



Universal Credit and your rent charge from April

If you receive Universal Credit, from Monday April 1 (and not before), you need to tell the Universal Credit team about your change in rent.



If you do not do this, you will not receive the correct amount of Universal Credit housing costs and you will have to pay the shortfall yourself, or you may receive an overpayment which you will have to pay back.

To report any change in circumstances (<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/changes-of-circumstances>), including this rent change, you need to log it on your Universal Credit Account. You may be asked the frequency of your rent charge - this is weekly. If you are a Shared Owner however, your charge is monthly.

You may also be asked if you have any rent free weeks - the answer to this question is 'no'. Telling them this information will ensure your claim is correct.

If you pay your rent to Teign Housing by Direct Debit, we will automatically change your payments, if needed.

If you have any questions about this email or wish to set up a Direct Debit to help you manage your finances, please call the **Income Team** on **01626 322780** or email us at rents@teignhousing.co.uk

Also our [Money Directory](#) has useful advice on budgeting and help available.

Grounds maintenance update

We look forward to the summer cutting season ahead, which will start, weather dependent, on Tuesday 8 April on a two-weekly schedule. We have recruited some new team members, so we are ready for this season.

To help ensure we hear from residents, we recently set up a **Grounds Maintenance Panel**. This group visits any of our sites and reports back to us on the standard of the grounds maintenance, drying areas, communal benches, pathways and internal & external caretaking. We then listen to any areas of concern and look to see if we can make any improvement.

If you would like to join the panel, please contact **Niki Holmes**, *Resident Involvement Manager* on **01626 322825** or email Getinvolved@teignhousing.co.uk

We are still increasing the number of battery tools we use whenever we can and have recently purchased a battery jet washer and a path edging tool.

A significant positive change will see the team take on responsibility for the grounds maintenance of empty properties. In addition to cutting the grass and any hedges, we will clear the gutters, remove moss, jet wash any paths, and hand the property over to new residents in better condition.

Our Housing Teams sometimes identify areas and gardens that need a one-off overhaul to help with the ongoing maintenance. The new **Blitz Team**, as we've named them, will attend and complete, for example, jet washing, moss clearance, gutter clearing, weed spraying and path edging. We have already received some positive feedback on this team from residents at Mill Path in Ashburton and Joslin Court in Kingsteignton.

Our usual winter hedge work has continued while we wait for the better weather. The photos here are from Linden Road in Dawlish, where you can see the before and after of our work.

Before



After

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

If you report Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), one route we can take to tackle this is a Community Protection Warning (CPW).

A CPW is issued by a Council. It sets out what the perpetrator must do or stop doing within a set timescale. Usually this is effective. If the CPW is ignored, a Community Protection Notice will be issued. Breaching this is a criminal offence and can lead to a fine as well as being a breach of tenancy conditions that could lead to eviction.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, 14 Community Protection Warnings have been issued to Teign Housing residents and one Community Protection Notice has been served. We currently have 31 active ASB cases where we are working to resolve unacceptable behaviour.

You can find out more about how to report ASB and our process on our website [Report ASB - Teign Housing](#)

Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour incidents outside of our office hours

The ASB Respect Line team has highly trained call handlers with backgrounds in housing or policing.

It's free to call the ASB Respect Line. You can reach the team on **0800 075 6699**. **The line is open 5pm until 9am on Monday to Friday, and all weekends, and bank holidays.** They'll then let us know of any calls, so we can work with you to resolve these.

During normal working hours, you should continue to contact us direct.

If it is an emergency, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is a danger to life or violence is being used or threatened, please call the police on 999.



Changes to Benefits

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has started 'Managed Migration'. This means that legacy benefits are being replaced by Universal Credit. Your legacy benefits will come to an end, and you will have to make a claim for Universal Credit.

The legacy benefits are:

- **Income Support**
- **Income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)**
- **Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)**
- **Housing Benefit.**

If you receive any of these benefits, you will be sent a migration notice letter notifying you that your legacy benefit entitlement is due to end and inviting you to make your claim for Universal Credit. There is no need to do anything until you receive this 'Migration Notice' from the DWP. This will give you a date by which you will need to have made a claim for Universal Credit.

