

## 2026/27 Rent consultation

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Date: **1<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

Dear Tenant

**We are writing to you to consult on next year's rent increase. Financial pressures and inflation, continue to be a challenge. To make sure we can deliver our services we have to increase rents for the 2026/27 financial year.**

Each year we review rents to make sure we can continue to deliver essential services, maintain homes to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and invest in improvements for the future. Rents have to increase to cover inflationary costs, increased cost of materials for repairs and maintenance, modernisation of our homes and new build developments.

Last financial year (2025/26) the rent increase allowed us to sustain service delivery but also make a £1m pound investment in the modernisation programme of our housing stock. Throughout this year we have taken steps to deliver on our commitment to:

- Make sure our properties meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, by replacing kitchens and bathrooms, carrying out energy efficiency measures, adding loft and wall insulation, replacing the heating systems and renewing doors and windows
- Ensure tenant safety, by carrying out regular safety checks and servicing to meet current and new legislation from the Scottish Government
- Carrying out extensions to meet changing needs
- Reducing the time taken to re-let empty properties
- Identifying alternative ways to make the best use of our housing stock, ensure compliance and deliver long term maintenance.

We are aware that the cost-of-living crisis continues to put pressure on many households. Although we are mindful of these challenges, we must balance them with the need to keep homes safe, secure and well maintained. Without increasing rents, we would not be able to continue delivering services at the level you would expect.

### Have your say

Each year we are required to consult with individual tenants, tenants and residents' groups and East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel on any proposals to increase rents. Details of this process are shared on our website at <https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/rent-consultation-26-27>

It's time for you to have your say on our proposed 2026/27 rent increase. The views of our tenants are a key part of the process; the more taking part – the more accurately they are represented. Please complete and return our rent consultation questionnaire, using the envelope provided, or online at [www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk](http://www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk) or scan the QR code **by 14<sup>th</sup> November 2025**.



Yours sincerely Wendy McGuire, Head of Housing



## How each £1 of rent is spent (based on the 2025-26 average weekly rent)

Our services (maintaining and improving existing council houses and building new ones) are paid for with tenants' rent. \*

4p Voids and Bad Debts	9p Employee Costs
17p Operating Costs	32p Repairs and Maintenance
38p for borrowing costs which pays for our modernisation and new build	

**This equates to 70p in every £1 going towards investing in our stock.**

*\*Rent income is paid into our Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Scottish Government provides clear guidance on what councils can spend it on: it must be used to provide services which benefit tenants and cannot be used to pay for services other than housing.*

## Improvements in more detail

Tenants' needs are changing with an increase in our older population resulting in more demand for accessible housing. We are also seeing an increase in demand for larger properties, our young people are struggling to secure their own accommodation as demand for affordable housing far outweighs supply. To meet these changing needs, we have our new build programme but are also having to adapt and extend more existing homes to help meet demand.

All this improvement work is funded by our **Capital Investment Programme**, where we have committed to building 600 new build houses between 2023/24 and 2028/29, as well as making sure we bring our existing properties up to standard.

Last year we completed:

- 147 kitchens
- 569 bathrooms
- 16 rewires
- 724 window and/or door replacements
- 473 energy efficiency measures
- 14 extensions.

Our programmes are closely monitored throughout the year and may change if a need has been identified or when a programme must be prioritised.

This year we are on target to spend our approved 2025/26 budget and in some areas to perform better than we had originally planned.

We are also on target to accelerate our window and door programme as a result of the additional £1m pounds.

We know that energy efficiency is important to you and our **Energy Efficiency Fund** will deliver:

- replacement heating systems
- increased loft insulation, where a need is identified
- wall insulation to council housing within mixed tenure blocks (some properties may also be owned or privately rented)
- a number of roof and rendering projects where the condition is affecting energy efficiency.