

PCHA relies on the income we receive from rents to fund our services. It is therefore imperative that the income derived from rents allows us to meet all our liabilities and remain financially strong. However, as a social landlord, we need to balance this with the importance of not setting rents that are 'unaffordable', which may lead to increased void loss, arrears and/or evictions.

How does PCHA set my rent?

As a housing association, the formula for our rent setting is determined by government and this formula is used to calculate the annual increase/decrease. In April 2023 we are able to increase the core rents by up to 7%.



We recognise that rent increases are unwelcome for most residents, especially this year when the cost of living crisis is having an impact on all of us. However, rents are our only income. They enable us to carry out our responsibilities as a landlord, invest in the long-term maintenance of our homes and go towards developing new homes for those in need. As our costs increase in line with or above inflation, our income also needs to keep pace with inflation in order for us to survive. Rent increases help us to match our increased costs.

Consequently, whilst the Board of PCHA are extremely mindful about affordability, they are equally clear that we need to increase the rent this year to ensure we can deliver our services effectively.

Therefore, core rents will increase on Monday 3rd April 2023 by 7%. Of course this only applies to core rent; service charges are calculated separately based on our expenditure for this year and an estimate of costs for next year (see next page). However, we have tried to keep any service charge increases to a minimum, and have capped all service charge increases to a maximum increase to £5 per week regardless of the increase in our costs.

If you hold a secure tenancy (fair rent), your rent is normally set by the Rent Officer every two years. This year your rent will increase by 7% providing it is below the last registered rent. Any increase or decrease applied will always be within the rents set by the Rent Officer. We aim to ensure fair rents are in line with our assured rents as far as possible.

Your Rent and Service Charges

2023-24

A service charge is a payment towards the cost of services within any shared spaces. For example, if you live in a block of flats with a communal garden, the cost of maintaining that garden is covered by a service charge. This is a charge you pay in addition to your rent and it is reviewed annually.

PCHA residents pay a fixed service charge which is based on our calculation of the scheme's costs for the forthcoming year; a budget will be sent to you. Fixed-rate service charges cannot be varied during the year and they are based on our best estimate of costs, so any surplus or deficit on the actual costs during the year are not carried forward.

What services are covered by the service charge?

PCHA provides you with certain services and will charge you for any services that apply to your property. Services covered by service charge could include:

- Cleaning shared areas, including cleaning windows and removing dumped rubbish
- Cutting grassed areas and looking after planted areas
- Repairs to shared facilities such as door-entry systems, TV aerials and lighting
- Providing and repairing lifts, including the cost of contracts and lift insurance
- Providing firefighting equipment, including repairing and testing emergency lighting and smoke alarms. This may also include fire safety works.
- Providing water, electricity and gas supplies to shared areas
- A sinking fund to reduce the risk of large unexpected bills for major repairs/renewals.



It is important to us that our communal areas are safe, clean and tidy and welcoming so we can all be proud of our homes. We have been looking at the services we provide to ensure we achieve this as well as looking at the associated costs to ensure that services represent value for money. Some services were affected by Covid but we are back on track now. Additionally, there are some ongoing costs in respect of fire safety due to recommendations following the tragic fire at Grenfell.

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