

# Your Service Charge Certificate explained

## What is a Service Charge Certificate?

This is an annual statement of your actual contribution as a leaseholder to Hounslow Homes' costs for managing, maintaining, repairing and providing services to the building that includes your flat. If your block is part of an estate the Certificate may also include a contribution to estate costs. If your flat is connected to a district heating system it will have heating/hot water costs.

The Certificate applies to a named financial year. The example included here relates to 2003/04 because we prepared it before certificates for 2004/05 were available.

Your Certificate has been approved by the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) of the Council as a fair summary of costs.

**Note:** The Certificate does not include recharges for major works, such as environmental improvements, redecoration and a new roof or windows. Charges for these large items of expenditure are invoiced separately from annual maintenance costs.

### Translations

If you would like this information on leaseholder service charge certificates in another language, large print or Braille please call 020 8583 2299 or 020 8583 3121.

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Somali   | Haddii aad u baahan tahay in warbixintan ku saabsan lacagaha lagu dallaco qofka guriga deggan iyo sida aad uga qaybqaadan kartid arrimaha saameeya dadka guryaha deggan , ama in laguugu turjumo luqad ama qaab kale, fadlan wac 020 8583 2299 amar minicom 020 8583 3122. |
| Albanian | Nese keni nevoje per informatat per shpenzimet per qiradhenesit dhe se si mund te merrni pjese ne ceshtjet te cilat kane ndikim tek qiradhenesit, ne gjuhen tjeter ose format tjeter, ju lutemi thirrni 020 8583 2299 ose minikom 020 8583 3122.                           |
| Farsi    | यदि आपको लीज़होल्डरों के खर्चों के बारे में और लीज़होल्डरों को प्रभावित करने वाले विषयों में कैसे शामिल हो सकते हैं इस बारे में जानकारी हिन्दी में या किसी और रूप में चाहिए तो कृपया 020 8583 2299 पर फोन करें या 020 8583 2299 पर मिनीकॉम करें।                           |
| Hindi    | बीअडोल्डरना बाअुस संबंधी आपेबी आ माडिती अने बीअडोल्डरने असर करतां मुद्दाओमां तमे डेवी रीते सामेब थई शडो अे विषेनी विगत जे तमने गुजरानीमां अथवा बीअ स्वडुपमां जेठेनी डोथ तो, मडेरआनी करी आ नंबर पर संपर्क साधो: 020 8583 2299 अथवा मिनिडोम: 020 8583 3122                   |
| Gujarati | अगर شما احتیاج به این اطلاعات در مورد هزینه ماهیانه ساکنین و چگونگی شرکت ورزیدن در مسائلی که بر امور ساکنین اثر می گذارد، به زبان دیگر و یا شکل دیگری دارید، لطفاً با تلفن 020 8583 2299 و یا برای ناشنوا با شماره 020 8583 3122 تماس بگیرید.                              |
| Arabic   | إذا كنت تحتاج الحصول على هذه المعلومات عن التغييرات في أمور التملك وكيف يُمكنك أن تتدخل بالقضايا التي تؤثر على المستأجرين، في لغة أو صيغة أخرى، رجاءً اتصل على 020 8583 2299 أو المينيكوم 020 8583 3122.                                                                   |
| Panjabi  | ਲੀਜ਼ਹੋਲਡਰ ਚਾਰਜਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਲੀਜ਼ਹੋਲਡਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੈ, ਬਾਰੇ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿਚ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ 020 8583 2297 ਜਾਂ ਮਿਨੀਕਾਮ ਕਰੋ: 020 8583 3122                                                     |
| Urdu     | اگر آپ کو لیز ہولڈر چارجز (لیز ہولڈروں کے واجبات)، اور لیز ہولڈروں کے معاملات آپ پر کیے اثر انداز ہو سکتے ہیں، ان کے بارے میں معلومات اردو زبان یا کسی اور ساخت/بناوٹ میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم فون: 0208 583 2299 یا مینی کوم: 0208 583 3122 پر رابطہ کریں               |

## 1. Charges that may apply to your block

These are your contribution to the actual running costs for your block.

**Block Repairs:** day-to-day repairs to the external or common parts of your building.

**Caretaking Services:** charges include costs associated with:

- Inspecting your building / estate and reporting defects.
- Cleaning and litter picking.
- Removing bulky refuse.
- Caretakers' travel time, cost of materials, uniforms.
- Monitoring the service.

A Caretaker Schedule, showing the service provided and the caretaker's visiting times, should be displayed on your estate notice board.

**Communal Electricity:** lighting common parts and external areas including:

- Door entry systems.
- Lifts and heating.
- Aerial boosters.
- Water boosters.

