

May 2008

Leasehold Services news



www.lewishamhomes.org.uk

Your estimated Service Charges 2008/09

Lewisham Homes is committed to providing you with excellent services. To do this, we are not only improving the services we currently provide to communal areas and facilities, but we are also introducing new ones.

We are also committed to ensuring that you understand the charges associated with our services and how we work them out. When calculating your Service Charges we looked carefully at our services to ensure that you are only asked to pay a share of service costs that are required by your lease and that the charges are reasonable for the services that we provide. As you will see from this newsletter, there are some new services and charges; however, you will only be charged if your block and/or estate benefits from the service.

Contacting us



Contact the Leasehold Services team by telephone: [020 8314 8211](tel:02083148211)



If you prefer, we are happy to make an appointment for you to meet us face-to-face.



You can also make online enquiries through our website: www.lewishamhomes.org.uk or email: leasehold@lewishamhomes.org.uk.

Extended phone hours

For the next two weeks the Leasehold Services Team will have extended phone hours. You can call your Leasehold Services Officer from [8.00am](#) until [7.00pm](#) Monday to Friday.

Communal repairs

If you need to report a communal repair, please telephone the Repairs Call Centre on [020 8314 8314](tel:02083148314).

Inside:

- Get involved
- Debt advice
- Information on your Service Charges
- Influence our services
- Leasehold Services Special Interest Group

Information on your charges

Your estimated Service Charges 2008/09

Building repairs

As a leaseholder you pay a share of the cost of repairs to the communal areas in your building and estate.

Lewisham Homes is improving the environment of estates and blocks by carrying out the necessary repairs to the communal areas. We have introduced a dedicated Communal Repairs Team. This team attends regular Estate Inspections with Caretaking staff and Tenancy Officers to improve residents' satisfaction with this service. For the latest timetable of Estate Inspections, please visit our website: www.lewishamhomes.org.uk or contact your Leasehold Services Officer.

Lewisham Homes has a contract with Lewisham Council's Building Services who carry out the majority of the communal repairs to properties. A number of these works require inspections to ensure that the correct work is ordered.

Lewisham Council operates a call centre that receives and logs all repair calls for Lewisham Homes, including repairs to communal areas. To improve residents' satisfaction with this service, Lewisham Homes has invested in increasing the number of staff in the call centre.

A share of the cost for the Communal Repairs Team, Building Services Inspection Team and the Call Centre is included in your Service Charges under the Repairs Charge. The charges take into account that leaseholders only benefit from communal repairs.

Pest control

A number of blocks have been identified for pest control treatment. This work is designed to treat existing problems in communal areas and be preventative. For leaseholders whose blocks are included in this year's programme, the charge for this service is included in the Repairs Charge. Further details about these works will be sent to leaseholders shortly.

During the year there may be the need to carry out pest control work in communal areas on other blocks. In these cases, leaseholders will be charged for the works as part of the Actual Cost Adjustment. Information will be given to leaseholders when the works are carried out.

If you have a pest control problem within your individual home, it is your responsibility to contact the Council's Pest Control team: 020 8314 7171 or email envirocall@lewisham.gov.uk. The Council will charge you for this service.

Caretaking, cleaning and sweeping

These services are provided by [Lewisham Homes](#) and [Lewisham Council](#):

- [Lewisham Homes](#) provides the service to the communal areas inside your blocks
- [Lewisham Council](#) provides the sweeping service on estates.

The charge for these services quoted in your bill is the amount that we estimate will be spent on your building and estate over the coming year.

This year the charge for the service provided by Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Council is shown under the heading 'Caretaking 1'. In future years the charge will be separated so that you can see at a glance the separate costs for internal communal areas and estate sweeping.

Caretaking inside your block ([Lewisham Homes](#))

Lewisham Homes has reviewed the way the caretaking service is managed. We have introduced a Quality Team to monitor the service to ensure that it meet our agreed standards, which we know is important to you.

The charge for this service broadly includes:

- Salaries of caretakers and their managers
- Equipment, uniforms, health and safety, vehicles, materials
- Bin/chute cleaning – this new contract will start in the autumn. We will write to you with more information once the contract has been allocated.

Sweeping on the estates ([Lewisham Council](#))

The Council continues to provide the sweeping service on estates. The cost includes:

- Salaries of sweeping staff and their managers
- Equipment, uniforms, health and safety, vehicles, materials.

