

The Highland Council

RENT CONSULTATION

CO-CHOMHAIRLEMAIL 2022/2023



Take part in this year's Rent Consultation.

We would like to start off this Rent Consultation by thanking all our tenants for their patience as we've adapted our services to meet the challenges of the ongoing pandemic.

This year, the rent consultation will commence on 1 November and run until 21 November 2021. The consultation will be mainly digital, though tenants also have the option to text their response and there will be a dedicated number to call if you want to discuss the proposals in more detail. We have produced a short video which explains the rent setting process – this can be accessed on the Highland Council web site.

www.highland.gov.uk/rentconsultation If you have any questions arising from the video, you can email us at tenant.participation@highland.gov.uk or call us on **07856 957056**

What happens next?

We will use the feedback received from tenants to prepare a report for Councillors to consider and agree the level of rent and service charges for council tenants for the year 2022/23.

We will write to you at least four weeks in advance to notify you of the new rent and service charges coming into effect for 2022/23.

How do our average rents compare now? (2021/22)



Everyone pays rent, even if you receive housing benefit, so it is important that we receive feedback from as many tenants as possible. If you have any questions about the consultation, please do get in touch on 07856 957056, or you can email tenant.participation@highland.gov.uk

Rent increase proposal for 2022/23

Moladh àrdachadh màil airson 2022/23

We are asking our tenants to select their preferred proposal for 2022/23. Details of the options can be found on page 3 of this leaflet along with ways to give your feedback.

Please take some time to consider our proposals and let us have your views.

Planned spend for 2022/2023

In **2022-23** we plan to spend the following:

Improvements to your homes. In 2022-23 we plan to invest **£19m** in our housing stock. **This is made up of £7.7m budgeted for 2022/23 and £11.3m to be carried forward from 2021/2022**

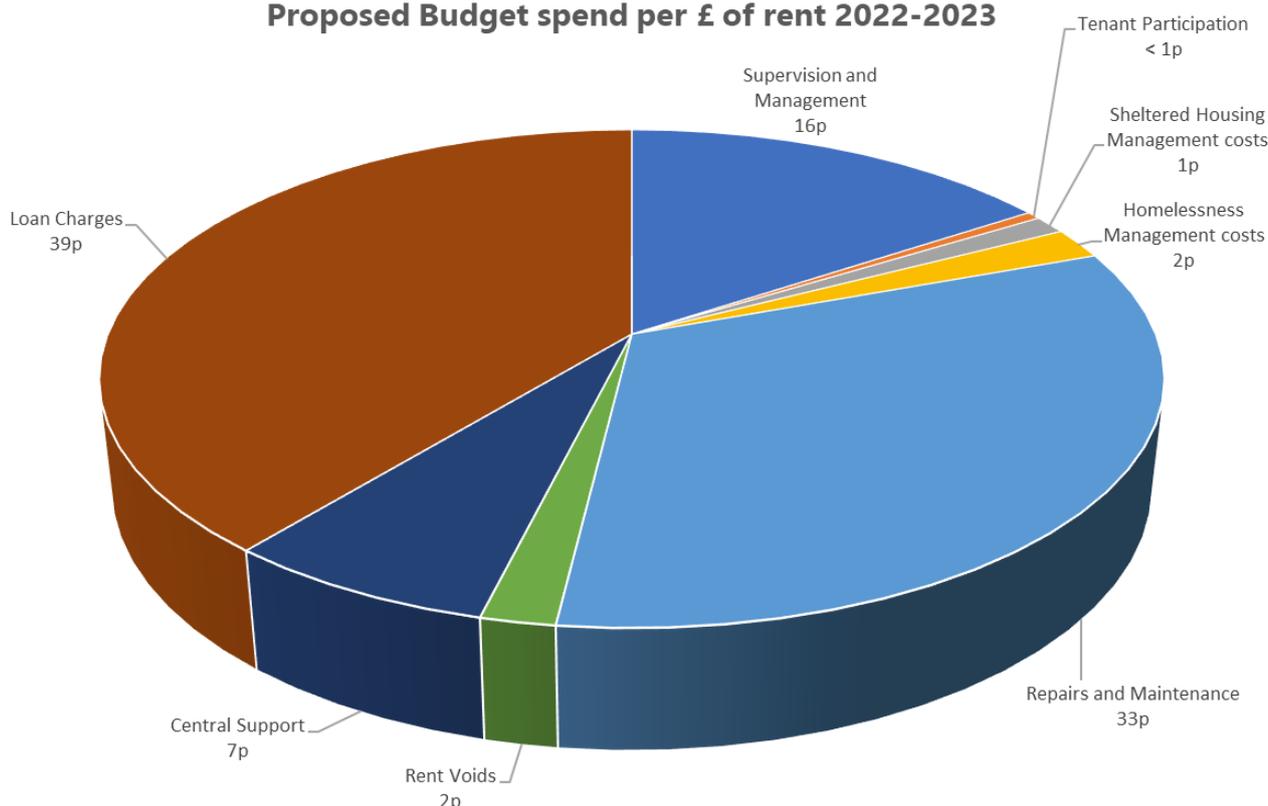
Planned work includes:

