

West Dunbartonshire Council

2024-25 Rent setting consultation

Wednesday 15 November 2023
Brock Meeting Room, Church Street, Dumbarton.
1.00 pm – 2.30 pm

Key achievements

Increasing housing supply

More Homes West Dunbartonshire has delivered over 500 new council homes and established the Council as the largest social housing developer in West Dunbartonshire



Latest completion at Queens Quay in September 2022, delivering 29 new Council homes as part of wider development delivering 146 new homes for social rent



Key achievements

Continuing to improve housing services

New key housing policies implemented include our new Local Housing Strategy, updated Domestic Abuse policy and updated Housing Allocations policy



We were again awarded Gold Accreditation for Excellence in Tenant Participation from TPAS Scotland



Key achievements

Continuing to invest and improve housing services



Good progress reducing time taken to re-let properties and overall number of empty properties

Consistent high rate of tenancy sustainability including our Housing First initiative

Introduction of a mobile app for Housing Officers to enable real-time community based working

The delivery of a more proactive and visible anti-social behavior services

Restarted our joint community and service Estate Walkabout's within our communities

Enhanced Capital Investment Programme for 2023/24

Delivering £50m additional investment over 5 years

- £30m to accelerate existing renewal and replacement programmes and new CCTV provision in high flats
- £10m increase to the Council's Buy Back scheme further increasing housing supply
- £10m to accelerate a programme to eliminate damp and mould from tenants' homes

Enhanced Capital Investment Programme for 2023/24

Buy Back Scheme Case Study

- WDC purchased a lower 4-in-a-block property in a block that already contained 3 other WDC properties
- This facilitated capital improvement work to be carried out that had been blocked by previous owner
- Property was subsequently allocated to an existing WDC tenant with medical needs who had been housebound at times

Enhanced Capital Investment Programme for 2023/24

Tackling damp and mould

- Technology to provide a proactive approach to tackling damp and mould in our homes
- Allows the tracking of temperature, humidity and air quality
- Housing staff would have access to the dashboard to help them provide both informed support to tenants
- Tenant mobile app will provide tenants with real time information to help manage their home and any related damp and mould risk

Key challenges

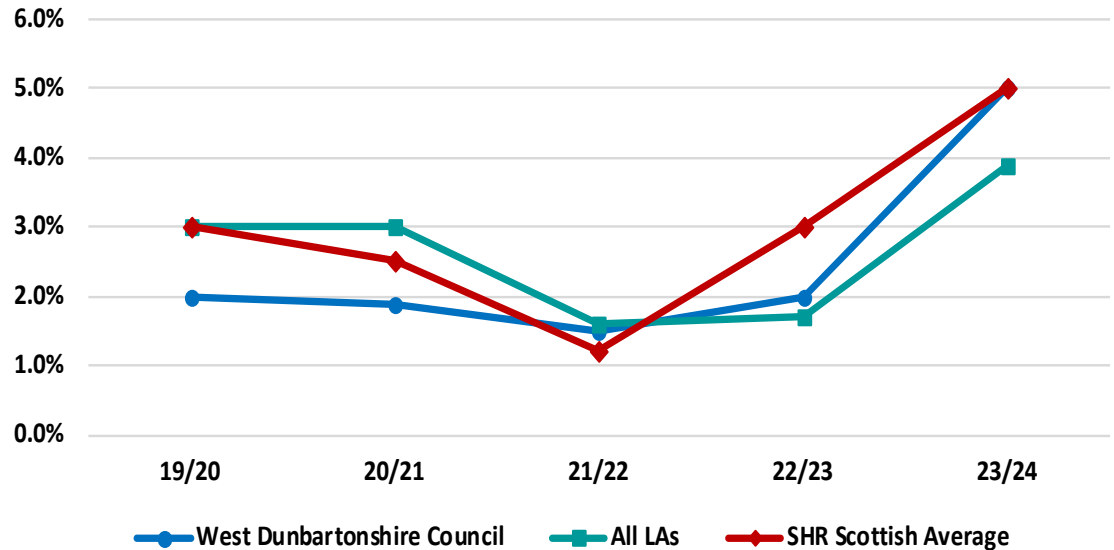
- Increased demand for support from communities exacerbated by the ongoing increased cost of living – employed income maximisation officers dedicated to supporting WDC tenants



- Operational challenges around voids now impacting access to housing and increasing demand on temporary accommodation
- Rising costs for all goods and services

