

Heating Service Charge Consultation

What is the Heating Service Charge?

Customers who receive heating and hot water through SHG's heat networks currently pay a daily standing charge on their heat meter. This covers the costs of maintaining, servicing and administering the heat meter. The charge applies throughout the year, including summer when heating may be used less frequently. The proposed Heating Service Charge would just change the way we collect this standing charge.

Why is the consultation is taking place?

Currently, the standing charge is collected daily through your pre-payment heat meter. We are proposing to collect it alongside your rent and other service charges instead.

This is not a new charge. All customers with heat meters are required to pay the charge, but we want to explore a different way of collecting it that could help customers manage their household budgets.

With a pre-payment meter, standing charges can build up as debt if the meter is not topped up regularly. For example, if £30 has built up in standing charge debt and you top up £10, your heating will still not work because £20 of standing charge debt remains unpaid on your meter. Collecting the charge separately and spreading the cost across the year could help prevent debt building up and reduce the risk of customers being left without heating.

How will this affect me?

The existing daily standing charge would simply be collected through a Heating Service Charge rather than your pre-payment heat meter.

Separating this cost from your meter top-ups could help prevent standing charge debt from building up over the summer and make it easier to manage your available heating credit.

The standing charge is increasing to reflect rises in the cost of providing and maintaining the meter service. These costs are reviewed annually by our supplier and typically increase in line with inflation. The updated charge remains in line with those charged by other providers.

The charge will increase from 30 pence per day (£109.50 per year) to 34 pence per day (£122.74 per year) in April 2027 when all service charges are reviewed. The total 2027/28 cost of £122.74 will be the same whether it is collected through your pre-payment meter or, as proposed, as a service charge.

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If the proposed changes go ahead, when will this happen?

If the proposal is agreed following consultation, the change will take effect from April 2027, alongside the other service charge changes.



I have some debt on my heat meter, can I get some help?

Yes. If you have outstanding debt on your heat meter, our Energy Advice team can discuss your circumstances and the support available. Please contact the team on **0161 474 4062** or email energy.advice@stockporthomes.org.



Need a little extra support?

You can also get in touch with our Money Advice team and Housing Support team by contacting them using the emails and phone numbers below.

If you're worried about money, our Money Advice Team is here to offer free, confidential advice and help you explore the support available. Get in touch by calling on **0161 217 6016** or complete the form on our website and an advisor will be in contact with you.

You can also visit the Housing Support Team at Cornerstone reception **Monday – Friday between 8.30am and 5.00pm.**

