



# National Audit Office

Comptroller and Auditor General  
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**The UK's independent public spending  
watchdog**

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Dear Suzanne Muna

## BENEFITS AND SERVICE CHARGES

Thank you for your correspondence, dated 13 April 2026, in which you set out your request, on behalf of the Social Housing Action Campaign (SHAC), for the National Audit Office (NAO) to carry out an investigation into service charges and the housing benefits system. I note this follows up related correspondence from Mohammad Yasin MP, on behalf of SHAC, in 2025.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for taking the time to share further information with us. My team has reviewed the material you provided, and we agree that it is helpful to have more up to date information, particularly in relation to tribunal outcomes.

The new information reinforces my view that this is an important issue. The NAO's initial work carried out last year and our remit in this area remain the same as I set out in my response to Mohammad Yasin MP in June 2025. In the annex to the letter I sent last year, I set out the work my team had done to understand how the system works and where roles and responsibilities lie. As I noted then, the NAO does not audit, or have any rights to access information from, housing associations, or local authority or private sector landlords, who are responsible for levying the service charges.

However, I do think there are questions to ask of the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) and what it understands about the service charges it is covering through benefit payments. To this end, I have asked my team to follow up with DWP to find out in more detail what data it collects on this matter and to establish whether there have been any changes to its oversight of service charges since we spoke to officials last year.

Once we have completed these inquiries, I will write to you again to let you know what we have concluded.

Yours sincerely

**GARETH DAVIES**