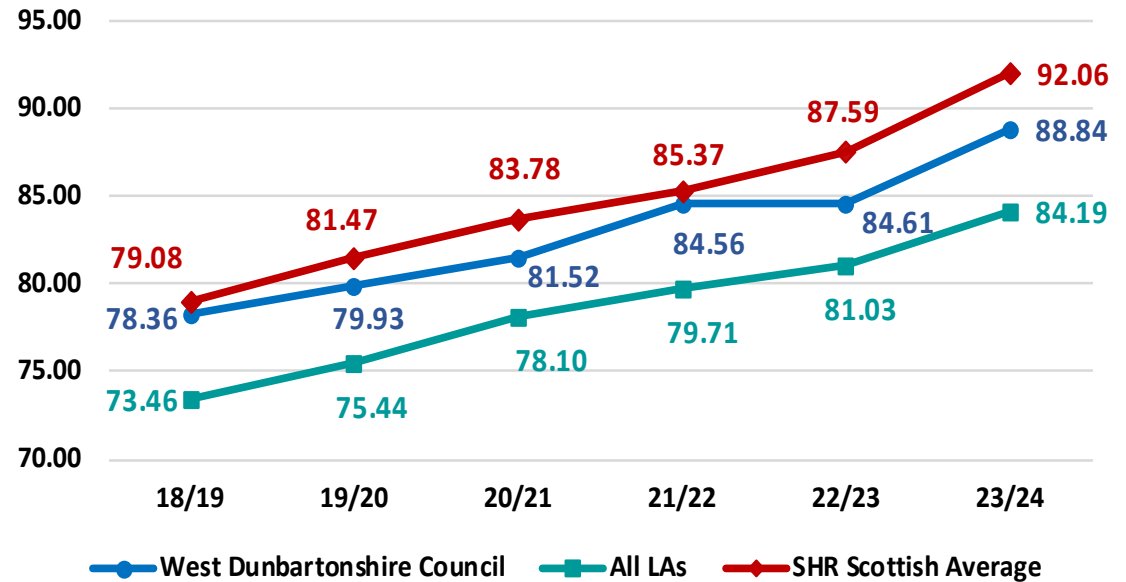
A strong
commitment
to keeping
rents
affordable

Average weekly rent increase



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Average weekly rent



Janice Rainey

Finance Business Partner

process
Estimates and
**Estimates and
budget setting
process**

- **Continued transparent approach based on engagement with Joint Rent Group**
- **Review of financial assumptions in Business Plan**
- **Ensuring long-term affordability for Housing Revenue Account**
- **Delivering Value for Money services for tenants**

2024/25 budget setting process

Baseline rent increase based on maintaining new build programme and continued Capital Investment in existing homes

- 630 new central heating systems
- 320 new roof coverings
- 400 window/door renewals
- 300 kitchen renewals
- 200 bathroom renewals
- 200 electric shower installations
- 450 external insulated render
- 200 medical adaptations
- 500 path/general environmental upgrades

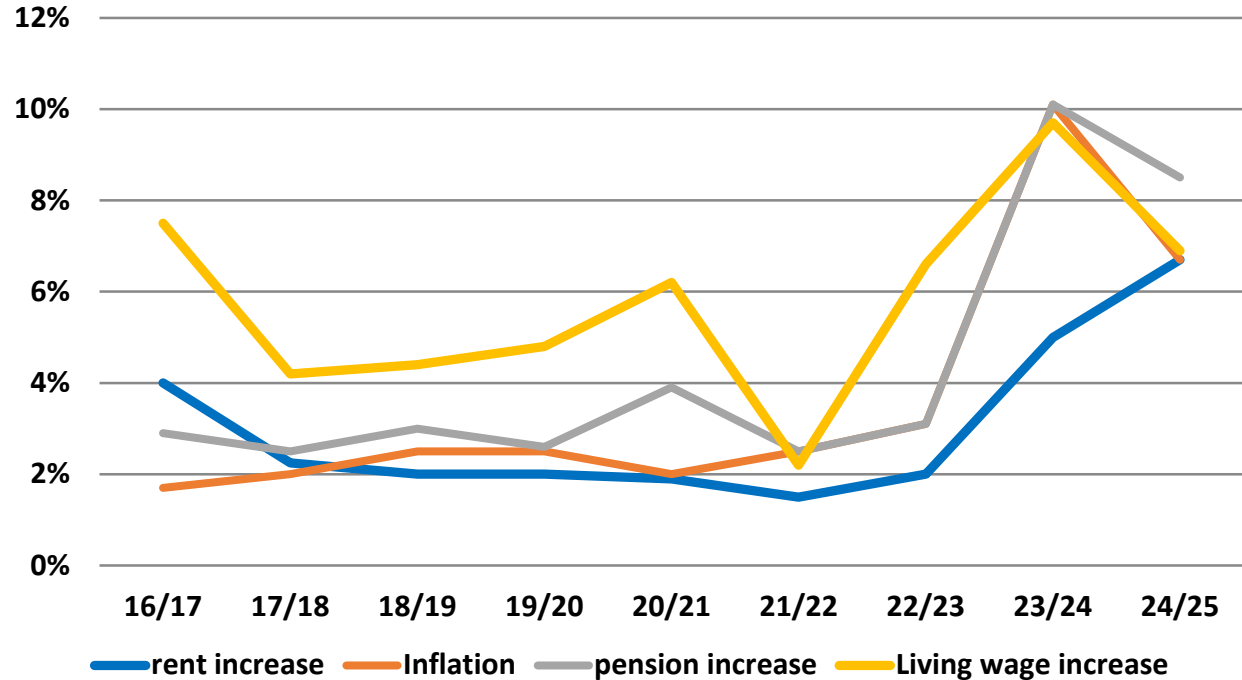
Rent increase required based on 2024/25 draft budget