Window cleaning

This is a new service. A contract for cleaning communal windows will start in autumn 2008 and it will involve two rounds of window cleaning between then and 31st March 09.

We carried out a pilot of the service last year following concern from residents living in low-rise and tower blocks with communal windows. Following the pilot we consulted tenants and leaseholders through the Area Panels and the Customer Panel and the feedback indicates that this is a welcome additional service.

If there are communal windows in your block, a charge for this service is included under a separate heading.

We will write to you with more information about this contract once it has been awarded.



Mechanical and electrical repairs and services (Technical Services)

Lewisham Homes deliver the mechanical and electrical repairs that are required to keep buildings and the equipment in them safe and in good repair. Our Mechanical and Electrical Services Team manages these services, which include maintenance of lighting conductors, fire safety equipment, water tanks, aerials and ventilation systems. You are only charged for the services provided to your building.



A share of the costs of the Mechanical and Electrical Services Team is included in your Service Charge if your block receives any technical services.

Communal lighting

This charge is based on the amount of electricity used to provide the communal lighting in your block. The commercial cost of electricity has increased significantly, which means that the cost of this item has risen by 33% compared to last year.

Communal heating

Where communal heating is supplied, leaseholders are charged for the cost of the fuel and boiler maintenance. There have been rises in the cost of commercial fuel recently. These rises are reflected in the 33% increase in the cost of this item compared to last year.

Lifts

The lift charge has different elements:

- regular maintenance
- responsive repairs
- Technical Officers managing this service.

The costs are calculated for each lift. You will pay a share of the above costs for any lifts in your block.

Grounds maintenance

This service is provided by Glendales and managed by Lewisham Council. The grounds maintenance cost in your Service Charge bill includes a share of the cost of:

- the Glendales contract
- tree maintenance
- Lewisham Council's management of the contract.

Entry phone

If your block has an entry phone, you will be charged a share of the cost of:

- keeping the communal parts of the system repaired
- Technical Officers managing this service.

If a repair is needed to the handset inside your home, you will be charged for this separately. Lewisham Homes is also required to charge you VAT at 17.5% on repairs to your handset.

Ground Rent, Insurance and Management

There is no change to the basis for these charges.

Included with your bill is the statutory notice that we are required to send on behalf of the landlord, Lewisham Council, about your Ground Rent. Although Ground Rent is not a Service Charge, it is included in the Service Charge invoice as this a cost efficient way of billing.

The Management Charge includes the costs for the Leasehold Services Team engaged in work on annual Service Charges, including calculating the estimated and actual cost, billing and recovery. The Management Charge also includes some of the other management costs incurred by Lewisham Homes, for example the cost of IT, finance services, office accommodation and running costs, such as postage, printing and telephones.

How would you prefer to receive information from us?

To help reduce costs, we are considering sending you information such as this newsletter by email and making it available to download on our website. Please complete this form to give an indication of how you would prefer to receive information in the future.

Please tick your preferred choice of communication:

- I would prefer to receive information by post
- I would prefer to receive information by email
- I would prefer to access information on the Lewisham Homes website

Where possible we will look to provide information in your preferred format.

Comments:

Name:

Address:

Email address:

Debt advice

Like your mortgage and utility bills, your Service Charges are a priority cost that you must pay. If you are having difficulty paying your Service Charge it is important that you contact Leasehold Services to discuss your circumstances so that we can work out a way forward together.

The Debt Self-Help pack developed by Lewisham Homes for tenants and leaseholders may also be useful to you if you are struggling with debt. This can be obtained from Leasehold Services or downloaded from www.lewishamhomes.org.uk, under the Home Ownership section of the site.



Leasehold Services have caseworkers who can discuss your particular circumstances with you and tell you about the loans that are available for leaseholders having to pay for major works. Leasehold Services are able to offer home visits for leaseholders who require a personal interview but are unable to come to the office.

Independent debt advice is also available from specialist agencies, for example the Citizens Advice Bureau and the National Debtline (0808 808 4000).

