

Service Charges Explained



This leaflet tells you about the services Adullam Homes Housing Association (Adullam) may provide to help you look after your home. It tells you what service charges are and what they are used for.

As a landlord we have a legal duty to provide works and services to you as a **tenant or resident**. If you would like this leaflet in another format, such large print or audio, or another language, please contact our Customer Services team on **0121 271 0789** or email **info@adullam.org.uk**

Adullam does not make a profit from your service charge. Only the cost of providing services and repairs is included on your rent notification notice.

All of your service charges are variable and are based on the actual cost of the services provided in the previous financial year.

What are service charges?

A service charge is a payment towards the cost of services and repairs beyond those specifically for your house or flat or scheme. We refer to a group of properties that share the same services and repairs as a 'scheme'. For example, in a block of flats / scheme with a communal garden, the cost of maintaining that garden is covered by a service charge because it is available to all residents as a communal service, and it is outside of occupants' flats.

These services may include: -

- Heating
- Lighting
- Cleaning of communal areas
- Security

- Maintenance contracts
- White goods

The service charge includes a management charge to cover the cost of delivering these services. It does not pay for:-

- The cost of care or support provided to tenants
- General bills such as food bills

Are these the services that appear on my annual Rent Notification Notice?

Yes. This is an explanation of the main services Adullam provides to your home which are chargeable. If there is a charge on your annual Rent Notification that isn't explained in this list, please look at our website, <https://www.adullam.org.uk/> for a full list of all chargeable services.



What services does Adullam provide?

There are lots of different services that may be provided by Adullam and that are included as a service charge with your rent. Service charges pay for providing services to look after parts of your home that you share with other people. These services will be arranged by Adullam.

How is a service charge calculated?

Firstly, we set an estimate for your scheme / accommodation each financial year, because we do not know in advance the exact amount it will cost us to provide services and repairs. Adullam estimates the cost of the service charge for the coming financial year by looking at previous costs and changes for the service provided to residents. Also included are changes in the cost of contracts provided by the suppliers of services to Adullam and expected changes in VAT and inflation over the coming year.

An estimated service charge is prepared before the start of the financial year and sent to you each March. If you are a tenant in Wales it is sent in February. You will receive a rent statement at the same time.

Obtaining your views on services & charges

Listening to your views is an important part of service charges to ensure you have an

opportunity to contribute, to be heard, and to help shape the service delivery. We will ask you for your views on any change, addition, or removal of a service.

We will ask for your opinion

- Before introducing new or ending existing services
- When standards are set or changed

How will we do this?

We like to speak to you personally to get your views and will generally do this by face-to-face door knocking, by telephone, or via a meeting at a local venue. You are welcome to provide comments to your Adullam support staff.

If we are unable to obtain views from over **(50)%** of affected TRS, we will make a second and final attempt, again using the above methods.

Who may be affected?

Tenants and residents.

How long will it take?

When we consult with you it will be clearly communicated in writing, and we will give you 30 days to consider your response.

Which charges are eligible for my Housing Benefit claim?