If you do receive this letter **do not ignore it** as your legacy benefits will end and you will lose out.

So we can offer the right support, please click [here](#) to complete our online questionnaire.

Citizens Advice also has a Help to Claim Service to assist you with any Universal Credit queries and a helpful guide to Managed Migration [here](#). You can contact Citizens Advice on **0800 144 8 444**.

If you have any queries or concerns, email us at universal.credit@teignhousing.co.uk
We are always here to help.

Your rent account

In preparation for having to make a claim for Universal Credit, please check that your rent account is up to date and you are paying your rent in advance. The easiest way to check your rent account is via the My Teign portal and app. This allows you to see payments made and your balance.

To find out more about My Teign and how to use it visit our [website](#).

Keeping your rent account up to date

You should never have an arrears balance showing on your account between payments. If you do, please contact us on **01626 322780**.



Paying your rent – new options

We have introduced an even safer way for you to pay your rent to us over the telephone.

We've invested in new technology, to protect you from ever-devicious would-be hackers, so when you call to make a debit card payment you will no longer have to read out your card details. Instead, you will be asked to simply input your card details on your telephone keypad. This provides even greater security to you.

In response to requests from residents, we have introduced an extra way to pay your rent. For those who want peace of mind that their rent is being paid on time but don't want a Direct Debit we can now offer recurring card payments.

To set these payments up you will need to call us on **01626 322722**. We will then request the payment from your account for the agreed amount, on the agreed day. If there are not enough funds in your account, you will not be charged by your bank.

Community Chest funding

Community Chest FUNDING



The Tenants' Forum Community Chest
has funds available

Apply now



The Tenants' Forum Community Chest is a £5,000 fund that Teign Housing sets aside for local community projects.

From 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, we will be granting Community Chest awards, up to a maximum of £500 (no minimum amount).

Awards will be made to projects or events that will help improve the lives of Teign Housing tenants and the surrounding community in which they live.

Applicants must be able to clearly demonstrate how the proposed project or event will benefit the community, and that there has been consultation with local residents. A panel of Teign Housing residents from the Tenants' Forum will consider the applications and make decisions about awards.

All successful applicants are asked, as a condition of receiving a Community Chest Award, to submit full details for the money spent, and completed feedback form outlining the success of the project.

Visit our website for more information: [Tenants' Forum Community Chest - Teign Housing](#)



Make things right

The Government's [Make Things Right](#) Campaign encourages social housing residents to first contact their landlord to report any issues or problems with their property and know who to contact if they are unhappy with their landlord and are struggling to get their problems resolved.

We will do everything we can to resolve issues promptly and provide a quality and efficient service.

Reporting a repair

The quickest and easiest way to report a repair is by calling the **Customer First Team** on **01626 322722**. You can also report a repair through our website or the My Teign app or portal.

If the repair is an emergency, you need to call us immediately, 24 hours a day.

You can find out about how to report a repair and what we class as an emergency [here](#).



Making a Complaint

We always try to do our best but recognise things go wrong from time to time. By telling us what's gone wrong, we can investigate and help put things right for you.

You can find out more by visiting our [website](#) or calling the **Customer First Team** on **01626 322722**.



Housing Ombudsman

If a complaint goes through our complaint process but hasn't been resolved, the Housing Ombudsman can investigate fairly and impartially.

You can find out more about the Housing Ombudsman Service and the new Complaint Handling Code [here](#).

Regulation changes

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 marks an important milestone in how Teign Housing, and all social housing landlords, are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing.

The new consumer standards are a set of requirements which set out how landlords should rent homes to tenants, look after and end tenancies. You can find out more about the new regulations, which start on 1 April 2024, on their [website](#).

The regulator now has more powers to ensure that landlords are meeting these standards. So, as a resident, it's good to know what you should expect from us.



Easter closures

Our offices, phone lines, email and web chat close at **5pm** on **Thursday 28 March** and reopen again on **Tuesday 2 April** at **8.30am**.

If you have a repairs emergency during this time, please call 0800 197 9790. Then choose option one.



Job roles at Teign Housing and Templer HomeBuild

You'll find our latest job roles on our website here at [Careers - Teign Housing](#).