

# About your service charge

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a service charge?

Your service charge covers the cost of services provided to your scheme, home and/or neighbourhood.

### How is my charge calculated?

The charge is calculated annually based on the cost of services for the previous year and estimated costs for the coming year. Charges are shared equally between all of the customers who benefit from the services.

### What items are chargeable?

All of the services we charge for are listed below. However, not all of the services listed are provided where you live and these services will not be included in your charge.

Administration	This charge contributes towards the support provided by the Independent Living Team
Area Caretaking	The charge includes for a weekly visit to ensure internal and external communal areas is clean and safe
Building Insurance	This charge is for your buildings insurance.
Caretaking	This charge includes for the provision of daily service to ensure the blocks, is clean, safe and well maintained.
Communal Cleaning	This charge includes for the provision of service to ensure the blocks, is clean, safe and well maintained, includes caretaking and waste management
Communal Electricity	The charge covers the electricity in the communal areas.
Communal Heating	This charge covers heating costs for communal areas.
Concierge	This charge covers 24/7 CCTV monitoring, door entry (GDX) maintenance, repair and staffing.
Entryphone	This charge covers the cost of maintaining and repairing entryphone systems to a block



Estate mgmt	This charge covers the cost of any estate management functions not provided by Stockport Homes.
Furniture	This charge is for Furnished Tenancy only and relates to the individual property
Ground Rent	This is a regular charge paid by the leaseholder for occupying the land on which their property is situated.
Grounds maintenance	This charge cover the annual costs of maintaining and monitoring of extenal communal greenspaces, including, grass, hard surfaces, shrubs, hedges, trees and playgrounds
Laundry	This charge covers the maintenance/servicing of washing machines and dryers.
Lift Maintenance	This charge covers the servicing contract, insurance, call-outs and repairs to the lifts within your block.
Management Fee	This is a charge that the leaseholder or tenant pays, specifically for the management of the property or estate to include administrative, financial, and operational services such as budgeting, service charge collection, property inspections etc.
Minor Repairs	This charge covers necessary repairs to maintain the building and shared spaces.
Miscellaneous Debit	This charge covers the cost of council tax, water, electricity and heating within temporary accommodation properties. It does not apply to communal areas and is not housing benefit eligible.
Property Heating	This charge covers heating costs for communal areas.
PV Monitoring	This charge covers the monitoring of energy being generated by solar panels and all maintenance and repair costs.
Refuse Collection	This charge covers the cost of bin hire and collections for shared ownership blocks only.
Reversionary Rent	This refers to the rent payable by a sub-leaseholder, to the leaseholder aligning with the terms of the head lease.
Building Safety and Maintenance	Building safety checks and maintenance are procedures and regular inspections carried out to ensure a building is safe for its occupants and complies with relevant regulations. Examples include Fire Risk Assessments, Fixed Wire Testing and Asbestos Checks.



Scheme Manager Intensive Housing Management	This charge covers the provision of building safety checks, inspections, accompanied viewings, home visits and assistance with benefit checks.
Scheme Manager Support	If you live in supported accommodation where staff provide support to tenants, there is an additional charge called a management charge. This charge helps pay for those additional staff.
Sinking Fund	Sinking funds are used to save towards specific, planned expenses that may occur in the future, such as major property repairs, replacing a roof etc
Television aerials	This is for the maintenance of communal aerials and other satellite services.
TV Licence	This charge covers the cost of the television licence required for televisions in communal areas.
Water	This charge covers the maintenance of communal water tanks, including annual testing for legionella.
Wi-Fi	This charge covers the provision of wifi in the building, including the cost of the equipment, installation and a monthly subscription.
Window Cleaning	This charge covers the cleaning of communal windows on a routine basis, in line with the agreed contract specification. (This does not include individual residents' property windows).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **I claim Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. Will it cover all of my service charge?**

Not all services are eligible for Housing Benefit/Universal Credit, which may mean you will have to pay for a shortfall. Please contact your benefits provider to check whether all services are covered. If you're still unsure, please contact our Customer Finance team on **0161 217 6016**.

### **What if I can't afford the changes to my service charge?**

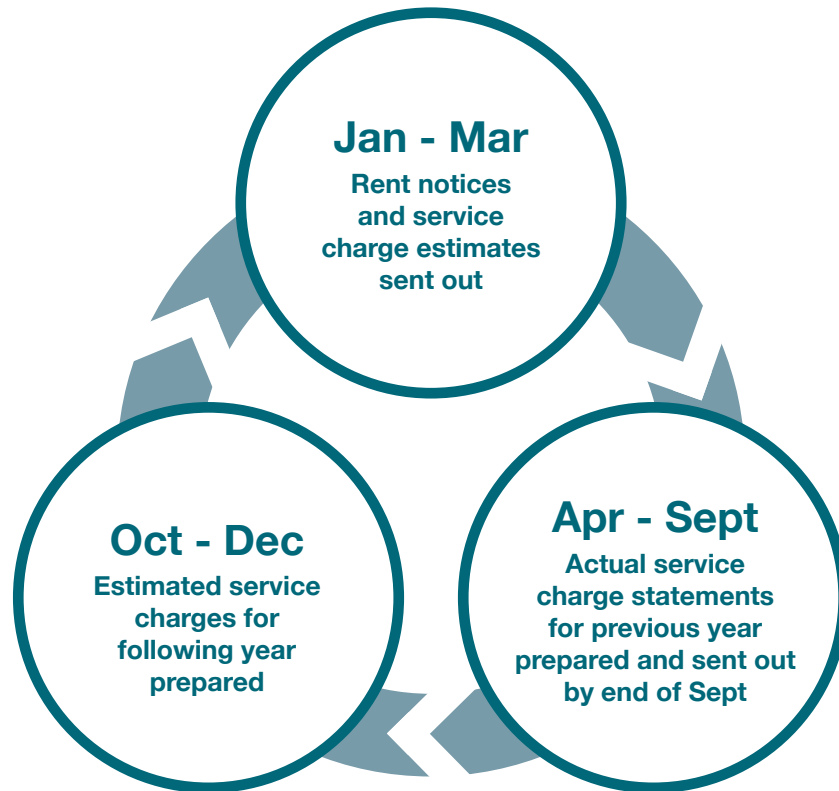
For the few customers who see a significant change to their service charge and are worried, we encourage you to contact our Money Advice Team team. We can offer support to help with your finances or support in helping you find employment, so please get in touch.

### **How do you know if customers are happy with the services they pay for?**

We regularly seek feedback from customers about our services. Customers are encouraged to contact our Feedback Team on **0161 217 6016** or by email on **feedback@stockporthomes.org** to register and comments, complaints or compliments. This is regularly analysed to identify any service improvements.

## The service charge annual cycle

Service charge estimates are sent out by the end of February each year. Actual spend statements for the previous year are sent out by the end of September.



### Throughout the year

Investigating and responding to resident queries