

Rent Setting Policy

Originator:	Regulatory Compliance Team
OVH Board Approval Date:	February 2026
Review date:	February 2027

1	Introduction
1.1	<p>One Vision Housing (OVH) is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide homes that meet demand in safe secure and sustainable neighbourhoods; and • to provide excellent services that meet or exceed customer and stakeholder expectations
1.2	<p>To achieve these aims OVH sets rents in line with the government guidelines whilst ensuring it remains viable and can achieve its business plan commitments.</p>
1.3	<p>This Policy sets out the mechanisms by which OVH calculates rents on an annual basis, in line with the prescribed government rent setting formula (where this applies), so that it is transparent and easily understood and ensures compliance with the outcomes of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England, adopted by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH).</p>
1.4	<p>The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have issued a ‘Direction’ to the RSH on the Rent Standard of the Regulatory Framework and also a Policy Statement on how social housing rents should be set from April 2026. This OVH Rent Setting Policy takes due regard of the Policy Statement and how this impacts the rent setting process. Further details can be found at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/697b8d18f8f4a746d9572f51/Annex_B_-_policy_statement_on_rents_for_social_housing.pdf
1.5	<p>This Policy also covers the provisions OVH has for setting rents that are outside of the regulatory framework’s Rent Standard where the Capital Funding Guide will apply i.e. intermediate rents, including Rent to Buy, Shared Ownership and OVH properties acquired through a buy-back scheme. The Policy also covers properties let at Market Rent.</p>
1.7	<p>Access and Communication</p>
1.7.1	<p>OVH is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to everyone. OVH will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for OVH or use its services.</p>
1.7.2	<p>Working with our customers we have established a Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustments Policy to ensure we make best use of every customer interaction to meet customers’ needs in our service delivery and ensure this information is kept up to date.</p>

1.8	Equality, Diversity and Human Rights
1.8.1	OVH is committed to fairness and equality for all customers, colleagues, and stakeholders.
1.8.2	OVH’s approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) goes beyond legal or statutory obligations, however, OVH will meet or exceed its legal requirements as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. This policy also demonstrates how OVH will meet the requirements of Public Sector Equality Duties, which it has chosen to adopt and implement as a matter of good practice rather than as a legal obligation.
1.8.3	OVH is fully committed to eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination. hate crime, harassment and bullying will also not be tolerated and take proactive steps to prevent such behaviours.
1.8.4	<p>It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly based on the following protected characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability • Sex • Gender identity, or gender reassignment status • Race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality • Religion or belief • Sexual orientation • Age • Marriage or civil partnership status • Pregnancy or maternity
1.8.5	OVH are also committed to ensuring that individuals are not treated less favourably due to their social, economic, or cultural backgrounds, as well as specific medical conditions as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
1.8.6	OVH regularly review policies and practices to ensure they reflect its commitment to equality and diversity.
1.9	<p>This Policy should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVH Rent Payment and Arrears Recovery Policy • OVH Market Rent Policy • OVH Rent to Buy Policy • OVH Service Charge Policy • OVH Tenancy Policy • OVH Tenancy Transfer and Mutual Exchange and Succession Policy • OVH Affordable Rent Policy
2	Statement of Intent
2.1	In setting rents, OVH will secure rental income to meet its business plan commitments, operating costs, investment / improvement programmes (subject to performance, wider economic factors and tenant consultation) and to meet the loan repayment requirements of its lenders.

2.2	Where applicable, OVH will ensure rents are set in line with formula developed by Government for the social housing sector and approved by RSH, within the Rent Standard of the Regulatory Framework.
2.3	OVH will also set rents in accordance with the most up-to-date guidance produced by the MHCLG (Capital Funding Guide) where this applies to properties that are part funded through one of the Homes England Affordable Homes programmes.
2.4	OVH will inform its tenants of how the rent has been set in the annual rent notification letter and via information available on its website.
2.5	OVH's Board will review and approve any changes to rent setting on an annual basis. All decisions made by the Board are recorded and available to interested parties on request (subject to any confidential or commercially sensitive information being removed).
2.6	OVH will set rents in line with the government requirements to ensure they are broadly comparable with other housing providers local to its areas of operation and are affordable to existing and potential customers.
2.7	OVH reserves the right to set different rent periods in different local authorities, in the area of its operations e.g. over a 48 or 52 rent week period.
2.8	OVH will inform all new and existing tenants of the potential impacts of any welfare reform measures, including those already introduced and any scheduled, on their income and rent payment liabilities.

