

Rent Consultation 2025

Frequently Asked Questions

The Association is currently consulting tenants on proposals that would mean:

- A 5.1% uplift in overall rental income from 1st April 2026, to enable us to meet rising business costs and continue to deliver services and carry out the planned investment in our homes.
- The introduction of a new, consistent approach to setting rents across the stock that we think would be more transparent and fairer than the current arrangements.

All tenants have been sent full details of these proposed changes, the reasons for them and the difference they could make to your own rent from April. The **Information Leaflet** (which was included with your consultation paperwork) can be seen here: www.shuttleston.co.uk

More information is set out below to help you understand the proposals and decide how to respond to the consultation. If you have any other questions, please let us know:

1. ***What do you mean by a “harmonised” rent structure?*** A “rent structure” is what all landlords use to calculate the rents for each of their homes. They usually take account of the size, type and other characteristics of the property.
Our current rents have been set in a variety of ways, depending on the history of the particular home. Some of our homes were acquired from another landlord (e.g. Glasgow City Council or Scottish Homes) following a tenant ballot. These tenants’ rents are still based on those landlords’ historic rent structures that were different to the Association’s own rent structure. In April 2015 we introduced a new rent structure to be applied to all new tenancies. This now applies to 58% of all of our homes. We are now looking to introduce one new “harmonised” rent structure that we would apply to all of our homes in future. Details of the proposed new structure are shown on the back page of the **Information Leaflet**.
2. ***Why are we proposing this change?*** Everyone’s current rent is set in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement that was originally entered into, and the rent policy that applied at the time. As such we are not required to make a change. However, our rents for similar properties can vary a lot and we think one structure would be fairer. Also, we think the new system would be easier for tenants to understand and for staff to administer.
3. ***Will the Association make more money from rent harmonisation?*** No. The aim is for the rent restructure to make no change to the overall amount of money raised from tenants but just to raise this money in a more consistent way from different

property types. However, we can legally only change tenants' rents once a year, so the rent harmonisation process is being introduced at the same time as the usual annual rent review. A 5.1% overall uplift on existing rental income is being proposed this year to reflect the increase in our business costs. If the rent restructure wasn't being introduced, we would still be proposing a 5.1% overall increase in rents.

4. ***What will be the impact on tenants of the change to the new system?*** Most tenants will not see a big change in their rent as a result of the harmonisation process, and that is particularly the case for people whose tenancies have started since 2015. However, there are some tenants who will eventually see a significant increase and some who will see a significant reduction in real terms. We will be phasing in these changes over a number of years – up to five for those facing the biggest changes. The **Information leaflet** sets out how the phasing will be calculated in year 1. If harmonisation was fully introduced today there would be more folk who see a rent reduction than an increase. However, because harmonisation is being introduced at the same time as the annual rent uplift everyone's rent will actually go up from the 1st of April 2026. The amount of increase for each tenant in the first year, from 1st April, will range though, from less than 1% to over 12%, depending on the harmonisation phasing applicable to each tenancy.
5. ***How have you arrived at the new rent structure?*** We weren't starting from scratch. The new structure has a lot of similarity to the system that was introduced for new tenants in 2015, to minimise the number of tenants who would see a big change. There are some differences however – in particular we've tried to make it simpler and easier to understand. We also had regard to the results of the tenant survey in August when we asked you about the factors that you think should be considered when setting rents. We shared these results with our Tenant Forum in August along with our early thoughts on changes. We also reported the results of the survey in the September newsletter (that can still be seen on our website). The main things that will be taken into account in setting most people's rents are: property size (number of bedrooms); property type (house, cottage flat, tenement flat etc); whether there is a garden and internal space standards (kitchen size, size of bedrooms etc).
6. ***Why is it proposed that the rents for newer properties, built since 2005, be set at a level that is 20% more than other for properties?*** This roughly reflects the current difference between the rents for our properties built before and after 2005. There are a range of reasons for this. One is the fact that building costs have increased and government grant funding has reduced in that time, meaning that

higher rents were required to make new projects viable. It also reflects the added amenity and higher building standards of these new homes, and in particular the increased energy efficiency that means that fuel bills can be much lower.

7. **What about service charges?** Most tenants – particularly those in flats – pay a service charge on top of the “net rent” for the property itself. These service charges are mostly for estate caretaking services (close cleaning, back-court maintenance/bin area tidying and bulk uplift). Following tenant feed-back we have made changes aimed at improving the quality of those services. These service charges will however only go up in line with the overall rent increase. We have, though, taken the opportunity to review who is currently paying for what and as a result some tenants who weren’t previously being charged for these services will start to be from 1st April 2026. We have not traditionally charged most people a separate amount for common landscaping (for either back-courts or open spaces) and under the new rent structure the entirety of this service will be covered through general rental income. That means that some folk (who have previously been paying a sperate charge for this) should see a reduction in their service charges going forward.
8. **How do SHA rents compare to those of other social landlords?** Our rents continue to be generally lower than the average rents from across the housing association sector. The **Information Leaflet** shows how our average 3 apartment rents compare to other Scottish housing associations. More detailed information about how our rents compare is provided below.

Average Weekly Rent at 31/3/25 (inc. service charges)	2apt	3apt		4apt	5apt	Overall Average Rent
Shettleston Housing Association	£88.76	£97.70		£108.69	£136.44	£96.37
Scottish RSL Average	£102.72	£104.17		£114.78	£127.25	£106.37
Peer Group Average	£95.83	106.35		£117.86	£131.98	£104.96

Rent harmonisation will not make much difference to our average rents and how these compare, although our average rents for 5 apartment properties (that currently look relatively high) will reduce going forward.

The 5.1% annual rent increase being proposed for the coming year is below the 5.4% reported average for the 55 housing associations that make up the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF).

9. **What do you spend our rent money on?** We rely on rent and service charge income to pay for all of our ongoing business costs and the delivery of our services; all day to day and planned repairs and improvements to properties (as detailed in the **Information leaflet**); property insurance and repayment of loans taken out originally to acquire or build new homes. The pie chart below summarises the current breakdown of those costs. We benchmark our costs against those of other social landlords and are pleased to report that our costs generally compare well to the 25 other landlords that participate in Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) annual Value for Money Benchmarking Review. For example, our average cost of repair is £194.98 compared with an average of £279.77 across the 25 landlords in the review, being 4th lowest overall.