**Communal TV Aerial:** running costs for a communal TV aerial; charges apply whether or not you choose to use it.

**Concierge:** charge for providing the Concierge Service to your block or estate and the costs of the Concierge office.

**District Heating:** charge for providing heating/hot water through the communal heating system, including fuel, repairs and maintenance.

Your charge is based on the heating points for your flat.

**Door Entry System:** charge for maintaining the system and twice-yearly inspection under a planned maintenance contract.

**Dry Riser:** part of the fire-fighting system in high-rise blocks, the charge is for any repairs and for twice yearly inspection under a planned maintenance contract.

**Lift Maintenance:** charge for repairing and maintaining lift(s) in your building, including monthly inspections under a planned maintenance contract.

**Ventilation:** charge for maintaining extractor fans to ventilate internal bathrooms under the planned maintenance contract.

**Water Booster:** pumps water to the top of high buildings; charges are for inspections and works under the planned maintenance contract.

## Your Block - Units

The building where your flat is located and the number of properties in your block. The costs under each category in Section 1 (except District Heating) are divided by the number of units to calculate your contribution. Charges for heating are apportioned by heating points.

## Your Estate - Units

The name of your estate and number of properties on it. The costs under each category in Section 2 are divided by the number of units to calculate your contribution.

### What do the 4 columns in the certificate show?

1. **Description** - the various services we charge for. They do not all apply to everyone
2. **Actual Cost** - your contribution to the actual cost of each service for the financial year
3. **Original Estimate** - the estimated charge applied to your property for that financial year
4. **Difference** - the difference between the estimated charge and the actual cost, for each service we provide and for the total of all services. This may result in a credit or an additional charge to you. A credit is shown by a minus (-) sign.

| Service Charge Certificate - sample copy                                                                                                |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2003 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004                                                                               |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Names:                                                                                                                                  | Mr A Random & Mrs B Random | Date:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct 04    |
| Property Address:                                                                                                                       | 1 Random Road, Random Town |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Account Number:                                                                                                                         | 11111111111111             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Your Block:                                                                                                                             | Random Road Block 1-20     | Units:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 20                         |
| Your Estate:                                                                                                                            | Random Road estate         | Units:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 100                        |
| Section 1 - Charges for your Block                                                                                                      |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Description                                                                                                                             | Actual Cost                | Original Estimate                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Difference ('-' is credit) |
| Block Repairs                                                                                                                           | £83.60                     | £50.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | £33.60                     |
| Caretaking Services                                                                                                                     | £169.94                    | £160.09                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | £9.85                      |
| Communal Electricity                                                                                                                    | £8.15                      | £45.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | -£36.85                    |
| Communal TV Aerial                                                                                                                      | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Concierge                                                                                                                               | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| District Heating                                                                                                                        | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Door Entry System                                                                                                                       | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Dry Riser                                                                                                                               | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Lifts                                                                                                                                   | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Ventilation                                                                                                                             | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Water Booster                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| <b>Total Block Charges:</b>                                                                                                             | <b>£261.69</b>             | <b>£255.09</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>£6.60</b>               |
| Section 2 - Charges for your Estate                                                                                                     |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Description                                                                                                                             | Actual Cost                | Original Estimate                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Difference                 |
| Estate Repairs                                                                                                                          | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| Grounds Maintenance                                                                                                                     | £21.43                     | £9.25                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £12.18                     |
| <b>Total Estate Charges:</b>                                                                                                            | <b>£21.43</b>              | <b>£9.25</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>£12.18</b>              |
| Section 3 - Charges for Administration and Management                                                                                   |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Description                                                                                                                             | Actual Cost                | Original Estimate                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Difference                 |
| Administration/Management Charge                                                                                                        | £163.80                    | £181.74                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | -£17.94                    |
| District Heating Administration Charge                                                                                                  | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| <b>Total Administration/Management</b>                                                                                                  | <b>£163.80</b>             | <b>£181.74</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>-£17.94</b>             |
| Section 4 - Manual Adjustments                                                                                                          |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| Description                                                                                                                             | Actual Cost                | Original Estimate                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Difference                 |
| Manual Adjustments                                                                                                                      | £0.00                      | £0.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £0.00                      |
| <b>Total Actual Costs 2003/2004:</b>                                                                                                    | <b>£446.92</b>             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |
| <b>Total Estimated Costs 2003/2004:</b>                                                                                                 |                            | <b>£446.08</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |
| <b>Difference added (+) or credited (-) to your service charge account:</b>                                                             |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>+£0.84</b>              |
| I certify that in my opinion the above is a fair Summary of costs in accordance with Sections 18-30 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 |                            | Landlord's name and address: c/o The Council Solicitor, Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow, TW3 4DN, at which Notices (including Notices of Proceedings) may be served for the purposes of Section 48(1) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987. |                            |
| Assistant Chief Executive (Finance)                                                                                                     |                            | <b>Account Queries should be directed to Hounslow Homes, as managers of Council properties.</b>                                                                                                                                                 |                            |

## 2. Charges that may apply to your estate

**Estate Repairs:** charge for maintenance of the external areas of your estate, including estate lighting, boundary walls, paths and playground equipment, and for removal of abandoned vehicles.