Translation and other format request

- Community Involvement – Improve our services by giving your ideas. Please provide your details below.
- Përfshirja e Komunitetit – Përmirësoni shërbimet tuaja duke shprehur idetë tuaja.
- Ju lutemi jepni të dhënat tuaja më poshtë.
- 社区改善——提出您的想法，改善我们的服务。请在下方提供您的详细信息。
- சமுதாயத்தின் ஈடுபாடு - உங்கள் கருத்துக்களை அளிப்பதன் மூலம் எங்கள் சேவைகளை மேம்படுத்துதல். தயவுசெய்து உங்கள் விவரங்களைக் கீழே அளிக்கவும்.
- Toplum katılımı – Sizin fikirleriniz ile verdiğimiz hizmetleri iyileştirmek için. Lütfen aşağıya bilgilerinizi yazınız.
- Sự tham gia của Cộng đồng - Nâng cao chất lượng dịch vụ của chúng tôi bằng cách nêu lên ý kiến của quý vị. Xin cung cấp thông tin về quý đây.
- Implication dans la communauté – Améliorez nos services en nous faisant part de vos idées. Veuillez noter vos coordonnées ci-dessous.
- Ka Qeybgalka Bulshada –Wanaaji adeegyadaada adiga oo fikradahaaga ka dhiibanaya. Fadlan faafaahintaada ku bixi halkan hoose.
Name, Emri, Nom, 姓名, Magac, பெயர், İsim, Tén:
Telephone No, Numri i telefonit, Numéro de téléphone, 电话号码, Lambarka telefoonka, தொலைபேசி எண், Telefon no, Số điện thoại:
Address, Adresa, Adresse, 地址, Cinwaanka, முகவரி, Adres, Địa chỉ:

- Gjuhët/Albanian
- 中文/Mandarin
- தமிழ்/Tamil
- Tiếng Việt/Vietnamese

- Français/French
- Soomaali/Somali
- Türkçe ve/Turkish

For other formats tick the appropriate box below:

- Large Print
- Audio tape
- Braille

Return to:
 Dërgojeni tek:
 À renvoyer à:
 寄至:
 Ku soo celi:
 அனை உபய விசேஷ்டிய முகவரி:
 Şu adrese geri gönderin:
 Gửi trả lại cho:

Lewisham Homes
Freepost (No stamp required)
SE6 4TW

Join the Leaseholder Special Interest Group to ensure your voice is heard!

Lewisham Homes launched the Leaseholder Special Interest Group (LSIG) on 17th April 2008. The purpose of the group is to enable leaseholders to influence the policies and procedures of those issues that only affect leaseholders.



22 leaseholders attended the initial meeting which was a promising start. However we need more of you to get involved and help ensure our services meet your needs and expectations.

The LSIG have worked with Lewisham Homes' Leasehold Services team to put together a consultation programme for the following year. Please have a read through the programme which follows and consider which issues you would like to be consulted on.

If you are interested in getting involved in the LSIG or taking part in any of the upcoming consultation, please fill out your details on the form attached and send back in the prepaid envelope provided.

Other ways of getting involved and influencing services

In addition to the Leaseholder Special Interest Group, there are many other ways for you to get involved. For example, the Lewisham Homes Community Panel invites representatives from various Council services and community groups to attend their meetings and discuss how these groups could help their community.

To find out about getting involved with these groups and other ways to share your views on any of our services, please contact the Community Involvement Team on [020 8314 9267](tel:02083149267) or email getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk. Alternatively, please complete the form entitled 'Get Involved' which follows.

**GET
INVOLVED!**

GET INVOLVED!

HAVE A SAY IN YOUR HOUSING SERVICES!
TAKE PART IN TRAINING COURSES

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

I would like to be involved by: (tick all that apply)

- Attending conferences Attending focus groups
- Joining my TRA Becoming a resident inspector
- Taking part in online discussions Commenting via email
- Taking part in estate inspections Attending special interest groups
- Completing surveys via telephone via Post face to face

I have an interest in: (tick all that apply)

- Antisocial behaviour Equalities policies
- Services for young people Caretaking and maintenance
- Rent setting Leasehold Services
- Communications Performance monitoring
- Residents charter Repairs and improvements
- Other (please specify)

GET INVOLVED!

getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk

I am available: (tick all that apply)

- Mornings Afternoons
- Evenings Weekends

I am interested in training courses: (tick all that apply)

- Chairing and meetings skills Computing (a range of levels)
- Secretary or treasurer skills Plumbing
- Equality and diversity Painting and decorating
- First Aid Involving young people
- Newsletters and publicity Influencing and negotiation skills
- Other (please specify)

To help us ensure all sections of the community are involved please give the following information.

