



NORTH STAR

Creating homes, building futures

YOUR
SERVICE
CHARGES
EXPLAINED

northstarhg.co.uk



What is a Service Charge?

If you live in a house or flat with shared areas or facilities, you pay a service charge. This helps cover the cost of services, maintenance and repairs. For example, it might help pay for cleaning and maintaining shared spaces like entrances, stairwells, or lifts.

Your service charge can also include estate charges. These cover things like maintaining the grounds in the area where your home is.

Ongoing Service Charges

We work out service charges based on what we spent last year. We also include any expected increases due to inflation, such as for cleaning or grounds maintenance.

To keep costs as low as possible, we set up contracts to manage price increases. We make sure the services you get are good value for money. We also think about any changes to services that might affect costs.

We do our best to forecast costs accurately so your yearly service charge doesn't change too much. However, some things, like utility bills, are harder to predict as we don't know how much energy will be used or how much will be spent.

What services are covered by the Service Charge?

We provide lots of services to the properties we manage. Some services make sure your home is safe, while others help maintain a good standard of living.

More details about these services, and who provides them, are on the next page.

Administration Fee

We charge an administration fee to cover the costs of calculating and arranging service charges.

Currently, the administration fee is 15% of the total service charge. This is in line with other social housing providers like us.

Management Charge

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.

INFORMATION ON SOME OF NORTH STAR'S SERVICES



Landscaping

Tivoli carry out all landscaping work. Grass cutting takes place from March through to October. Other services may include pruning shrubs, weeding, and maintaining hedges or hard surfaces.



Cleaning/ Window Cleaning

Hispec is our current cleaning contractor. Windows are cleaned monthly and communal areas are cleaned either fortnightly or monthly, depending on the site.



Water Safety

In some schemes, we must provide a legionella control and monitoring programme to ensure good water hygiene. Hydrochem provides this service, which includes cleaning showerheads and storage tanks.



Utility Costs

We have fixed prices for gas (SEFE) and electric (EDF) until March 2027. These costs cover communal lighting, heating, and power supplies.



Concierge

Some blocks have an onsite concierge, provided by Northern Security Limited. They provide security to communal areas.



Lift Servicing, Maintenance & Fire Alarm Testing

MMC Facility Management Ltd handles lift servicing and repairs. They also test fire alarms weekly at some properties.



Fire Alarms, Fire Safety Equipment, Door Entry & CCTV

Tees Fire Services looks after fire alarms, fire safety equipment, and door entry systems in communal areas. They also fix any faults to keep everyone safe.



What if I need more information?

If you require further information relating to your service charge, please contact your Housing Officer.

Help us to improve our services!

If you would like to have your say on how we deliver services, there are lots of ways to get involved. Please visit www.northstarhg.co.uk/get-involved/its-your-voice/ for more details or scan the QR code to sign up to be notified about opportunities. There are chances to enter prize draws and receive payments for taking part!



North Star

North Star brings together the skills, resources and values of Endeavour, Teesdale and Darlington Housing Associations.

GET IN TOUCH

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Please note that all calls to our Customer Services Team are monitored and recorded.

<https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/privacy-statement/>

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