

## RENT CONSULTATION 2022/23



We received 88 responses to our recent consultation on rent levels for 2022/23. A big thank you to all tenants who responded. We entered the names of all tenants who replied into a prize draw for £50 of High Street vouchers, this was won by a tenant in Kenilworth Road – congratulations!

This response rate was 10.8% of all tenants. This is broadly similar to the response rate last year. It also means that around 725 tenants did not respond to the consultation, so we don't know their views on the proposed rent increase.

This year as well as the consultation document being sent by post to all tenants, we also sent the survey via text or e-mail where we hold such contact details for tenants. This provides a quick and easy way for tenants respond. If you did not receive the survey by text or e-mail and would like to receive future communications from us this way, please get in touch with the office and give us your mobile phone number or e-mail address.

The question we asked in the consultation was;

I want Hillhead Housing Association to maintain investment in homes and services by increasing rents by inflation (CPI at 4.2%).	
I do not agree with the proposal to increase rents by inflation (CPI at 4.2%).	

The results from the 88 tenants who responded were as follows;

<b>Agree</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>45.45%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>54.55%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	

Of the 88 who responded, 51 are self-payers, 12 are in receipt of partial Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (HB / UC) and 24 are in receipt of full HB / UC. One response did not allow us to identify the benefit status of the tenant. However, it is not the case that those on benefits always agreed with the increase, nor did self-payers always disagree with the increase. A detailed analysis is shown below.

Agree	Full HB/UC	13
	Part HB/UC	8
	Self-payer	19
Disagree	Full HB/UC	11
	Part HB/UC	4
	Self-payer	32
		87



The consultation also asked for comments where tenants disagreed with the proposal. We received a wide range of views and responses, and all of these were passed to our Management Committee in full for them to be considered when the final decision was taken on this year's rent review.

As you may expect many comments were in relation to the varied effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on individual households, the community and the Housing Association. A significant number of comments also made reference to the rising cost of living generally, and energy and food costs in particular.

The Management Committee thought long and hard over the results of the consultation. Many commented that they found this one of the toughest decisions they had taken on the Hillhead Committee. They also looked at the financial plans that seek to ensure that the Association remains in sound financial health over the longer term and can continue to invest in its homes and services. It is critical that the Association has enough rental income to be able to repay the loans it took out to significantly improve or replace the housing stock when the Association was set up.

The current economic situation is extremely challenging both for individuals and for businesses. Inflation is at a rate not seen for a generation. The rent consultation was based on an inflation rate of 4.2%, but inflation is now even higher at 5.5% and looks set to remain high for the remainder of the year. That means that the price the Association pays for materials, goods and services may well increase at that rate. We need to have the ability to pay for those things in order to continue to deliver high quality services to our tenants.

We are proud of the changes that we have brought about in the community through careful financial management. Most recently the large-scale environmental improvement works, which many tenants had told us was really important to them, delivered £1.4 million of investment without having to increase rents by higher amounts.



Based on this the Management Committee of the Association made the decision that rents would go up by 4.2% in the coming financial year. Individual letters will be issued to all tenants by the end of February 2022 providing exact details of the new charge from 28 March 2022 for their property.

We are aware that the UK & Scottish Governments are putting in place measures to seek to ease the burden of increased costs for households and we support these efforts. We will also actively seek opportunities to bid for funding to help support the Hillhead community, and build on our successful track record in this area. For example, we have just been awarded £18,800 from the Cash for Kids / Scottish Government Winter Fund to support children affected by poverty. As is often the case with such funds, bids must come from community groups rather than individuals. The Association is well placed to take advantage of these types of opportunities.

A big thank you again to all those tenants who took the time to talk to us, comment on Facebook or complete the consultation document either on paper or online.



The logo for Hillhead Housing Association features a green wavy line above the word "Hillhead" in a large, bold, black serif font. Below "Hillhead" is a blue wavy line, followed by the words "HOUSING ASSOCIATION" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the tagline "Building on progress for a brighter Hillhead" is written in a black, sans-serif font.  
**Hillhead**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
Building on progress for a brighter Hillhead