Total expenditure 2024/25 draft budget	£53,480,875
Less estimated other income 2024/25	£2,115,108
Less estimated rental income 2024/25	£48,140,362
Deficit	£3,225,404
<u>Deficit as % rental income:</u>	
Deficit/House rents (£m/£m)	6.7%
Average rent 23/24 (52 weeks)	£88.80
Proposed average increase per week (52 weeks)	£5.94
Revised average rent (52 weeks)	£94.74

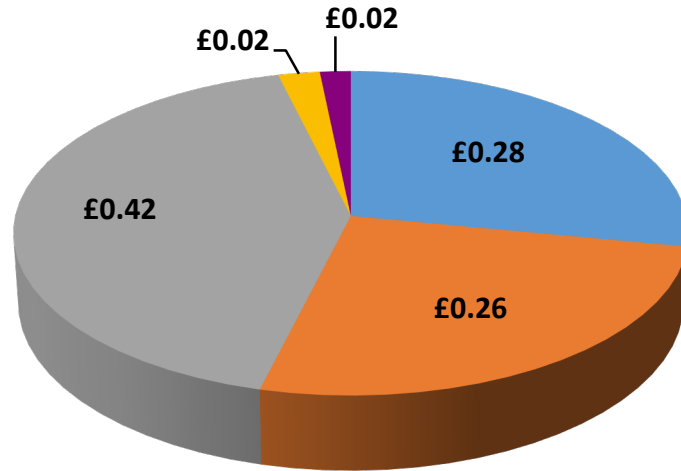
Identified and agreed savings to 2024/25 revenue budget

Shortfall on current budgets if rent rise is zero %	5,044,000
Original rent rise required	10.50%
<u>Savings/ adjustments agreed</u>	
Tenant priority budget reduce from 800K to 200K	600,000
Remove tenancy sustainment budget – Women’s Aid	84,000
Productivity improvement target to HMTA	316,000
Reduce budgets for loss of rental/rent abatement due re empty properties	606,596
Reduce tenancy assistance budgets	415,000
Use Government refugees grants towards void repairs	250,000
Increase income for expected rental income from new builds	47,000
Create a contribution to Capital spend budget	- 500,000
Total	1,818,596
Revised shortfall	3,225,404
Revised rent rise required	6.70%

Rent increases over recent years compared to inflation, pensions and living wage increases



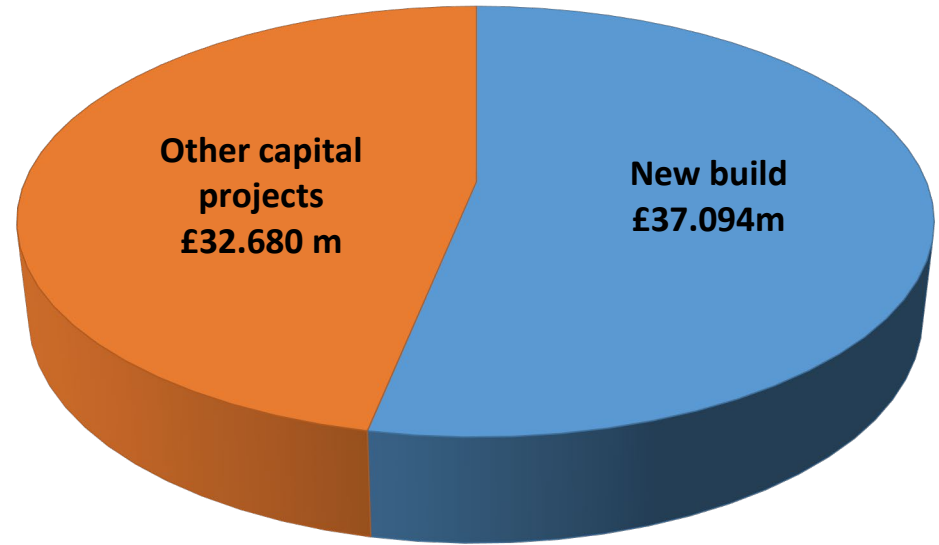
HRA budgeted expenditure for every £1 spend 2024/25



