



RENT SETTING POLICY – SPECIALISED SUPPORTED HOUSING

1. Introduction

This policy sets out how Citizen sets the rents for homes that it owns which form part of Specialised Supported Housing (sometimes referred to as ‘Exempt Supported Housing’). How we set our service charges is set out in our Service Charge Policy.

The Government has powers granted by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 to issue directions to the Regulator to set out the rent regime for Housing Associations. This policy meets the requirements of our Regulator, Homes England, as set out in its National Standards and in particular the “[Rent Standard 2020](#)” and “[Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing](#)”.

Where applicable, Citizen sets its rents in line with the regulatory guidance as issued and as updated by the regulator.

We are committed to the following objectives in how rent and other charges are set:

- To provide affordable accommodation providing value for money for customers.
- To meet statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations when setting rents
- To ensure that all tenants and licencees are advised clearly at the start of their tenancy or licence, what their rent is and any service charges that apply.
- To ensure that any change to rents charged is clearly communicated to tenants and licencees, ensuring that proper notice is provided in line with our statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to how rents are set on Specialised Supported Housing owned by Citizen. This includes homes where customers pay rents on homes owned by us to a managing agent acting on our behalf.

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Date: February 2022

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3. Policy Detail

3.1 Definition of Specialised Supported Housing

The 'Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing' defines 'supported housing' as being low cost rental accommodation provided by a registered provider that:

- (a) is made available only in conjunction with the supply of support;
- (b) is made available exclusively to households including a person who has been identified as needing that support; and
- (c) falls into one or both of the following categories—
 - (i) accommodation that has been designed, structurally altered or refurbished in order to enable residents with support needs to live independently; and
 - (ii) accommodation that has been designated as being available only to individuals within an identified group with specific support needs.

The definition of 'support' includes:

- sheltered accommodation
- extra care housing
- domestic abuse refuges
- accommodation for the homeless
- support for people with drug or alcohol problems
- support for people with mental health problems
- support for people with learning disabilities
- support for people with disabilities
- support for offenders and people at risk of offending
- support for young people leaving care
- support for teenage parents
- support for refugees

'Specialised Supported Housing' is defined as being supported housing ;

- (a) which is designed, structurally altered, refurbished or designated for occupation by, and made available to, residents who require specialised services or support in order to enable them to live, or to adjust to living, independently within the community;
- (b) which offers a high level of support, which approximates to the services or support which would be provided in a care home, for residents for whom the only acceptable alternative would be a care home;
- (c) which is provided by a private registered provider under an agreement or arrangement with a local authority or a health service (within the meaning of the National Health Service Act 2006);
- (d) for which the rent charged, or to be charged, complies with the agreement or arrangement mentioned in paragraph (c); and
- (e) in respect of which at least one of the following conditions is satisfied:
 - i. there was no, or negligible, public assistance, or

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- ii. there was public assistance by means of a loan (secured by means of a charge or a mortgage against a property).

3.2 New lettings and Re-Lets

Specialised Supported Housing is exempt from the mandatory application of the 2020 Rent Standard.

Rents for new lets on “Specialised Supported Housing” properties owned by Citizen are calculated in the first instance in accordance with the guidance in the 2020 Rent Standard applicable for supported housing. The calculated rent is then used as the basis for discussion and negotiation between Citizen and the relevant commissioning body.

Regulations allow for a property’s formula rent to have an upward tolerance applied of 10% if the accommodation is supported housing. Citizen has process in place to utilise this flexibility. The use of this flexibility has been considered and approval has been given by the Citizen board to utilise the tolerance with the ability to disapply the tolerance if inclusion of the tolerance would make a scheme unaffordable.

3.3 Rent reviews

Rent reviews take place on an annual basis, and are based on an uplift of CPI + 1%, with CPI being the rate published by the Office of National Statistics for the previous September. Each rent review is supported by a detailed implementation and audit plan to ensure that revised rents are applied appropriately.

The rent review process will ensure that customers are informed of any changes in rent in accordance with the requirement of their agreements and regulation.

These changes will be communicated in a clear and concise format and we have process in place to allow customers to ask for further information on the changes.

4. Roles, responsibility and authority

It is the responsibility of the Board to seek assurance that this policy is successfully implemented. The Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy and that all staff understand the importance of this policy, the related procedures and that they comply with them.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that their team have undertaken the appropriate Policy eLearning and training.

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Any changes to this policy must be made in line with the requirements set out in Citizen's Standing Orders and our Policy framework.

5. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, unless legislation, service delivery or sector developments require otherwise ensuring the policy continues to meet its objectives and take account of good practice developments.

Legal advice will be taken as required to ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and contractual responsibilities, particularly in respect of the content of the various rent increase letters that we send to our customers.

6. Equality Impact assessment

This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. Staff working across Citizen have considered the impact of this policy on different groups and communities that we work with. In framing this policy, our staff are committed to not discriminate adversely against any group and will respect the diversity of the communities we are working within.

7. Version Control

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENTS	APPROVED AT/BY	REVIEW
V 1.0	Nov 2020	Policy updated to Citizen brand format	Board	Nov 2023
V2.0	February 2022	Updated to refer to the Policy Statement on Setting Rents for Social Housing and improve presentation.	Board	March 2025

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