

## **Annual rent changes**

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Currently, a majority of Universal Credit claimants rent from Social Rented Sector landlords, which consist of local authorities and housing associations. There are around 380 local authorities and 1,700 registered social landlords in housing associations.

Under the 'Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016', registered providers of social housing in England are required to reduce social housing rents by 1% a year for 4 years from starting point of financial year 2015/16. This does not apply in Scotland and Wales, where rents can continue to increase.

Currently, around 90 per cent of social housing providers make changes to rents in line with the financial year, at the beginning of April. This means high volumes of Social Rented Sector claimants are likely to have changes to their rent every April. These tenants report changes to their housing costs through their account and reporting a change of circumstance.

Tenants may be advised by their landlords of rent changes in advance of the advised date. Universal Credit Full Service does not accept rent changes reported in advance of the effective date of change. Claimants must be advised to report changes once they take effect.

[Back to top](#)