

# Understanding some of your charges

If you live in one of our independent living schemes, you might have access to a telecare service. Some residents might have a pendant, some might have a screen in their home, which allows direct contact with Service 24 in case of an emergency or if support is needed. These are part of your Building Services Charges and are called **Telecare Services Contract Charges**. We want to help explain each charge and why there may have been an increase.

## Services include: Warden call contract

We've recently upgraded the telecare system where you live. This provides a better and more reliable service to keep you safe. It also incorporates the latest digital technology replacing older analogue technology that is no longer supported.

A service is carried out once a year, testing the equipment to make sure it correctly calls the service provider, and any battery backup operates correctly. We use Appello as our contractor for the annual service.

We pay a monthly maintenance and annual service cost; this means we know what our costs are each month for the routine testing and servicing, and this is what we pass onto you. In some circumstances you will see an increase in these costs. This is because of general cost inflation over the last few years and the specialist nature of the technology.

We also pay for any callouts if the telecare system stops working. Our aim is to get things working again within 4 hours for an emergency and final fix within 24 hours to keep you safe. If parts need to be ordered, this could take slightly longer. The cost for this isn't included in our service contract and we don't know in advance how many callouts or repairs we'll get in a year.

We do know that things do sometimes fail, and we've estimated what the costs of this might be. The system is still under warranty however, so we'd expect any significant issues to be covered by the manufacturer. In some years it might be higher and in other years lower, but we believe the charge to be fair.

If you're a leaseholder or own your home, you will have paid for the installation of the equipment at the time, either through your reserve fund or we may have billed you directly. You'll also be contributing to the reserve fund for the future cost of replacing the system when it reaches the end of its useful life again. This helps smooth the cost of replacing the system.

If you rent your home from us, you pay for the equipment through what we call a provision of use charge. This smooths the cost of the equipment over 10 years. You may see an increase in this charge on your account as your previous charge for the old equipment would have been lower, or ended.

If you have the equipment, you'll also pay us a small charge for answering your calls should you need our assistance. Our call handlers are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We'll automatically know it's you whose calling us and we'll have access to any medical information you've shared with us. We'll be able to send help even if you can't hear or respond.

## Do you have any questions?

If you have any questions about your Telecare Services Contract Charges, please contact us or visit our website for more information.

[www.pahousing.co.uk](http://www.pahousing.co.uk)