or birth in the family

### Does the Welfare Benefits Team just deal with Housing Benefit?

No, we deal with all benefits including...

#### Means Tested Benefits

- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Employment Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Income based Job seekers Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Social Fund Payments

#### Non Means-Tested Benefits

- Child Benefit
- Guardian Allowance
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Maternity Benefits
- Paternity and Adoption Pay

#### Sickness Benefits

- Employment Support Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Statutory Sick Pay
- Industrial Injuries

#### Disability Benefits

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Carers Allowance

#### Tax Credits

- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits

### How successful is the Benefit Team in doing what they do?

During April 2008 – March 2009 we have helped 340 residents following their referral to the Welfare Benefit service, but many more than this were given advice regarding their benefits.

As a result of the Welfare Benefit Team our residents have gained an extra £876,600 in benefits during this period that they otherwise would not have received. This is a staggering amount and shows just how many people do not receive the full amount of benefits that they should.

### How do I get help?

You can contact the Welfare Benefits Team by calling **0845 612 4700** between 9:00-17:00 Mon-Fri or email [benefits@swan.org.uk](mailto:benefits@swan.org.uk)

The Welfare Benefits Officer responsible for your area might not be available to take your call as we are often out and about visiting residents. If this is the case you will be able to speak to a member of the Rent Recovery Team to arrange for a call back at our earliest opportunity.

# our contact details

**Contact us**

**phone** 0845 6124700

**email** [benefits@swan.org.uk](mailto:benefits@swan.org.uk)

**In writing** Swan Housing Group, Pilgrim House, High Street, Billericay, CM12 9XY