

Rent-Setting Questionnaire results

56 tenants responded to the rent-setting questionnaire and the results are as follows:

Question 1

Do you agree that it is fair to set rents mainly by property size (number of bedrooms) and the type (flat/house)

	Yes	No	Blank
Lanarkshire	60%	28%	12%
Ayrshire	76.9%	23%	0%
Glasgow	64.2%	35.7%	0%

The majority of respondents believed rents to be set fairly in accordance with the number of rooms and property type. However, others considered the following factors to be important. Our response to these suggestions is provided below

Issue	Feedback from WSHA
Income/financial circumstances	We do have to keep our rents affordable and eligible for Housing Benefit.
Property condition	We have the flexibility to adjust individual rents if a property is not in good condition: more than 94% of our homes meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and we continue to prioritise investment in properties needing improvements.
Rent comparisons with other landlords	We do compare our rents with other social landlords and our average rents are middle of the range.
Number of rooms and property type	This is our preferred method for setting rents.
Next door neighbour pays less for the same size of property	Rents can vary which is the main reason for introducing changes to the way we will set rents in the future. However, there may still be differences. For example, between Fair Rents (set by the Rent Officer) and Scottish Secure Rents.
Should depend on the land the property is set on e.g. 3 - 4 bedroom house is set on more land than a block of flats which is occupied by 12 people.	We don't plan to increase rents based on the amount of land attached to a property. Although common land, for example surrounding some flats will often be our responsibility to maintain, the cost of this is met with a service charge in addition to the rent. The garden belonging to a house is

private and will be the responsibility of the tenant to maintain.

Question 2

Are there any other property aspects that you think should be considered when setting rents?

	Yes	No	Blank
Lanarkshire	12%	28%	60%
Ayrshire	15.3%	30.7%	53.8%
Glasgow	14.2%	0%	85.7%

Income and financial position were mentioned and our response would be the same as the one given in the previous table. Other issues mentioned were:

Issue	Feedback from WSHA
Length of time lived in the property	It would not be possible to vary rents depending on tenancy duration; our rents have to reflect the characteristics of the property, not the circumstances of the tenant.
Affordability	Whilst our rents are set to be affordable, we cannot vary a rent for a tenant's individual circumstances.
The condition of the area	This can be very subjective and depends on what people think is important, so it would be difficult to set rents on this basis.
Housing type e.g. sheltered housing	Our sheltered service costs may be higher to reflect additional costs of management and services but rents are broadly similar to mainstream housing.
The age of the building (wear and tear)	We take account of the condition of a property when setting priorities for our planned maintenance. Costs for maintenance come from the rental income across all our housing.
Distance to and from amenities	This can be very subjective depending on what amenities a tenant uses and it would be unfair to set rents using this criteria.
Should be the same rent for old and new properties i.e. irrespective of the age of the property.	The new rent setting policy takes account of property age and type. Age criteria are not used, although we can reduce a rent if it is in poor condition.

Question 3

There are 4 types of property we are proposing to use to set rents. They are:

1. Tenement/flat/4 in a block
2. Mid terrace
3. End terrace/ semi-detached
4. Detached

Do you think this is sufficient?

	Yes	No	Blank
Lanarkshire	72%	20%	12%
Ayrshire	76.9%	15.3%	7.6%
Glasgow	64.2%	14.2%	21.4%

No further comment was given by tenants on this question.

Question 4

Is there anything else you would like to comment on concerning the rent setting proposals?

Issue	Feedback from WSHA
Concerns about having to give up flat if rents were increased	We are introducing greater fairness because the rent restructuring will help tenants who are in properties with higher rents and above the target rent. If you have concerns about your rent please do contact us for advice.
Lack of amenities within the area	This can be difficult to assess, as everyone has different views, which is why we no longer consider this aspect.
Low wages and not qualifying for benefits	Whilst we cannot adjust the rent charge for a tenant's circumstances, we do try to provide support for tenants in financial difficulty; so please do contact us. We have experts who can assess your situation and provide help.
Concerns about differences in Local Authority rents in comparison with WSHA rents.	Housing Association rents can be higher than Local Authority rents. This may be because we have borrowed money to fund new homes or we don't have the same economies of scale as a larger landlord. The costs we need to meet from rents are often different to Local Authorities.
Rental increases should be the same as benefit/pension increases.	When we set rents we take account of the Consumer Price Index, which is used by the

	Government when uprating benefits.
The median income of an area should be considered.	We do take account of the rents other social landlords are charging in an area.
Every home should be judged separately i.e. location, size, type, condition.	Every home is assessed by us according to its size and property type.
Maintenance (new windows)required	Please let us know if you have any maintenance concerns. WestWorld will give details of our window replacement and other planner maintenance programmes for 2017/18
Rents should be in line with Local Authorities rents.	We will compare our rents with other landlords but need to make sure that each year we are covering our costs.

Useful contacts

Our **Welfare Rights Team** is here to assist you should you experience difficulties in paying your rent or service charges.

For confidential advice and assistance please contact the Team on **0141 550 5662**

If you need advice and support in relation to your on fuel bills or personal debts please contact our **Money Advice or Energy Advice Services** on **0141 550 5664**