ELIGIBLE CHARGES

Concierge

Enhanced Housing Management

Handyman

Landlord Charges

Cleaning Materials

Cleaning Contract

Insurance

Council Tax

Communal Fuel

Communal Water

Environmental Controls

Secure Building Access

Inventory Provision

Grounds Maintenance

Health & Safety

Renewals

Lift Maintenance

Fire Maintenance

Heating Maintenance

Property Equipment Maintenance

TV Aerial Maintenance

Telephone

Admin Charge

Service Charge Description

Service	Explanation of Service Charge
Admin Charge	<p>This is the cost for the management of administration and services charges as a % of the overall cost of the service charges They are contributions towards the “back office” operational costs of the Association. This charge encompasses Finance who manage, post and account for the tenants rent and service charges. ICT who provides and maintain the equipment that staff use.</p>
Concierge	<p>The is the cost of providing staff at your scheme to carry out activities such as monitoring CCTV, alarms and access to the building. They may also have cleaning and inspection duties</p>
Cleaning Contract	<p>Depending on the services provided this may include window cleaning, internal and external cleaning to communal areas, bin hire, rubbish collection and the equipment and materials used to carry out the service.</p>
Cleaning Materials	<p>These are costs for items provided to the you at entry at certain services, on a weekly basis. This charge provides for assisting you with cleaning your property. Cleaning materials given to you could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet cistern blocks • Toilet Rolls • Toilet cleaner (sometimes bleach depending on if a Sani flow toilet) • Bathroom Cleaning Cloths • Multi-purpose Bathroom Cleaner • Floor cleaner • Polish • Duster • Air freshener • Glass cleaner • Paper towel or glass cleaning cloths

Service	Explanation of Service Charge
Communal Fuel	Communal electricity charges such as internal and external lighting in your block/scheme or for communal heating. The cost is calculated from bills received from utility suppliers providing the service. This allows us to calculate a per accommodation cost for those that have this service.
Communal Water	Water costs for the supply of water to a communal area. Meter readings for charges are reviewed, noting both decreases and increases in charges, allowing us to calculate a per scheme / property cost for those that have this service.
Enhanced Housing Management	Costs for staff which are more intensively provided because of the additional management. Includes educating and informing you on all aspects of tenancy management including but not limited to dealing with nuisance issues, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and organised crime.
Environmental Controls	This charge covers rubbish such as skips or provision of a commercial waste company. Supply of safe disposal of sharps and Initial sanitary products.
Fire Maintenance	This cost is for all fire safety requirements, such as communal fire alarm systems and communal fire extinguishers. It includes the cost of annual servicing, weekly testing (as required by law), maintenance of the system and the equipment
Grounds Maintenance	Depending on the services provided this may include the cost of grounds maintenance contract, the upkeep of unadopted roads, footpaths, parking areas and the removal of abandoned vehicles. It may also include the cost of providing gardening equipment.
Heating Maintenance	Costs associated with maintenance and safety checks required for heating equipment. This varies from property to property, dependent upon the type of system you have.
Health & Safety	This will cover the cost of testing, inspecting and maintaining all communal electrical equipment. The testing of water for Legionella within the building. Any treatment works that result from this would be recharged (if applicable) through responsive maintenance.
Insurance	This is the cost of building insurance.
Inventory Provision	This charge relates to the provision of the property being set up with furniture. Following on after the first financial year of a property being set up this cost changes to a renewal charge for items needing to be replaced due to wear and tear or damage.
Maintenance Operative	This is the cost of an onsite Maintenance Officer and is based on the time they spend at your estate / scheme.

Service	Explanation of Service Charge
Landlord Charges	This is the cost of essential activities that we do to manage and provide you with services. This can include a contribution to IT equipment, human resources, and legal services.
Lift Maintenance	This is the cost of servicing, testing, repairing and insuring any lifts in communal areas.
Non-communal Fuel	Where heating and lighting are provided to your property, the charges are included within the service charge. They are shown separately on the statement because they are not eligible for Housing Benefit. Tenants pay for these charges where heating and lighting is supplied to their home as part of their rent.
Property Equipment Maintenance	These costs are for Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and hard-wired electrical safety certificates.
Renewals	This is for costs for items needing to be replaced due to wear and tear or damage.
Refuse and Pest Control	This is the cost of refuse collection, communal bin hire, and pest control in communal areas.
Secure Building Access	Covers the costs of communal CCTV monitoring systems, servicing and repairs. All door entry costs for servicing and maintaining the equipment.
Substance Testing	Costs associated with undertaking drug testing.
TV Aerial Maintenance	Relating to communal aerial maintenance and rental costs. For schemes this might include any licensing costs.
TV Licence	For schemes this might include any licensing costs.
Water Rates and Sewerage	Some schemes may have a water pump or sewerage pump to ensure that any waste water or sewerage is disposed of properly.
Wi-Fi	Schemes that pay to have Wi-Fi in their home.
Void Allowance	A percentage of the rent and eligible service charges to account for properties that are not let for periods of time.