3 Policy

3.1	The Rent Setting Policy and the rental structure this produces will be approved by OVH's Board.								
3.1.1	OVH will review the rents it sets on an annual basis and will inform all customers in writing of any changes to their rent, giving a minimum of one calendar months' notice before the changes come into effect, outlining how the rent has been calculated.								
3.1.2	For 2026/27, OVH rent increases will take effect on the following dates for its range of rental products (unless specific individual arrangements apply, in which case customers will be informed in writing of the date of rent increases):								
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type of rental product</th> <th>Date rent increase will be effective from</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Social Rent, Affordable Rent and Fair Rent</td> <td>6th April 2026</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Intermediate Rent, Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy</td> <td>1st April 2026</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Market Rent</td> <td>1st April 2026</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Type of rental product	Date rent increase will be effective from	Social Rent, Affordable Rent and Fair Rent	6 th April 2026	Intermediate Rent, Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy	1 st April 2026	Market Rent	1 st April 2026
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3.1.3	OVH is committed to ensuring a fair method of calculating social rents based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The condition and location of properties • Local earnings (to take account of affordability) and, • Property size and valuations 								

3.1.4	<p>In line with the RSH’s regulatory standard, OVH will exempt the following categories from social rent and the Rent Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared ownership and low-cost ownership • Intermediate rent including Rent to Buy and properties acquired through a buy-back scheme • Market Rents • Commercial Rents
3.1.5	<p>In line with the ‘Direction on the Rent Standard’ issued by MHCLG to the RSH, OVH will increase rents for its Social Rent properties for the rent year commencing on the first Monday in April 2026 to 5th April 2027, by a maximum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Price Index - CPI (as at September the previous year) plus 1% point
3.1.6	<p>OVH may in agreement with its Board set rents below the maximum permissible amount where it considers this would create affordability issues for customers and may limit increases for certain property types that may be subject to higher-than-average service charges e.g. Independent Living Retirement Living Schemes or high-rise blocks.</p>
3.1.7	<p>The formula rent increases will apply to OVH general needs and independent living tenancies - (that meet the definition of supported housing) and will not exceed the Rent Cap that imposes upper rent limits that can be applied to a property based on its size (number of bedrooms), where the Rent Cap is subject to annual uplift of CPI plus 1.5%.</p>
3.1.8	<p>OVH will set rents for any new Social Rent Property it develops or acquires using the ‘Formula Rent’ – as determined by MHCLG, using the following calculation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of national average rent, multiplied by relative County earnings, multiplied by the bedroom weight, plus 30% of national average rent, multiplied by the relative property value (where the ‘national average’ is taken from a base year of 2000 (for rents) and 1999 (for relative county earnings index) and uplifts for each subsequent year are applied)
3.2	<p>Rent Flexibility</p>
3.2.1	<p>In line with the MHCLG Policy Statement OVH reserve the right to increase rents above Formula Rent levels by an additional 5% on general needs properties and an additional 10% on independent living properties to take into account local circumstances and any additional costs of investment (as detailed in 2.1).</p>
3.2.2	<p>Decisions to apply discretionary rent increases for the rent period covered by this Policy have been subject to Board approval.</p>
3.2.3	<p>Where OVH tenants intend to move between general needs and independent living properties or vice versa they will be informed beforehand of any changes in rent that will apply.</p>
3.2.4	<p>OVH also reserves the right to increase the rent payable on properties to bring them up to Formula Rent if they are not already at this level on re-let of tenancy (Note - this can occur outside of the annual rent setting process as set out above in 3.1.5)</p>

