



# What does the rent increase mean for you?

Keeping our customers informed and providing value for money are both very important to us: which is why we have created this short guide to explain why your rent is going up and answer any questions.

## Why is your rent increasing?

In April 2021 we will be increasing our rents by 1.5% to help us improve our homes and communities and provide better services to you.

This increase reflects current government policy and is in line with other housing associations throughout the UK.

Your enclosed letter provides an individual breakdown of your new monthly costs.

## What about service charge?

Those LYHA customers who have shared interior or exterior areas also pay a monthly 'Service Charge'. This covers any services which you receive outside your home or that are shared with your neighbours, such as gardening or cleaning of communal areas. On a new estate, all residents make a contribution to overall estate management.

We constantly try to improve our services and work very hard to balance the provision of a quality service with the cost to customers. Occasionally the service at any particular site might require more, or less funding, and this change in cost will be passed on through the Service Charge.

Service charge is calculated on a scheme-by-scheme basis and split between all the customers who receive these services. If this applies to you, there will also be a full breakdown of these costs included within your individual letter. We have also published cleaning and gardening service level agreements on our website: [www.lyha.co.uk/estate-services](http://www.lyha.co.uk/estate-services)



## How we spend your money?

LYHA is a not-for-profit organisation and all additional rent income will be invested in our homes and communities:

- In 2021/22 we will spend over £1 million on improvements to our existing homes
- We are working hard to improve the energy efficiency, warmth and sustainability of our homes over the next ten years (including retrofitting our existing properties which should create energy savings for you)
- We are building new, affordable homes to help address the housing crisis in Yorkshire. Over the next three years we hope to build another 200 homes.
- Health and safety is our top priority. In the last two years we have invested over £700,000 on ensuring we are fully compliant in all areas.



## Last year for every £1 of rent and service charge we spent:



We are working hard to improve our services by listening to what you tell us and responding to your feedback.

Over the last year we've had to make changes to the way we deliver some of our services, in order to ensure everyone's safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we have worked hard to support customers throughout this time and continue to provide all our core services.

### What do you need to do?

Your new rent payment (and service charge if applicable) will be due on 1st April 2021.

- If you receive **Universal Credit**, you will need to login to your DWP journal and 'Report a change' in your housing costs.

Please do this promptly on 1st April, as your UC will not be increased until you do this and they do not backdate payments.

- If you receive **Housing Benefit**, you will need to tell your local council benefits team.
- If you pay us by **Direct Debit** you don't need to do anything. The amount will be automatically changed. Please check your statement. However, if you pay by any other method (such as online banking, your mylyha account or Post Office GIRO) you will need to change the amount yourself. Please make sure this is done in time for 1st April, when your new rent is due. Better still, why not set up a direct debit now? It's very easy to do, just visit our website: [www.lyha.co.uk/pay-direct-debit](http://www.lyha.co.uk/pay-direct-debit)

### What should I do if I am struggling with money?

If you are struggling to pay your rent and bills or worrying about spiralling debts, please call us straight away and ask to speak to an Income Officer. They can signpost you to the right sources of support to help you get your finances under control.

**It is our firm policy that we will not evict anyone that is experiencing financial hardship due to the current crisis.**

We also have an **LYHA Support Fund** in place to help customers who are struggling. Please visit:

[www.lyha.co.uk/supportfund](http://www.lyha.co.uk/supportfund)

Recent help we've given to customers has included supermarket shopping vouchers and purchasing white goods and smart phones/tablets to help people access the internet.

### Find out more

If you have any further questions about rent, service charge or anything else to do with your tenancy, please call us on

Tel: **0113 278 3335** or

Email: [info@lyha.co.uk](mailto:info@lyha.co.uk)

You can also visit our website: [www.lyha.co.uk](http://www.lyha.co.uk)

