



What is included in my rent?

Your rent can include four main parts:

1. The core rent ✓
2. Property-related service charge ✓
3. Support service charge ✓
4. Personal charges ✓



Core rent

Core rent pays for the management and maintenance of your home, the repayment of any loans taken out to purchase or improve your home and other homes owned by Progress Housing Group, and to cover additional running costs.

Services charges

Service charges pay for services that provide a benefit over and above the simple right to occupy your home.



How is the core rent calculated?

The core rent is worked out using a formula set by central government. Most rents are at this 'formula' level; a small number are below. Most of those below the target are for tenancies that started several years ago.

The government and the rent standard set out how your rent will be calculated, and this year will use the Consumer Price Index in September (6.7%) plus 1%. For most of our properties, the maximum increase in the rent will be 7.7%.

This is for the following reasons:

- Our rent levels are reasonable and in line with what other providers charge
- We continue to invest in our existing properties
- We want to continue developing new affordable housing.

How are the property-related service charges calculated?

Property-related service charges are calculated each year to cover the estimated cost of providing the following year's service. In some cases, this is the estimated average cost of providing the service averaged over a number of years. These are explained further in the attached sheet.

Your property-related service charges are known as **variable** service charges. This means that the service charges you pay are based on an estimated figure. At the end of the financial year, the cost of providing each service is calculated using actual figures. Any under or overcharges are carried forward to the next year, in line with the terms of your tenancy agreement. In this way, you pay the actual cost of providing the service.

Support service charges

Support service charges pay for the cost of providing support in certain types of accommodation. For example, in independent living schemes, the support service charge pays for part of the independent living co-ordinator's cost and the employees who monitor social alarms.

Any queries? Get in touch by using our live chat service at www.progressgroup.org.uk, enquiries@progressgroup.org.uk, or 0333 320 4555.



What should I do if I receive Housing Benefit?

It is your responsibility to inform Housing Benefit of any changes to your rent. However, we will also notify the local council of the change in your rent if your Housing Benefit is paid to us as your landlord. They will continue paying Housing Benefit to us on your behalf unless your circumstances change.

You should continue to pay your personal heating and other charges not covered by Housing Benefit where this is included in your rent.

If you have not received written confirmation from the local council of your new benefit entitlement by mid-April, please contact your local benefits office at the local council for details.

What should I do if I receive Universal Credit?

If you are entitled to Universal Credit, it is your responsibility to pass the increase information on to the Department of Work and Pensions. You can do this by signing in to your Universal Credit online account if you have one or call the Universal Credit service centre on **0800 328 9344** (Monday to Friday - 9am to 4pm). You will need to provide the following information on or soon as possible after the 3 April 2024 - the new rent, the new property-related service charge and confirm the charges are weekly.

Housing Benefit or Universal Credit pay part of my rent; how do I work out how much to pay?

To work out the amount you have to pay:

- a) Look for your total rent figure in the letter we have sent to you
- b) Take away the amount of Housing Benefit / Universal Credit housing costs (if paid to us as your landlord) you receive and the remainder is what you should pay.

I have to pay some or all of my rent. What should I do now?

If you pay by Direct Debit, we will automatically increase your payments and send a letter during March to confirm the new amount payable. If you do not already pay by Direct Debit and wish to set one up contact us on the number below.

You may continue to use your existing swipe card to make payments at the Post Office or PayPoint outlets for the new amount payable.

If you pay through the internet online or by telephone, you should ensure that the amount you pay reflects your rent changes.

What date does the new rent start?

From Monday 1 April 2024



When are the rent-free weeks? Current year (2023/24)

- Monday 4 March 2024
- Monday 11 March 2024
- Monday 18 March 2024
- Monday 25 March 2024



New financial year (2024/25)

- Monday 10 March 2025
- Monday 17 March 2025
- Monday 24 March 2025
- Monday 31 March 2025



Under your tenancy agreement, 'rent-free' weeks are provided because the annual rent is calculated and divided over 48 weeks. This allows tenants whose rent accounts are clear to have 'rent-free' weeks.

However, if you are in arrears, you must make a payment to reduce the arrears during these weeks. If you are finding it hard to pay your rent, then please let us know. Our friendly team are here to help.

The financial year 2024/25 is a 53-week year (based on the number of Mondays in the financial year; as per your tenancy agreement, rent is due and payable each Monday). The calculations have been based on your weekly rent and you will pay your charges over 49 weeks.

Keep on top of your rent balance and repairs

Don't forget that you can keep on top of your rent balance and repairs by logging into your online tenant account. To sign up, all you need is your tenancy reference number which you can find on your enclosed rent letter. Go to www.progressgroup.org.uk/activate or scan the QR code

