

Getting Involved

Expenses and allowances

At DCHA we want to provide our residents with high quality services and encourage them to get involved in our work. We will cover most out-of-pocket expenses for travel and other reasonable costs to enable residents to attend meetings, events, workshops, conferences and training courses.

Claiming expenses

Expenses claim forms are available from Julie West, Resident Involvement Co-ordinator, DCHA, Whitefield House, Greenbank Road, Plymouth, PL4 8NH, telephone 0300 1238080. Wherever possible, receipts for expenditure must be provided. When we receive the completed form, payment will be made either by cheque or direct into your bank account. Payment will usually take about 21 days from the date we receive the completed form. We can by arrangement refund some residents' travel expenses at the meeting or event.

Tax and benefits

Expenses paid to residents are not classed as earnings. They cover out of pocket expenses and should not affect residents' entitlement to benefits but may affect residents' tax position. Currently, the tax-free allowance is 41p per mile up to 10,000 miles. Claims are subject to audit by internal and external auditors. Also, HM Revenue and Customs inspect paid claims from time to time. We strongly advise residents to check their position.

Car mileage rates and expenses

The current mileage rate we pay is 40p per mile.

Rail and bus travel

If you are travelling by train we can buy tickets in advance or we will refund second class train travel and bus travel on receipt of the used ticket. As part of our policy of becoming a more environmental responsible organisation we encourage residents to consider how they travel to meetings and where possible to share transport or travel by train or bus.

Childcare costs and making children welcome

We will meet reasonable childcare costs, which must be agreed with DCHA before a claim is made. If possible, a receipt should be provided and registered childminders employed. We will try our best to provide children's art and craft activities at community meetings and crèche facilities at weekend events.

Refreshments at meetings

If you attend a meeting or take part in training you will be provided with refreshments (tea, coffee, water and biscuits). For meetings over three hours that end or begin at lunch time we will provide a light buffet. We will also provide food if a meeting runs from the afternoon into the evening. When we provide food we will ask people before hand to tell us about their dietary needs.

For events that are not held “in house” we will pay a meal allowance:

Breakfast For leaving home before 7.30 a.m. to attend an event or meeting, we will pay a breakfast allowance of £4.00.

Evening Meal If your travel distance home from attending an event or meeting means you are unlikely to get home before 9pm you will be entitled to an evening meeting allowance of £10.00.

You can claim for coffee, tea and soft drinks, but not alcoholic drinks.

If you require a carer to travel with you, we will meet their costs.

It is best to check with staff before the meeting and always remember to get a receipt.

We will only pay for overnight stays in exceptional circumstances. We will not pay costs for room service.

Stationery and other expenses

We will cover expenses for stationery and other sundries such as printer cartridges, telephone calls and postage, if the cost has been incurred in relation to tenant representation, or our business as an Association. We may consider part-funding items such as computer printers. Please check first before making any purchases.

For more information please contact Julie West or your local Neighbourhood team, telephone **0300 123 80 80** or email: Julie.west@dcha.co.uk

Devon & Cornwall Housing Association

Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 2JZ

Devon & Cornwall Housing Association is a charitable Industrial and Provident Society

These expenses and allowances are subject to revision as the Devon and Cornwall Group agree a shared approach to resident involvement.