- **£1.1m** on adaptations such as walk-in showers
- **£5.7m** on upgrades/replacements which will include new bathrooms, new kitchens and new windows and doors
- **£9.6m** on energy efficiency works including new heating systems and properties being externally insulated
- **£2.6m** on external fabric works such as harling or roofing repairs/replacement

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated delays, it will not be possible to complete all works on the 2021/22 capital programme by March 2022. All previously planned works will still be carried out, but some will be included within the 2022-23 investment budget detailed above. We continue to prioritise the safety of our tenants, staff and contractors when carrying out any planned works.

The delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may have a knock-on effect on timescales for delivery of the planned 2022/2023 programme, although we are working hard to minimise these and deliver programmed works by March 2023.

Proposed Budget spend per £ of rent 2022-2023



Your Views Matter

We want to consult with you on the proposed annual rent increase for Highland Council's houses in 2022/23. We have outlined two options for rent charges for 2022/23 below:



Your rent options for 2022/23

*Based on the average weekly rate in 2021/22

Option 1.

Increase rents by 1%
Average increase of £0.79p per week*

This increase will effectively 'balance the books' and maintain current services and agreed levels of Capital spend

Option 2.

Increase rents by 1.5%
Average increase of £1.19 per week*

This increase will maintain current services and agreed level of Capital spend but will also generate an additional income of £280,000 to increase maintenance budget for cyclical maintenance, some of which would be identified through the Rate your Estate initiatives.

How will this affect my rent?

Size of property	Current average weekly rent	Option 1 1% increase	Difference +	Option 2 1.5% increase	Difference +
1 apartment	£67.22	£67.89	£0.67	£68.23	£1.01
2 apartment	£71.87	£72.59	£0.72	£72.95	£1.08
3 apartment	£79.02	£79.81	£0.79	£80.21	£1.19
4 apartment	£87.80	£88.68	£0.88	£89.12	£1.32
5 apartment	£97.96	£98.94	£0.98	£99.43	£1.47

Have Your Say

Our plans, and how we spend the budget, will have an impact on your home and your community.

We want to hear what you think.

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of the traditional forms of consultation are still unable to safely take place. This is our second 'digital' rent consultation, the first being last year when we received a higher number of responses than ever before!

To take part in the consultation, all you need to do is select one of the following ways to respond:

- **By Text:** **Option 1** or **Option 2** to **07856 957056**

This number will close at the end of the consultation.

- **Online:** by following the Survey Monkey Link or use the QR code

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HCRC22-23w>

- **By email:** tenant.participation@highland.gov.uk



If you are unable to respond using any of these options, please call 07856 957056 to speak to someone about the Rent Consultation.



As a thank you for taking the time to complete our rent consultation you will be entered into our prize draw. Two lucky winners will win £50 each in shopping vouchers!

Don't delay, give us your views today!

Thank you and good luck!