3.3	Market Rents
3.3.1	OVH will usually review market rents and associated service charges on an annual basis and will inform tenants of any changes in the rent in writing, providing at least one calendar months' notice.
3.3.2	OVH will calculate market rents based on residential lettings estimate for a property of the appropriate size, condition and area. Valuations will be independently assessed in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) criteria (as recommended by the MHCLG).
3.3.3	OVH reserves the right to reduce market rents for vacant properties subject to demand and local market analysis. Any decisions to reduce market rents will be approved by the OVH Executive Management Team.
3.4	Affordable Rents
3.4.1	OVH will let Affordable Rent properties for a minimum fixed-term period of five years renewable or on long term periodic assured tenancies (according to any conditions of grant that are stipulated by Homes England). Note: When the provisions in the Renters Rights Act 2025 come into effect for the social housing sector (expected to be November 2026), OVH will no longer issue fixed term tenancies with all existing fixed term tenancies and any new tenancies issued being a 'periodic type' i.e. indefinite in period as long as tenancy conditions are met. When Affordable Rent Properties are available for rent, OVH will make it known to prospective tenants the term and type of tenancy that will be offered.
3.4.2	On all new build Affordable Rent properties OVH reserve the right to set rent levels over 48 and 52 weeks (depending on locality and local authority area).
3.4.3	Where OVH develop new build properties for Affordable Rent and on handover of properties, RICS Red Book Valuations will be obtained to confirm the market rent. OVH will set initial and subsequent rents at 80% of the gross market rents, taking into account property size, location and characteristics of the property.
3.4.4	OVH may limit Affordable Rents to the maximum level of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Rate, however, where not restricted by any S106 requirements OVH reserves the right to set rents above the LHA rate.
3.4.5	Affordable rents will also be no lower than could be charged on a similar social rented property using the 'Formula Rent' calculation outlined in 3.1.10 above.
3.4.6	Annual Affordable Rent increases will be a maximum of CPI plus 1% point and the same conditions outlined in 3.1.5 / 3.1.6 will apply.
3.4.7	Where an Affordable Rent tenancy is to be re-let, OVH will get a new valuation unless valuation on similar properties is less than 12 months old, to assess the Market Rent valuation. The revised affordable gross rent will be charged at up to 80% of the market rent.
3.4.8	According to the terms of funding arrangements agreed with Homes England, OVH may pursue the option to convert social rented properties on re-let to affordable rents in areas of its operations not covered by the stock transfer agreement with Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council.

3.5 **Intermediate Rents**

3.5.1 OVH also have a number of properties that it has acquired through a buy-back scheme. Rents on these properties and Rent to Buy properties will be charged at the intermediate rate (80% of gross market rent inclusive of service charges).

3.5.2 When the fixed term tenancies end for the buy-back properties or when they become void, OVH will take a decision in line with its business objectives and local circumstances on the type of rent that will be charged in these properties i.e. social, affordable or market rents and will inform the tenants accordingly (where a tenant is in situ).

3.5.3 For all Rent to Buy Properties, OVH will set initial rents (and at first let) at 80% of gross market value inclusive of service charges following an independent assessment by a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) registered valuer (and for the period a valid valuation exists).

3.5.4 Rent to Buy properties will be subject to an annual increase applicable from the first Monday in April each year and tenants will be given one calendar month's written notice of this increase. The maximum increase will be Consumer Price Index figure (calculated the previous September) plus 1%.

3.5.5 The annual increase will only apply to tenanted properties and where it is possible to give the one-month notice period. Where it is not possible to give the one-month notice or the property is unoccupied at this time, the annual increase will be implemented the following April.

3.6 **Shared Ownership**

3.6.1 OVH will set initial rents for shared ownership properties at no more than 3% of the value of the unsold equity, at the point of initial sale.

3.6.2 Subsequent annual rent increases (for existing shared owners, unless informed otherwise) will be, dependent on the lease, limited to either;

- The Retail Price Index (RPI) figure (published in February) plus 0.5%. If the RPI is nil or negative the maximum rent increases will be limited to 0.5%; or
- From 12th October 2023 rents for new shared owners can be increased once a year by no more than the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) plus 1%. Rents cannot be increased if CPI is minus 1% or lower

3.7 **Fair Rents**

3.7.1 OVH manages a number of Regulated Tenancies on 'Fair Rents', which began before the 15th January 1989 provided, they had no change in tenancy conditions. The tenancies are protected as long as the tenant lives in the property.

3.7.2 When Regulated Tenancies become available for re-letting, they will be converted to social rents, except where an eligible succession occurs (where a tenancy is passed to family member, subject to certain qualification criteria – See OVH Tenancy Transfer Policy for details), in which case the Regulated Tenancy will continue.

