



Trident Housing

PART OF TRIDENT GROUP

Frequently Asked Questions – Rent and Service Charge Review 2021/22

Notifications of your new rent and service charges are being sent to you and give you 28 days' notice of your new charge, which will be payable from Monday 5th April 2021.

It is important that you know how your rent and service charges are calculated so we have prepared this guide to help you understand.

Why are you increasing my rent?

We fully understand that any increase in rent will not be good news. However, we are committed to ensuring our tenants get the best possible services from Trident Group. Increasing the rents will help us fund our commitments to repair and improve your home and deliver the objectives within our Business Plan.

Following the change in government policy we are able to increase rents by the rate of inflation (CPI) + 1%. The CPI figure was announced by the government on 21st October 2020 and was 0.5%. We have applied 1.5%.

When does the new rent start?

The new rent increases will take effect from Monday, 5 April 2021.

I pay a service charge, do the same increases apply?

Your service charges may increase but the formula we use to calculate rent increases will not be used. Variable service charges are calculated on the previous year's actual costs. This is then divided between all properties in the area that benefit from that particular service. Your service charge can increase or decrease each year based on how much it costs us to deliver the services.

We do not make a profit from service charges; we only charge you for what it costs us to provide the services.

If you pay a fixed service charge this is fixed at the start of the year, based on an estimate of the service cost. If the actual cost of the service at the end of the year is higher or lower than the estimate, the charge cannot be changed. However, the charge may be changed the following year to ensure that the full cost of the service is recovered from residents.

Will the rent increases affect my Universal Credit payments?

Yes. If you receive Universal Credit you must notify the DWP of the change in your April rent through your online journal so they can amend your claim. Please note you must do this after Monday, 5 April. If you delay in informing the DWP, your claim will not be backdated, and you will need to pay any shortfall for your housing costs. If you require any assistance with this, you can gain support from your Income Officer.

I claim Housing Benefit, will this cover the rent increase?

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit the amount you receive will automatically be amended from Monday, 5 April 2021, when the new rent year starts. The rent notice you receive will show the amended Housing Benefit amount.

Do I have to adjust my Direct Debit mandate or Standing Order with my bank, or will you do this automatically for me?

If you pay by Direct Debit you will not have to do anything as they will be automatically adjusted by our finance team. You will be notified separately of the revised payment amounts.

However, if you pay your rent by standing order you will need to contact your bank to amend the payment to the new amount advised in your Rent Notice. Please ensure your standing order is set-up for the correct amount as shown in your rent notice to prevent your rent account falling into arrears.

Where can I get some debt and budgeting advice from?

Trident Group have a specialist Income Team and details of your Income Officer are provided along with this document or you can email IncomeTeam@tridentgroup.org.uk

Alternatively, you can get help and support from:

Citizens Advice Bureau – www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Money Advice Service – www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Debt Helpline – www.nationaldebtline.org.uk

I am not happy with my new rent can I appeal against it?

If you have any queries with the proposed new rent or service charges in the first instance you can contact us directly by phone 0121 633 4633 and ask to speak to your Homes & Community Housing Officer; or email

HomesAndCommunityHousingOfficers@tridentgroup.org.uk

If you do not wish to discuss it with us, you can refer the rent notice to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

More information around this process can be found at the following link:

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/useful-tools/fact-sheets/charges/>