GROUP RENT POLICY

Rural Stirling Housing Association, Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849 Venachar Limited, Incorporated under the Companies Act (Company Number SC447415), Registered Office: Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA	
Policy Name	Group Rent Policy
Policy Category	Housing Services
Date Policy Reviewed	November 2025
Review Period	5 years
Next Review Due	November 2030
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Rural Stirling Group (RSG) aims to provide high quality affordable housing for rent and low-cost home ownership within its area of operation.

1.2 This policy sets out the key principles of our rent setting framework and methodology.

2.0 Objectives

2.1 The Objectives of the policy are:

- To ensure that our rent setting methodology is transparent, fair and easy to understand.
- To ensure that rents are affordable .
- To ensure that rents are in line with rents charged by other providers of similar properties.
- To ensure that rental income is sufficient to meet the costs of delivering the service.

3.0 Equality & Diversity Statement

3.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. In implementing this policy, we will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other grounds. Our commitment to equality and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation..

This policy and any other Rural Stirling Group (RSG) publication is available in other formats e.g., other languages, Braille, large print, audio.

4.0 SHR Regulatory Standards

4.1 The SHR's regulatory framework sets out Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management to be achieved by all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Board accepts that it is responsible for ensuring that the Association complies with these standards. The standards of direct relevance to this policy are noted below:

Standard 1: The Governing Body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
Standard 2: The RSL is open and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.

Standard 3: The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.

5.0 Relevant Legislation

- Under the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 the association is responsible for setting rent levels for properties within its ownership and for consulting with the residents involved.
- Social Housing Charter: The Scottish Government, through the Social Housing Charter, sets the outcomes it expects social landlords to achieve for its residents.
- In terms of how rent and service charges are applied the relevant Social Housing Charter indicators include:
    - Outcome 13 – Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.
    - Outcome 14 – Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that a balance is struck between the cost of services, and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them.
    - Outcome 15 – Tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including any details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.
- Good Practice: The SFHA Rent Setting Guidance and Affordability Tool has been taken into account in development of this policy.

6.0 Affordability

6.1 The Rent Policy aims to take account of the social and economic profile of applicants, producing rent levels which are affordable to those in low paid work, who are not wholly dependent on Universal Credit or Housing Benefit.

6.2 Best practice approaches are used to assess affordability of rent, which include;

- comparisons with peer landlord rents
- feedback from tenants (tenant satisfaction surveys)
- sustainability of tenancies / offer refusals; and
- the SFHA's Affordability Tool.

7.0 Cost Considerations

7.1 We will use our agreed annual budget and long-term financial projections as the basis for costs required to be met from rental income.

7.2 These will include:

- Management costs
- Maintenance (reactive and cyclical)
- Major repairs provision
- Loan repayments
- Component Replacement Programme

7.3 Rents will be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting and business planning process in light of updated information regarding costs, affordability and comparability and will be subject to tenant consultation.

8.0 Rent Setting Methodology

8.1 A comprehensive review of our rent and service charge structure was conducted by independent housing consultants during 2024/25. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the charging framework to tenants is fair, transparent, and financially sustainable, while taking into account tenant feedback and affordability considerations.

8.2 The rent calculation proposals contained within the consultant's final outcome report was approved by the Board in August 2025.

8.3 The review applied to our general needs properties and excluded our shared ownership, leased and mid-market rent properties. The key outcome from the review was a set of attributes that are used to determine rent levels and that traditional service charges such as stair cleaning and landscaping are incorporated into the rent charge rather than being charged separately. Details of our approach to rent setting and the methodology used are given in **Appendix 1**.

8.4 We will ensure that our rent setting model is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and fit for purpose.

8.5 Shared Ownership Occupancy Charges will be based on Scottish Government Guidance and reviewed as part of annual rent reviews. The current methodology used is detailed at **Appendix 2.**

8.6 Mid-market rents are set in line with the Local Housing Allowance for the Broad Rental Market Area (Forth Valley). Local Housing Allowances are based on the 30th percentile of rented accommodation.

9.0 Comparisons with Other Landlords

9.1 The Group will benchmark our rents with our Peer Group and publish this information annually as part of our Annual Performance Report. We will also closely monitor the equivalent rents set by other social landlords.

10.0 Related Documents

10.1 This policy links to the following related documents:

- Group Strategic Plan
- Annual Business Plan
- Annual Budget.
- Value for Money Statement

11.0 Review

11.1 We will review and update this policy every 5 years. More regular reviews will be considered where, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation/policy or regulatory guidance or when there is a need to comprehensively review our rent setting methodology and framework.

Appendix 1

Rent Setting Framework

The base level rent is £369.00 (a one double bedroom flat with no parking or garden).
To make up the total rent charge for any other type/size of property, an adjustment to the base rent will be made for the following 7 criteria:

Criteria 1: Size

Property Size and Person Size	Rent to be added or subtracted
1 Room 1 Person (Bedsit)	-£60.00
1 Bedroom 1 Person	-£20.00
1 Bedroom 2 Person	0
2 Bedroom 2 Person	+£45.00
2 Bedroom 3 Person	+£50.00
2 Bedroom 4 Person	+£55.00
3 Bedroom 3 Person	+£65.00
3 Bedroom 4 Person	+£70.00
3 Bedroom 5 Person	+£75.00
3 Bedroom 6 Person	+£80.00
4 Bedroom 5 Person	+£100.00
4 Bedroom 6 Person	+£110.00
5 Bedroom 5 Person	+£130.00
5 Bedroom 7 Person	+£135.00
5 Bedroom 9 Person	+£140.00
6 Bedroom 7 Person	+£160.00

Criteria 2: Property Type and Garden Type

Property and Garden Type	Rent to be added
Flat, shared access, no garden	0
Flat, shared access, shared garden	+£10.00
Four in a block, with no garden	+£25.00
Four in a block with shared garden	+£35.00
Four in a block with private garden	+£50.00
Terraced or semi-detached house with a private garden	+£70.00
Detached house with a private garden	+£85.00

Criteria 3: Energy Efficiency

EPC Rating	Rent to be added or subtracted
A	+£20.00
B	+£10.00
C	0
D	-£10.00

Criteria 4: Parking

Private Driveway	Rent to be added
Yes	+£20.00
No	0

Criteria 5: Stair Cleaning

Stair Cleaning Service	Rent to be added
Yes	+£3.25
No	0

Criteria 6: Location

Rurality	Rent to be subtracted
Very Remote Rural or Tyndrum	-£10.00
Rural	0

Criteria 7: Estate Maintenance

Estate Maintenance	Rent to be added
Yes	+£0.08
No	0

Appendix 2

Calculation of Occupancy Charges for Sharing Owners

The Group calculates sharing owners' occupancy charges using the method of calculation given below. This has been based on the method for calculating net rental income for HAG (Housing Association Grant) calculation purposes. The occupancy charges are uprated annually in line with the rent review.

The calculation is as follows:

Scottish Secure Tenancy Rent Equivalent
Less Maintenance Allowance
And
Less Management Allowance

= Basic occupancy charge

Multiplied by

Occupancy charge as per Tranche (i.e. 25%, 50% or 75%)

Plus Management Fee

= Occupancy charge payable.