**Grounds Maintenance:** charge for works to grass or planted areas around your block/estate, including mowing, pruning and re-planting, plus some weed control on hard surfaces such as paths and playgrounds. Most work is carried out under a grounds maintenance contract, but sometimes it is necessary to order additional work, that is not covered by the contract.

## 3. Charges for Administration & Management

**Administration and Management Charge:** the charge is a contribution to the cost of managing estates and for providing services to leaseholders and includes:

- Providing a housing management service, including inspections, repairs, dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour, responding to enquiries.
- Meeting with residents.
- Maintaining records of leaseholders.
- Identifying rechargeable costs, and calculating leaseholders' estimated and actual recharges for each financial year.
- Billing service charges and ground rent.
- Collecting charges from leaseholders and accounting for payments received.
- Arranging building insurance and making claims in respect of the structure, common parts and supporting leaseholders in their own block policy claims.
- Providing newsletters and handbooks.
- Dealing with queries.

NB. A separate administration and management charge is applied to major works.

**District Heating Administration:** a contribution to the staffing costs and overheads for heating engineers and leaseholder services staff.

## 4. Manual Adjustments

Occasional changes to charges that are input by staff not generated by the computer system.

## 5. Difference applied to your service charge account

The net difference between the estimated charge and the actual charge for the year. The balance this produces on your service charge account will depend on the payments you have made.

## Further Information

If you want further explanation or information about anything included on your Certificate or sent with it, such as details of the repairs carried out to your block or estate last year, please contact Leaseholder Services at Home Ownership Unit, 21 High Street, Feltham, Middlesex, TW13 4AG or phone:

**West area** (Feltham, Bedfont & Hanworth)  
**020 8583 3418**

**Central area** (Hounslow, Heston, Cranford & Isleworth) **020 8583 3417**

**East area** (Brentford & Chiswick) **020 8583 4295**

**Email:** [homeownership@hounslowhomes.org.uk](mailto:homeownership@hounslowhomes.org.uk)  
**Fax:** 020 8583 4133

### Challenges to Charges

If you think we have charged you for works or services that were not carried out at your block or estate, please let us know, preferably in writing and giving as much detail as possible. We will investigate and let you know our decision. If we agree that there is a charging error we will adjust your account and the accounts of anyone else affected by the error.

### Dispute Resolution

If we cannot agree on the charges you can follow our complaints' procedure, you can take advantage of the Arbitration Service, or you can take the matter to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT).

The LVT can decide a variety of issues around service charges, including liability for charges, whether costs for works and services are or will be reasonably incurred, whether the charges for works and services are reasonable and, in circumstances where the law requires us to consult leaseholders, whether statutory

consultation has been properly carried out. Leaflets relating to these options are available in Hounslow Homes' offices, or we can post them to you on request.

### Further advice.

General advice on leasehold matters can be obtained from:

The Leasehold Advisory Service (LEASE)  
2nd Floor, 31 Worship Street, London EC2A 2DX  
website: [www.lease-advice.org](http://www.lease-advice.org)  
Tel 020 7374 5380.

### Hardship

If you go into debt without informing us of any problems, or if you fail to keep agreements for the payment of charges, we may take arrears recovery action against you that could ultimately place your home at risk.

If you are having difficulty paying any of the charges collected by Home Ownership, please contact our Income Recovery Team without delay. They are available on the following numbers:

**West area** (Feltham, Bedfont & Hanworth)  
**020 8583 3966**

**Central area** (Hounslow, Heston, Cranford & Isleworth) **020 8583 3965**

**East Area** (Brentford & Chiswick) 020 8583 3949  
Email: [Homeownership@hounslowhomes.org.uk](mailto:Homeownership@hounslowhomes.org.uk)

Home Ownership is working in partnership with CHAS, an independent debt advice and counselling service, to provide support for some leaseholders in hardship. Further information can be obtained from the numbers above.

Financial advice can also be obtained from Citizens' Advice Bureaux and from the Council's Welfare Benefits & Money Advice section on:  
**020 8583 5016.**