Rent Direct
A safe and easy way to help you manage your rent payments

BRISTOL credit union
Here for everyone

bristolcreditunion.org
Your rent paid direct to your landlord, on time, every time

If you are a tenant in Bristol, Bath or the surrounding area and in receipt of Local Housing Allowance (LHA), or are preparing to receive Universal Credit, our Rent Direct Account offers a hassle-free way to manage your rent payments.

Bristol Credit Union can collect your LHA on your behalf, or help you separate out the rent from your Universal Credit payments, and then pay it directly to your landlord. Keeping your rent separate from your other money so you can’t spend it on anything else, can help you avoid rent arrears.

Open a Rent Direct Account today and you could benefit from:

✔️ Your rent is always separated
   Tell us how much to set aside and we’ll send it straight to your landlord, ensuring your rent payments are made on time, and allowing you to budget for the rest of the month.

✔️ No fees or charges for you
   We don’t charge you to use this service, other than the one-off cost of joining Bristol Credit Union – which is £3.50.

✔️ Access to credit union services
   By signing up to the scheme you’ll get access to a wide range of products and services including a free savings account and affordable loans.

How does it work?

To get started, you need to check that your landlord is registered with us so we can pay them direct. If they are not yet registered then let us know and we can send them details to get them signed up. Then follow the steps below:

Step 1
Join Bristol Credit Union. Select ‘Rent Direct Account’ if joining online, or request a Rent Direct Account form in branch.

Step 2
Complete the Rent Direct form with details of how much to send to your landlord and their Landlord ID number. Your landlord will need to sign the form so that they understand the terms and conditions and charges. We can then set up your account.

Step 3
When we receive LHA or Universal Credit into your Rent Direct Account, we’ll send the agreed amount straight to your landlord. You can request a statement at any time, or register for online access to keep track of your payments.
Frequently asked questions

1. **What do I need to open a Rent Direct Account?**
   You’ll need to become a member of Bristol Credit Union first. To join online you need to be able to make a £3.50 card payment and be registered to vote at your address. If you are applying for membership in person, you will need proof of ID (e.g. passport or driving licence or recent benefit award letter) and proof of address (e.g. bank statement or utility bill), plus £3.50 to open your account. You will then be able to set up a Rent Direct Account.

2. **How do I know if my landlord is registered with you to receive Rent Direct payments?**
   Your landlord needs to agree to take part in the scheme. You can always ask us if they are already registered. If they are not signed up, you’ll need to get them to contact us to register before we can open a Rent Direct Account for you. They will also need to sign your application form to agree to receiving payments and paying any associated charges.

3. **Does it cost my landlord anything?**
   Yes. We charge your landlord per rent payment, per tenant, but these fees can usually be offset against tax as a business expense like any other banking charge.

4. **If I get my Universal Credit paid to you how do I access the rest of my money?**
   If you get your Universal Credit paid into your Rent Direct Account, we will allocate what you have instructed for your rent, and the remainder will be transferred to a named bank account or prepaid card on the same day, no charge to you.

5. **What happens if I receive less than the rent amount from Universal Credit or other benefits?**
   We will send the amount that has been received; however, we do not contact you if this is the case and you will need to check your credit union account regularly to make sure you know what payments have been made.

6. **What happens if my landlord is overpaid?**
   You will need to contact your landlord and arrange any repayment.
What happens if my circumstances change?
You must give us 14 days’ notice of any change to your Rent Direct Account, including requests to change the amount paid to your landlord, details of a new landlord, cancellation of payments or closure of the account. We will contact your landlord on the same day and let them know you have asked us to change the arrangement. Your landlord may then contact you about this.

What happens if I move address?
Contact us as soon as possible with the details of your new address. You will also need to confirm that your new landlord is registered with us and instruct us of the amount to be paid to them. Don’t forget that the 14 day notice period still applies, unless your old landlord tells us they’re agreeing with the change.

What happens if I want to cancel my Rent Direct Account?
You can close your Rent Direct Account at any time, as long as there is no balance owing to us. You will need to give us 14 days’ notice and we will immediately inform your landlord that your Rent Direct Account has been closed. Any payments due within the 14 day notice period will still be made to your landlord unless they tell us they’re not owed the money.

What other services does Bristol Credit Union offer?
When you open a Rent Direct Account you will have access to a range of services including a free savings account and access to apply for our affordable loans.

Any questions?
Call 0117 9247 309
(Monday-Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm), we’ll be happy to help.
Need help managing your Universal Credit payments?

In addition to our Rent Direct Account, we also offer a Jam Jar service, or a prepaid debit card, which can help you budget for other important bills. Please contact us for details.
About Bristol Credit Union

Bristol Credit Union is a not-for-profit co-operative, helping local people save and borrow at fair rates. We offer affordable loans from £100 to £15,000 subject to status, and a range of accounts from a Christmas saver and a children’s savings account, to a Cash ISA.

We are owned by our members and we welcome anyone who lives, works, volunteers or studies in Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

Find out more at bristolcreditunion.org

0117 9247 309
Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm

Or our branch in Stokes Croft:
112 Cheltenham Road, Bristol, BS6 5RW.
Monday - Friday, 10am-2.30pm.

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