

Explaining the rise in rent and service charges March 2023 – frequently asked questions for our tenants

Arabic

إذا كنت ترغب في التحدث إلينا بلغتك حول محتوى هذه الرسالة ، فيرجى الاتصال بمجلس مدينة ويستمنستر 3783 0800358 أو زيارة مركز الخدمة المحلي الخاص بك

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই চিঠির বিষয়বস্তু সম্পর্কে আপনার ভাষায় আমাদের সাথে কথা বলতে চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে ওয়েস্টমিনস্টার সিটি কাউন্সিলের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন (0800 358 3783) অথবা আপনার স্থানীয় পরিষেবা কেন্দ্রে যান

Portuguese

Se desejar falar conosco sobre o conteúdo desta carta no seu idioma, entre em contacto com a Westminster City Council através do número 0800 358 3783 ou visite o centro de atendimento da sua área local, através do endereço abaixo indicado.

Kurdish

Ger hûn dixwazin li ser naveroka vê nameyê bi zimanê xwe bi me re bipeyivin, ji kerema xwe têkilî Şaredariya Westminster (0800 358 3783) bikin an biçin navenda karûbarê xweya herêmî.

Spanish

Si desea hablar con nosotros en su idioma sobre el contenido de esta carta, comuníquese con el Ayuntamiento de Westminster (0800 358 3783) o visite su centro de servicio local.

Rent Increase 2023/2024

If you're a social housing resident, we follow rules set by the government when we calculate any changes to your rent each year.

The Council sets the rent in accordance with the social housing rent policy which is controlled by the government. Normally, any increase in rent is set at the rate of inflation (in September of the prior) year + 1%.

However, due to inflation hitting a record high of 10.1% in September 2022 and the ongoing cost of living crisis and rising energy costs, the government has decided to cap how much social rent can be increased by to a maximum of 7%.

In line with government guidance, your rent will increase by 7% from 03 April 2023.

Despite this, for most tenants who are claiming full benefit, the rent increase will be mitigated by increases in Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit.

Westminster City Council is launching the Rent Support Fund to help social housing tenants struggling with rent payments during the cost of living crisis.

The Council's Rent Support Fund has been created specifically to help those in financial difficulty. The money will be used to cover some or all the upcoming rent increases for households who are not entitled to Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. Tenants who are eligible for full benefits will receive the full rebate in their Housing Benefit or Universal Credit payments.

If you need assistance, please register your interest by scanning the QR code or following the link below and an income officer will contact you.

We anticipate that there will be high demand for this fund, so we will aim to get back to you within 10 working days following.

www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/tenants/rent-and-service-charges/rent-support-fund



What is the average service charges this year?

The service charge will vary depending on the size of your property and some of the specific charges delivered to your block and estate. The table below outlines the average base service charge.

Bedroom	2022/2023		2023/2024		Variance
	AVERAGE BASE SERVICE CHARGE				
0	£	152.29	£	163.21	7.17%
1	£	146.75	£	158.40	7.94%
2	£	306.50	£	327.86	6.97%
3	£	401.31	£	428.13	6.68%
4	£	498.44	£	529.86	6.30%

If you are finding it difficult to pay your rent and service charge then it is important to contact us as soon as possible, our friendly income team are here to help. The sooner you contact us, the sooner we can help you.

Contact details: Telephone **0800 358 3783** Email: housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk

Book a 20 minute online appointment

You can now book a 20 minute online appointment to discuss your rent and service charges with one of our income advisors.

Every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday you can book between the hours of 9am to 5pm.

Every Wednesday you can book between the hours of 9am to 8pm.

Once you have booked your appointment you will receive an email to confirm your upcoming booking on Microsoft Teams. You can manage your booking, reschedule, or cancel your appointment at any time.

Please join the meeting via the Teams link you receive, we will call you after ten minutes of your appointment time if you have not joined the call.

Please provide a summary of what you would like to discuss regarding your rent or service charge to help us to prepare for your appointment.

Book a 20 minute appointment now by scanning the QR code or follow the link below

www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/tenants/rent-and-service-charges/book-20-minute-online-appointment



Cost of living support hub

The cost of living crisis is affecting us all. We have found that around a quarter of households in Westminster, more than 31,000, face a serious reduction in living standards due to rising costs, such as fuel, energy bills and food. The information provided here can help you with everything from accessing government financial aid to finding local advice services. Whatever hardships you're facing, we're here to help.



For further information, scan the QR code or follow the link below.

www.westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support

What other help is available

You can also call the following for advice:

- Citizens Advice Westminster - Advice Line 0808 278 7834
<https://www.westminstercab.org.uk/advice/online-enquiry/>
- National Debtline - Freephone 0808 808 4000
www.nationaldebtline.org
- Shelter – 0300 330 1234 (calls cost less than local rate)
www.england.shelter.org.uk
- Step Change - Freephone 0808 138 1111 808 4000
www.stepchange.org
- Debt Free London - Freephone 0800 808 5700 (24 hours a day)
www.debtfreeadvice.com

Contact us

If you have any queries in relation to your rent and service charges, or any other housing matter please contact us:

Telephone: 0800 358 3783 (freephone)

Email: housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk

North Area Service Centre - 1 Glasgow House, W9 1QY

<https://goo.gl/maps/4qbAm8kwjo75qj4e8>

West Area Service Centre - 155 Westbourne Terrace, W2 6JX

<https://goo.gl/maps/mNZkwKfLd4brdPDDA>

Central Area Service Centre - 24 Lilestone Street, NW8 8SR

<https://goo.gl/maps/oDnEQvMsLQuW59gr9>

South Area Service Centre - 137 Lupus Street, SW1V 3HE

<https://goo.gl/maps/yut3Det5ZSifQM8c7>