

Rents and Services 2023/24

The Management Committee (MC) extend their thanks to the Tenants who took the time to respond to this year's rent consultation. Whilst formal notification of the revised rents and service charges will be provided in writing by the end of February, the MC were keen to take the opportunity to provide advance notification of their decision to help alleviate immediate concerns.

A total of 261 consultation responses (17.5% of all tenancies) were received, with 64% of tenants indicating they were not in favour of the proposed 5% increase, with particularly strong opposition from some Annual Tenants Conference attendees around the impact of the increase on already pressured household incomes.

Mindful of the challenges facing our tenants in this current financial crisis; acceptance of the issues we need to address to substantially improve our reactive repairs service delivery; and in acknowledgement of the pace of planned investment works; a pared back increase of 3.75% was agreed by MC Members, effective from 28/03/23. Suspension of the ongoing Rent Restructuring programme for this year was also agreed to help further mitigate the impact for tenants.

In reaching their final decision the MC considered a range of variables on our Business Plan, all the while mindful of the challenges of forecasting in this ongoing period of uncertainty, and of their important role in reaching an optimum balance between the rent policy factors, including taking account of tenant feedback; ensuring contingency for emerging and/or unforeseen risks and regulatory requirements; and protecting the association's property assets: providing excellent customer services and decent, affordable, energy efficient and sustainable homes for future generations. MC Members were also aware that service charges were expected to increase by more than inflation (20-25%), with contractors citing increased fuel, material, energy and wages costs, as well as parking charges.

The 3.75% rent increase is substantially less than inflation (CPI was 10.5% December 2022), and is GWHA's third consecutive below-inflation average increase. Within this context it is important for tenants to be aware that above-inflation increases may be more likely in future to aid recovery, and to avoid a longer term impact on our investment plans and service delivery. This would, of course, be alongside the ongoing focus on efficiencies.

Formal notification of the rent review will follow in writing for all tenants by the end of February 2023. As ever, the collection of our rental income will be underpinned by our tenancy sustainment measures, with our welfare benefits advice service enhanced to include food support, energy fuel payments and emergency funds delivered by GWHA and in partnership with other organisations.

Please also remember if you are experiencing financial hardship, or wish advice or support, contact a member of the tenancy services team for assistance by:

- Calling the office on 0141 331 6650
- Emailing admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk
- Visiting the office at 5 Royal Crescent, G3 7SL