■ Repairs and Maintenance
■ Loan Charges
■ Bad Debt Provision

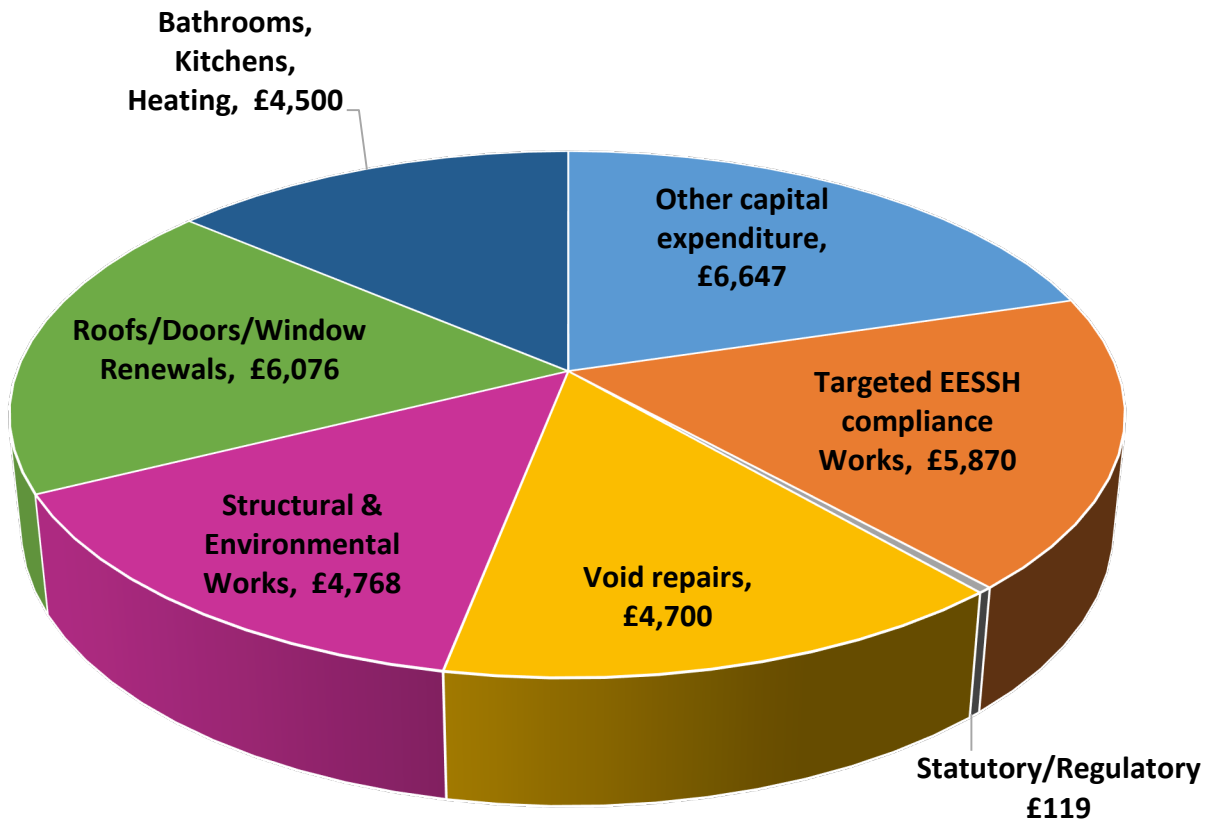
■ Supervision and Management
■ Other

**2024/25
HRA Capital
Programme
(£69.774m)**



2024/25 HRA Capital Budget

(Excluding Affordable
Housing Supply)



Rent Setting Options for 2024/25

Option 1

6.7% increase

Average weekly increase
of £5.94

This option will mean:

- Maintaining all current services that tenants receive
- Delivering our Capital programme of housing investment, including the enhanced programme developed with tenants
- Continuing our New Build Housing Programme
- Retaining a Tenant Priority Budget of £200k for tenant led improvements
- Combined Tenant Support Fund of *£150k*

Option 2

7.2% increase

Average weekly increase
of £6.38

This option will mean:

- Maintaining all current services that tenants receive
- Delivering our Capital programme of housing investment, including the enhanced programme developed with tenants
- Continuing our New Build Housing Programme
- Retaining a Tenant Priority Budget of £200k for tenant led improvements
- Combined Tenant Support Fund of *£400k*

Consultation key dates

15 Nov 2023 - Launch of consultation

8 Dec 2023 - Winter Housing News delivered to all tenants with consultation information and voting card

15 Nov 2023 to 9 Jan 2024 - Consultation promoted via website, social media, text and email prompts

10 Jan 2024 - Consultation closes

6 Mar 2024 - Council meeting to agree 2024/25 rent setting