3.7.3 Fair rents for Regulated Tenancies are set by the Rent Valuation Officer every two years on the anniversary of the tenancy. For Regulated Tenancies, OVH will:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to phase in any large rent increases for ‘fair rent’ properties over a period of two years to prevent financial hardship for the tenants concerned • Carry out a comparative of social rents for similar sized properties in the same area and will not set rents higher for fair rent properties than the relevant social rate rent (Formula Rent) • Review fair rents on an annual basis in accordance with calculation for Formula Rent as outlined in 3.1.5 / 3.1.6 above 	
4	Implementation	
4.1	The OVH Board have the ultimate responsibility for approving rents and OVH Executive Management Team has responsibility for reviewing the operation of this Policy on an annual basis.	
4.2	The Director of Housing and Customer Services has operational responsibility for the associated activities that underpin this Policy including annual rent calculation and notification.	
5	Performance	
5.1	The performance of OVH in setting rents annually and providing the appropriate notification to tenants of any changes to rent will be validated by the RSH as part of the annual Statistical Data Return, submitted each May. Any failings in this area or performance on rent collection which affects the viability of OVH may be subject to regulatory control measures.	
5.2	Performance on setting rents and sending appropriate notification will be reported to the OVH Board and will also be subject of scrutiny by internal and external audit services.	
6	Consultation	
6.1	All OVH staff have been consulted on the development of this Policy. The Tenant Policy Review Group was consulted on the development of this Policy.	
6.2	The Policy has also been subject to external legal advice in February 2024. This assurance is provided every two years with the option to extend where additional assurance is provided from other sources e.g. Internal Audit.	
7	Review	
7.1	The OVH Rent Setting Policy will be reviewed every twelve months (from the date of OVH Board approval). The review process will ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness or as required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation that impacts on OVH’s obligations in regard to rent setting, changes to OVH business practices or in the light of management system audits.	
8	Equality Impact Assessment	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	Yes
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	An Equality Impact Assessment Relevance Test was undertaken by the Strategic

		Regulatory Compliance Manager and the Group Operations Director - Financial Management / Audit in January 2026	
8.3	Results of EIA	The Relevance Test revealed the risks associated with operation of the Policy largely impact on business viability, legal requirements and regulatory compliance. Operation of the Policy is not thought to have any differential or adverse impacts on individuals or groups with protected characteristics.	
9	Scheme of Delegation		
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the policy and any amendments to it	OVH Board	
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	Operations Director Housing and Customer Services	
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	Operations Director Housing and Customer Services	
10	Amendment Log		
Date of revision:	Reason for revision:	Consultation record:	Record of amendments:
12 th February 2024	Updated in line with Government Guidance	See Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy updated throughout to reflect the DLUHC Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing for the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 Wording change at 3.4.4. and 3.4.7 to reflect current operational practice New clauses inserted at 3.6.2 / 3.6.3 to reflect revised government guidance on shared ownership Revised job titles changed throughout EIA Relevance Test updated at Section 8
17 th February 2025	Updated in line with review Schedule	See Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference to DHLUC changed to MHCLG throughout

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wording of Section 3.5 changed to reflect current operational practice • Team names updated throughout • Equality, Diversity and Human Rights statement updated • Wording changed at 5.1 to include reference to Statistical Data Return • Additional information on external validation included at 6.2 • EIA Information updated at Section 8
9 th February 2026	Updated in line with review Schedule	See Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change at 1.1 to reflect OVH Strategic Aims • Wording Change at 1.4 and 1.5 to reflect revised government guidance on rent setting • Change at 3.1.2 and 3.1.5 to reflect new dates for rent setting year 2026/27 • New clauses added at 3.1.6 and 3.1.7 to reference Rent Convergence • Frequency of rent increases for Market Rent properties changed in line with new guidance at 3.3.1 • Reference to rent reduction period removed throughout as no longer relevant to rent calculations • Addition at 3.4.1. to reflect reference to Renters Rights Act 2025 provisions • Wording change at 3.4.3 to reflect current operational practice • Wording change at 3.5 to reflect current government guidance • 6.2 updated to reflect current operational practice • EIA information updated at Section 8