



ANNUAL RENT REVIEW CONSULTATION 2022-2023

Each year the Board of Directors at Homes for Life must make decisions about the levels of rent we charge for our properties to ensure that we continue to keep your home well maintained, provide you with excellent services and balance this with ensuring that rents remain affordable.

The current financial climate has inflation rates which are at the highest they have been in many years (CPI December 2021 5%). This increases all of our costs. The continuing impact of COVID-19 on labour and material shortages is impacting on our cyclical and planned maintenance repairs costs.



The Board continues to be aware of the impact of inflation on your own household budgets too and are mindful of increasing energy bills, the impact of COVID-19 on individuals and the continuing impact of welfare reform.

Our latest Business Plan approved in December 2021 is built around ensuring that we secure the best future for you, our tenants. Two of the 5 key objectives are:

- ✓ to invest in our operating area and local economy whilst achieving value for money for our tenants, and
- ✓ to provide our tenants with the best services to allow them to enjoy and sustain their tenancies.

Examples of how we are achieving these objectives:

- ✓ we have changed our repairs contractor and introduced a new appointment repairs system
- ✓ we are updating our technology to ensure we are working smarter therefore, more efficiently
- ✓ we are introducing a pilot tenancy sustainment project

- ✓ we are now drawing up improvement programmes based on the stock condition survey information which means we are targeting investment where it is required
- ✓ We are investing in making homes more energy efficient and as futureproof as we can.

The proposed increase for 2022/23 is 2%

At the December Board meeting Members considered the financial forecasts and the rent increase for consultation. The only income we have is from our rents so this impacts on what we can do and when we can do it. We funded the original build and/or purchase of our properties using loan finance. The financial year ahead sees this loan being paid off. Our financial projections show that we can consult with tenants on an increase which is lower than CPI (5%) without it having a negative impact on the longer-term financial plans despite the current high inflation rate.

The rate of increase being consulted on is 2%. The Board are aware that any increase is unwelcome, however given that this is 3% less than CPI of 5% (December 2021) it will be less of an impact to you than it could have been.

What this means to you

We have varying rent charges across our properties. For ease of comparison, we have used the average rent levels to show what a 2% increase means on a weekly and monthly basis.

Property Apt Size/Bedroom	Current rent charge weekly/monthly	Proposed with 2% increase	Weekly increase	Monthly increase
2 apt/ 1 bedroom	£82.36 £356.89	£84.01 £364.03	£1.65	£7.14
3 apt/ 2 bedrooms	£93.18 £403.78	£95.04 £411.86	£1.86	£8.08
4 apt/ 3 bedrooms	£100.38 £434.98	£102.39 £443.68	£2.01	£8.70

The monthly increase varies on average by £7.14 to £8.70. Had the % increase been the same as CPI (5%) these increases would have been between £17.84 and £21.25 per month which the Board felt was unjustifiable.

Please note that the illustrations are based on average rents for each house size and that you will receive a tailored letter advising you of your actual increase following approval by the Board. However, if you would like to know now what your actual increase will be, please contact a staff member from the housing team.

How our rents compare with other local Associations?

In the table below we have compared our existing rent charges with other landlords operating locally.

2020/21 Average Rent Level Comparisons

Average Weekly Rent	Homes for Life	ELHA	Castle Rock Edinvar	Dunedin Canmore
2 apt	£82.36	£89.19	£80.49	£95.48
3 apt	£93.18	£100.35	£96.64	£106.98
4 apt	£100.38	£110.49	£108.61	£116.89

Source: Scottish Housing Regulator ARC Returns 2020/21

From the table you can see that our rents are the lowest for 3 and 4 apartments and second lowest for 2 apartments.

We have asked these same landlords for their proposed increases that they are re consulting their tenants on. These are shown in the table below.

Organisation	Proposed rent increase
ELHA	-0.65 to +5.1% depending on take up of rent discount scheme
Castle Rock/Edinvar	3.9%
Dunedin Canmore	Unavailable at time of issue.
Homes for Life	2%

Right to Consultation

Before the Board can make a final decision on the rent increase at the February meeting, you as a tenant have the right to comment on the proposal. You can do so in the following ways:

- ✓ Email: info@homeforlife.co.uk
- ✓ Telephone our staff team on 01620 829300
- ✓ Write to us at the office – address below
- ✓ Text: 07418 347197 please include your name and address.

We will also be contacting a number of you by telephone for your views.

The closing date for the consultation is **5pm on Monday 14 February 2022.**

TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY



Research Resource has been commissioned to carry out a full tenant satisfaction survey. They will be in touch with all tenants between the 31 January and 25 February 2022.

Normally this would involve someone coming to your home, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions you will be contacted by telephone to take part.

The more tenants who take part, the better as it allows us to tailor our future plans to where you tell us they are needed. It also allows us to report to the Scottish Housing Regulator on our performance as viewed by you.

So, when you are contacted please do take part as we do want to hear what you think!

As a thanks for taking part there are three prizes of a £100 gift voucher of your choice. As we do not know who has taken part in the survey, Research Resource will ask you if you want to be included in the prize draw.



Homes for Life Housing Partnership 57 Market Street, Haddington, East Lothian, EH41 3JG is a recognised Scottish Charity No 028542. Company Registration No: 188299.

Telephone 01620 829300 **Email:** info@homesforlife.co.uk **Web** www.homesforlife.co.uk