I would describe myself as:

- | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|
| White | <input type="checkbox"/> British | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other white background | <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other black background | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi |
| Mixed | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian background |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White and black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White and black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other mixed background | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish Cypriot | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female | | |
| Age group: | Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> | 18-25 <input type="checkbox"/> | 26-59 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | 60-74 <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 75 <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes No
- If yes please specify)



020 8314 9267
WWW.LEWISHAMHOMES.ORG.UK



PLEASE RETURN TO:
LEWISHAM HOMES
FREEPOST (NO STAMP REQUIRED)
9 HOLBEACH ROAD, CATFORD, LONDON SE6 4TW

OUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TEAM WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU SOON!

Leasehold Consultation Programme

Get involved!

To take part in the upcoming leasehold consultation, please select the activities you are interested in below and then send it back to us using the prepaid envelope provided. We will write to you prior to the meeting to confirm the details.

Activity	Date and time	Venue	Topic	Tick if you would like to attend
Focus group	11th June 08 1.30pm-3.00pm	North Area Office, 1A Eddystone Tower, Oxestalls Road, SE8 3QU	Service Charges and all service costs including management expenses but not insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11 th June 08 7.00pm - 8.30pm	North Area Office, 1A Eddystone Tower , Oxestalls Road, SE8 3QU		
	18 th June 08 2.00pm - 3.30pm	South Area Office, 9 Holbeach Road, Catford SE6 4TW		
	18 th June 08 7.00pm - 8.30pm	South Area Office, 9 Holbeach Road, Catford SE6 4TW		
Leasehold Special Interest Group	24 th July 08 7.00pm- 9.00pm	Civic Suite, Catford SE6	Service Charges and management charges	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus group	15th July 08 2.00pm - 3.30pm	North Area Office, 1A Eddystone Tower , Oxestalls Road, SE8 3QU	Insurance and Lewisham Homes Service Standards. Also, could roll the Customer Service Standards to these groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
	15 th July 08 7.00pm - 8.30pm	South Area Office, 9 Holbeach Road , Catford SE6 4TW		
People's days	12 th July 08	Mountsfield Park	Leasehold Services staff will be available to answer your questions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residents' open day	13 th Sept 08	See September's edition of Home Magazine for details	Leasehold Services will be present to answer your questions and discuss topics of interest to leaseholders	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus group	16 th Sept 08 2.00pm - 4.00pm	North Area Office, 1A Eddystone Tower , Oxestalls Road, SE8 3QU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paying for major works, including Right to a Loan and discretionary loans, sinking funds Leaseholder handbook - design, layout, content, cost 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	16 th Sept 08 7.00pm- 9.00pm	South Area Office, 9 Holbeach Road , Catford SE6 4TW		
LSIG	18 th Sept 08 7.00pm- 9.00pm	Venue to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance feedback from focus group Leasehold Service Standards Property Service Representative to attend 	<input type="checkbox"/>
LSIG	20 th Nov 08 7.00pm- 9.00pm	Venue to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paying for major works, including Right to a Loan and discretionary loans, sinking funds discussion and feedback from focus groups Leaseholder handbook - design layout, content, cost and feedback from focus group 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Telephone and email survey, focus group for leaseholders in street properties	November 08	Venue to be confirmed	The right to buy the freehold and compulsory purchase orders	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone, email and post	November 08/ ongoing	Telephone, email and post	Lewisham Homes learning more about our leaseholders to help us develop our services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone, email, and focus group	November 08/ ongoing	Telephone, email and post Date and venue for focus group to be confirmed	What extra services might leaseholders like to buy into, for example gas servicing	<input type="checkbox"/>
LSIG	15 January 09 7.00pm- 9.00pm	Venue to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing the freehold, including compulsory purchase orders - feedback from targeted approach • Update on profiling leaseholders - how we can use this information to improve our services. • Buying into services - feedback from focus group responses group • Alterations and improvements to leasehold properties 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus groups, telephone and email	17 th February 09 7.00pm- 9.00pm	Venue to be confirmed	Working with leaseholders who do not live in their properties and those who are landlords	<input type="checkbox"/>
LSIG	19 th March 09	Leaseholder Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of current year's consultation - what worked well and what needs to change • Feedback working with leaseholders who do not live in their properties and those who are landlords 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your details

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Mobile:.....

Please return this form using the enclosed prepaid envelope