



Income Collection – Rent Statements

We currently send rent statements four times a year to all tenants, regardless of their rent account balance. We are currently reviewing our current process to see whether tenants want rent statements on this frequency.

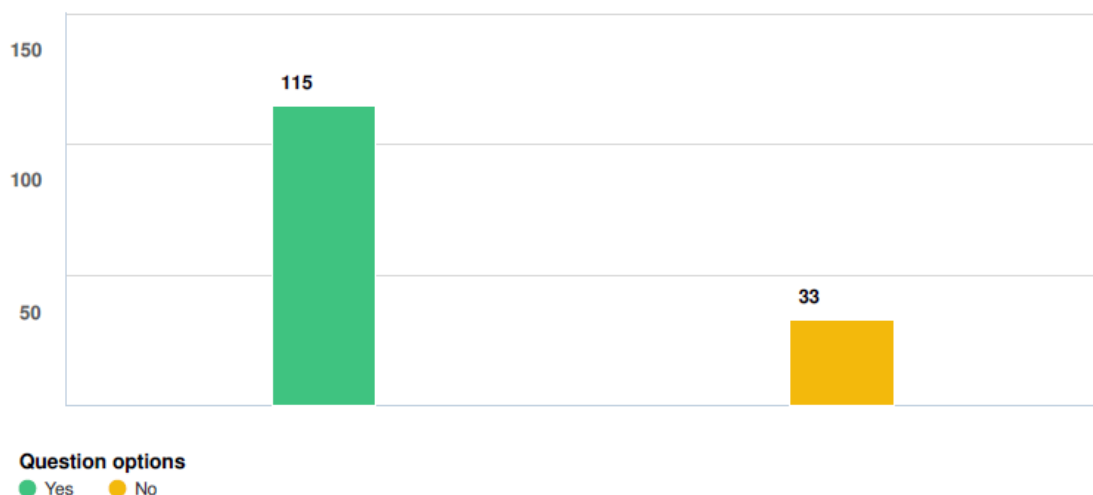
We ran consultation around this subject during June – October 2024, utilising a range of in-person activities, supported by an online survey to ensure we sought a range of views on this subject.

In total 148 tenants completed the survey, with a further 16 tenants attending an in-person Spotlight Session to review the feedback received and discuss the proposals in more detail.

Survey responses

Question: Would you be happy to only receive rent statements on request, or if you had fallen into arrears?

Responses:



78% of respondents said they would be happy to only receive their rent statements on request, or if they were in arrears.

A large number of those who said they would still like their rent statements felt that twice a year or annually would be acceptable, and also a large number said they would be happy to receive it online.

Those who wanted to keep the regular copies appeared to have concerns around Universal Credit and felt they needed the statements not only as evidence for claims, but to make sure they were receiving the right amount / paying the correct amount of rent.

We also invited all respondents to leave any additional comments, of which 32 people chose to leave comments.

Respondents were all supportive of the proposal to move to less frequent rent statements, stating that they felt it would be more environmentally friendly and much more efficient use of resources.

19 of the comments suggested we introduce access to online rent statements or send them via e-mail. With one recommending we send them before a tenant falls into arrears.

The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposal, and felt by still providing the option to receive them on request, those tenants who wanted to still receive them could.

A further 16 tenants attended a Spotlight Session focussing on our Income Collection and Tenancy Support Team. Attendees at the meeting reviewed the feedback to date and agreed with the proposal. Like the feedback above, many attendees suggested online access would be preferable, receiving their rent statements either via e-mail or on an online portal. One attendee stated they would like to receive paper copies to help keep up-to-date and to use as ID.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider sending rent statements annually to all tenants.
2. Explore the possibility of utilising online options for those tenants wishing to receive them online / via email.

3. If only sending them when tenants are in arrears, make sure they are sent before the tenant reaches the arrears stage.
4. Provide tenants with the option to 'opt in' to receive them, even if they aren't in arrears.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

1. After reviewing the results of the consultation and considering the comments from our customer panels we will now only send paper rent statements on an annual basis as standard. The next statement is due to be sent in April 2025.
2. Access to online statements remains an aspiration at this stage, a customer portal is something that CGA want to and will offer in the future, as per our digital strategy. We are currently unable to send bulk rent statements via email but these can be provided on an individual basis upon request at any point throughout the year.
3. A tenant falling into rent arrears is very much based on their individual circumstances which would make it unrealistic and unmanageable to send a statement prior to them falling into rent arrears. The Income Management Team review cases on a weekly basis, including cases where a credit balance is reducing, increasing the risk of a tenant falling into arrears. Where this is identified, tenants are contacted to discuss their circumstances and offered support to prevent arrears action being taken.
4. As the statements will only be sent on an annual basis, all customers will be automatically 'opted-in' to receive them.

Next steps

This information will now be reviewed and responded to by our Income Collection Team. Our tenant committee, Gateway Central will have oversight of the recommendations made and implementation of any of the changes detailed.

Any changes to the service will be communicated to tenant through our website and tenant newsletter, Gateway News.

Tenant Voice

At Community Gateway we aim to hear from as many tenants as possible. We offer a range of different ways for tenants to give us feedback, helping us to make sure the 'tenant voice' is representative of our tenant base.

Below is the diversity information of those who took part in this consultation who gave us their information.

Age Range	Count of Name	%
15-24	2	1.33%
25-34	15	10.00%
35-44	30	20.00%
45-54	25	16.67%
55-64	37	24.67%
65-74	21	14.00%
75+	15	10.00%
Unknown	5	3.33%
Grand Total	150	100.00%

Disability	Count of Name	%
NO	63	42.00%
YES	37	24.67%
Unknown	50	33.33%
Grand Total	150	100.00%

Gender	Count of Gender	%
Female	99	66.00%
Male	46	30.67%
Unknown	5	3.33%
Grand Total	150	100.00%

Ethnicity	Count of Name	%
Asian: Other	1	0.67%
Black: African	1	0.67%
Black: Other	1	0.67%
Mixed: Other	3	2.00%
Refused	3	2.00%
White: English/ Scottish/ Welsh/ Northern Irish/ British	117	78.00%
White: Irish	1	0.67%
White: Other	10	6.67%
Asian: Indian	1	0.67%
Unknown	5	3.33%
Asian: Pakistani	2	1.33%
Not known	1	0.67%
Black: Caribbean	2	1.33%
Chinese or other ethnic: Arab	1	0.67%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	1	0.67%
Grand Total	150	100.00%