

Rent Charge changes from 6 April 2020

Target Rents

The government set out a process for setting a target rent for all social housing. Councils and housing associations were encouraged to move towards these target rent levels each year, to ensure a more consistent approach to setting social rents.

New Rent Standard

A new rent standard was published by the government's housing regulator in May 2019, effective from April 2020. Under the new rent standard, the maximum 2020-21 permitted rent is; the 2019-20 actual rent plus Consumer Price Index (CPI) 1.7% (September 2019) plus 1%.

Changes to rent and service charges for 2020

Changes to rent charges from 6 April 2020 have been calculated in accordance with the new rent standard. Your rent will increase by the CPI (1.7%) plus 1%, unless your rent has reached or exceeded either the lower of the national target rent or national rent cap, in which case it will increase by CPI (1.7%) only or up to the appropriate cap.

The average weekly rent for Islington Council managed properties is increasing by £2.90 (plus 2.68%).

How much should I pay from 6 April 2020?

The new charges are shown in your rent charge change letter.

The total weekly charges amount does not include any charges for parking/storage facilities and Housing Benefit entitlement (where applicable). The full breakdown of charges will be on your next rent statement which you will receive by the end of March 2020.

Service Charges

On an annual 52 week basis, the weekly tenant service charge for caretaking and estate services increases from £15.46 to £16.06, up 60p per week. Charges have increased by 3.9 % to cover inflationary increase in respect to the pay award, salary increments, utility costs and other running costs.

From 6 April 2020 the charges are as follows:

	Weekly Charge
Caretaking	£10.54
Estate Services	£5.52*
*Estate Services include communal lighting, repairs and grounds maintenance.	

Refund Policy

A refund is paid for total loss of the caretaking service where there has been a total loss of the caretaking service for more than five consecutive working days. The refund rate from 6 April 2020 will be £2.49 per day from the sixth working day of the service loss until the restoration of the service. Refunds will be paid into tenants' rent accounts (after any Housing Benefit adjustment). Tenants can request a refund by contacting tenancy services at **HomesandCommunities@islington.gov.uk** or on **020 7527 5300**.

Digital TV

Following the switch off of the analogue television transmission in April 2012, the council installed digital TV aerials to enable the switch over to digital TV. The council introduced a new charge in 2008/9 for tenants to cover the installation and on-going maintenance costs of digital television. The charge period per property for installation and ongoing maintenance costs is ten years. Following the end of the ten-year period this charge will stop and a new charge will apply for ongoing maintenance costs only.

The new charge came into effect on 1 April 2019, and the weekly charges are as follows:

	Current	New
Installation and ongoing maintenance	£0.33	£0.34
Ongoing maintenance only	£0.20	£0.20

Concierge Charges

For tenants that receive a concierge and CCTV service there are four levels of charging based on the below criteria of where a resident lives:

Category A	In the same block as the concierge and uses the access which is covered by the concierge office
Category B	On the same estate as the concierge, but not falling within category A
Category C	Remote (multiple cameras)
Category D	Remote (a smaller number of cameras)

Charges have increased by 13% to cover inflation and reflect the true cost of the service.

Weekly charges from 6 April 2020 are as follows:

Category A	£14.40
Category B	£10.81
Category C	£6.50
Category D	£2.04

Parking Charges

Parking charges will increase in line with inflation in 2020/21 (2.4% Retail Price Index (RPI) at September 2019). Charges are based on a vehicle's carbon emissions and engine size.

The charges for **2020/21** are shown in the table below:

	EMISSION BANDS			
CARBON EMISSION and ENGINE SIZES:	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D
Carbon CO2 Rating G/km (Grams per kilometre)	0 - 120	121 - 150	151 - 185	186+
Engine Size CC (Cylinder Capacity)	0 - 1,100	1,101 - 1,399	1,400 - 1,850	1,851+
	WEEKLY CHARGES (£)			
Standard Charges for Rent and Service Charge Payers:				
Garage	10.24	20.47	20.47	22.52
Car Cage	4.78	9.57	9.57	10.53
Parking Space	2.62	5.22	5.22	5.74
Internal Garage	7.07	14.10	14.10	15.52
Garages Used For Non-Vehicle Storage	-	-	-	22.52
Non-Rent and Service Charge Payers:				
Garage	21.33	42.61	42.61	46.84
Car Cage	10.00	19.92	19.92	21.91
Parking Space	5.86	12.49	12.49	17.19
Garages Used For Non-Vehicle Storage	-	-	-	46.84

When parking permits or garage letting agreements are renewed, we will check the vehicle emission band to make sure you are being charged the right amount. We will write to let you know if there are any changes. Concessions for Islington Blue Badge parking permit holders will remain the same, i.e. 50% or 100% depending on qualification criteria.

In addition to weekly estate parking charges, a levy of £120.00 per year (£2.30 per week) will be charged for all vehicles that use diesel fuel.

Charges are applicable from Monday 6 April 2020. All tenants renting a parking facility will receive a separate letter detailing their specific charges.

The council is also continuing its policy to reduce estate parking charges by one band for registered taxi (black cab) drivers, to reflect that they have little choice in the vehicle they use. Parking is still free for electric vehicles on estates.

Heating Charges

There will be no increase in heating charges for 2020/21. Although gas supply cost are expected to increase, the gas pool has been used to absorb this increase, so we can freeze heating charges for the fourth consecutive year at 2016/17 rates. There are some blocks that receive heating but no hot water from the communal system. These blocks will receive a 40% discount.

Rent Statements

The next rent statement will be sent out in March and will include a full breakdown of the rent charges applicable from Monday 6 April 2020, as well as details of Housing Benefit entitlement (where applicable).

Residents should receive their rent statement and new payment calendar to record their payments by the end of March 2020.

If you need help working out the weekly amount you need to pay, contact the income recovery team (contact details on the back page).

Housing Benefit

Tenants who receive Housing Benefit will receive a letter from the Benefits Service that will give details of the new benefit entitlement and the revised amount that should be paid each week. For Housing Benefit applications or enquiries please call **020 7527 4990**, or to download an application form, visit **www.islington.gov.uk/benefits-and-support** and this can be printed at your local library.

If you are making a new claim for Housing Benefit and are of working age you may need to claim Universal Credit instead.

Universal Credit

Tenants who receive Universal Credit must inform the Department for Work and Pensions of any changes in their rent charges. You can report this change by signing into your Universal Credit account online or calling the helpline **0800 328 5644**.

Direct Debit Payers

Residents who pay by Direct Debit will receive a letter setting out the revised payment details with effect from Monday 6 April 2020.

Support to help you cope with rent payments

If you are worried about how you are going to cope with rent payments, or loss of income from government benefits changes, please get in touch. We can help.

Please do not ignore your rent payments.

Get in touch with the Income Recovery Teams at income.recovery@islington.gov.uk or call 020 7527 5300 and they will help you make arrangements to manage your rent.

Paying your rent by Direct Debit



The easiest way to pay your rent is by Direct Debit. Most bank or building society accounts including basic bank accounts can be used to make payments by Direct Debit. Some of the advantages of paying by Direct Debit are:

- Payments are made for you by your bank or building society
- No queuing at the post office or other pay points
- Your payments will be received on time each month
- No paperwork or postage costs

Switch to paying your rent by Direct Debit for the first time and we will credit your rent account with a £10 payment for switching.

Find out more at [**www.islington.gov.uk/rent**](http://www.islington.gov.uk/rent)

**Do you need this information
in another language or reading
format such as Braille, large print,
audio or Easy Read?**

Please contact:

Income Recovery Team

@ income.recovery@islington.gov.uk

📞 020 7527 5300