

Your rent increase: frequently asked questions

Why has my weekly rent changed?

Your weekly rent has been changed in accordance with the terms of your tenancy agreement.

The basic rent element has changed in line with guidance from the Government and the Regulator of Social Housing. This guidance allows us to increase the basic rent element by 2.7%. This is based on a formula of the annual change in Consumer Price Index (CPI) in September last year (which was 1.7%) plus an additional 1%.

We have increased the service charge and other charges (if applicable) by 2.4%: this was the annual change in Retail Price Index (RPI) in September last year. The only exception is if your service charge includes any amenity charge - this has been increased by 2.4% plus an additional 5%.

What is my amenity charge for?

The amenity charge applies to all assured tenancies. It covers maintenance on general land that Futures Housing Group is responsible for across our entire operating area.

Can I use and see my rent account on the internet?

Yes. Many people are familiar with internet or electronic banking and we have something similar for your rent account. If you go to our website home page and click the 'My Account' button you can pay your rent, see your current rent balance and all your other financial transactions, including any housing benefit payments received and any individual payments you have made. You can even print a rent statement.

This service is available 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

'My Account' can also be used to update your personal details, raise and see updates on your repairs as well as receive news from Futures.

How does Futures use the rent it charges?

The income we receive from rent is used to manage and maintain your homes.

Do I need to pay my rent in advance?

Yes. The agreement with us that you signed states that your rent should be paid one week in advance. This means that your rent account balance should never be less than zero. However we encourage customers to pay four weeks (or one month) ahead with their rent. This is a safeguard for you as it will help you to maintain your tenancy if you have a change in circumstances (for example a sudden drop in income).

What can I do if am struggling to pay my rent or other bills?

We offer a free, confidential money advice service. It can help you with claiming all the benefits you are entitled to, debt advice, priority payments and household budgeting.

To find out more about the service, contact Customer Services on 0300 456 2531 or visit our website www.futureshg.co.uk.

How are Direct Debit payments calculated?

Direct Debits are automatically calculated by our computer system to take an equal amount each month. In a full year this will be 12 monthly payments. If you receive part Housing Benefit this is taken into account before we calculate the Direct Debit amount.

The calculation for the rent year 2020/21 will start on 6 April 2020 (or 1 April 2020 if you have monthly tenancy). The calculation may change if you are in arrears or if you join the Direct Debit scheme later in the year.

Do I get a letter if my Direct Debit changes?

Yes. If your Direct Debit changes we will write to you again to tell you the new monthly amount. Your Direct Debit may change if the amount of Housing Benefit you receive alters or you fall into arrears; if the amount you need to pay changes regularly then you must always check that you are meeting your rent commitments.

How can I influence services at Futures?

Yes. We have a lot of different ways for you to get involved and help shape our services.

To find out more, please click on the 'Get Involved' option on the 'Our Services' section of our website.