

WELCOME To SIGNATURE HOUSE APARTMENTS



Independent Living means you can continue to live independently and enjoy a social life, with the confidence that help is at hand if you need it

YOUR GUIDE
To
INDEPENDENT LIVING
At
SIGNATURE HOUSE APARTMENTS

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Key Facts



Your Landlord

The Trust was originally formed on 11th September 2000. Amica Care Trust relaunched under its new name on January 7th 2019.

The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees

The Trust owns and operates four nursing and social care homes

The Homes are situated in Bromsgrove, Crewkerne, Dorchester and Exmouth

The Trust is the freeholder of 126 independent living apartments and cottages in Exmouth and Dorchester co-located with three of the Trust's Care Homes, and an independent older persons living complex in Taunton, Somerset

The Trust's Managing Agent is: Alpha Housing Services Limited. They are a dedicated local block and estate management firm established in 1988. As members of the Institute of Residential Property Management and accredited through the Association of Residential Managing Agents, they hold high expectations of themselves.

Amica Care Trust is a registered charity who has your best interests at heart of everything we do. Led by a board of dedicated Trustees, any financial surplus is reinvested into the development of services for everyone who lives or works for the Trust

Amica Care Trust

Amica Care Trust is a charity whose purpose is to care for older people and the disabled. The Trustees policy is to own and manage care services in the United Kingdom and to develop other care services of an innovative nature with particular emphasis on the provision of independent living accommodation for older people. AMICA CARE TRUST is a closed trust and the properties it manages must be self-supporting so that, at the appropriate time, further developments can be undertaken.

Alpha Housing Services Ltd is the managing agent which provides the services for the upkeep and maintenance of Gatchell Oaks. The services are paid for by the residents of Gatchell Oaks through the Service Charge.

Amica Care attach great importance of effective communication with residents and consultation on matters of importance. For this reason, it is essential that residents are fully aware of their rights, the major items within the lease, the people involved as the Landlord and Management Company, the services that are provided and the way in which residents' concerns are dealt with. This Information Guide, (which is supplied to all residents), will try to explain these points. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Independent Living Manager on site or the administration staff at the addresses listed on pages VII, 28 and 37 of this document.

John Whittaker
Chair of Trustees
Amica Care Trust

Our Vision

To innovate, empower and inspire everyone to create vibrant communities and to live their best lives.

Our Mission:

To provide exceptional care and support to all within our Amica communities. We help to maintain independence, creating special moments and fulfilling lives.

Our Staff Values:

- **Positive Attitude**
- **Kindness and Respect**
- **Open and Honest**
- **Working together**
- **Passion and Joy**

INTRODUCTION

The Landlord

Amica Care Trust
Gatchell House
Gatchell Oaks
Trull
Taunton
Somerset
TA3 7EG

Please note that the above address is also the address at which any notices may be served on the Freeholder (Landlord).

The property you occupy is held on a lease of 125 years commencing on 1 October 2012. You as the lessee and the landlord are both bound by the terms of the lease and by relevant legislation. It may be that a relative is the lessee but that you live in the property. We endeavour to treat all residents as if they are lessees.

Your landlord has a legal obligation to insure, repair and renew the structural fabric of the building, including communal areas, and provide certain services. The lessees have the obligation to bear the reasonable costs of all such works and services.

THE MANAGING AGENT

Alpha Housing Services Limited has been appointed by your landlord to provide the management services set down in the lease and summarised in this information guide.

Alpha Housing Services Limited has its administration Office at:

1st Floor, 1 Chartfield House
Castle Street
Taunton
Somerset TA3 7EG
Tel: (01823) 270661

email: info@alphahosuingsservices.co.uk

BUYING AN INDEPENDENT LIVING PROPERTY



We kindly request that you meet with the Independent Living Manager before you buy so that you are aware of the services offered and the commitments you will be entering into.

**Your Independent Living Manager is:
JASMIN PURNELL**

If you are thinking of buying one of our Independent Living properties, there are several key points you should bear in mind:

- 1 You are strongly recommended to commission a private building survey prior to purchase
- 2 This development has a minimum age restriction of fifty-five years or older for residents and purchasers/owners or those with a Relevant Disability. Relevant Disability is classified as a physical disability only, and does not include those with a mental disability. No other persons, including family members (other than a spouse), under the restricted age are permitted to live in the property.
- 3 The Independent Living Manager is there to assist and can provide information on the services provided which are also listed in accordance with the Schedule of Services and Charges which are reviewed on an annual basis
- 4 You should satisfy yourself that you can afford to meet the payment of service charges, ground rent and other outgoings associated with living in an Independent Living property. This guide helps to identify the costs you should expect
5. All prospective purchasers must attend an assessment with the Independent Living Manager prior to purchase.

SIGNATURE APARTMENTS COMMUNAL FACILITIES

Those allocated parts are open to all residents of the apartments. The communal rooms can be used for both impromptu and organised gatherings and will be available for private hire by residents on payment of a fee, which will be credited to the Trusts accounts. When arranging an event, it is requested that as much advance notice as possible should be given to the Independent Living Manager

RECEPTION AREA

Within the main entrance foyer at Signature Apartments there is comfortable seating and a reception this is available to all residents to meet and greet visitors.



MAUMBURY CAFE

Available to all the residents on a daily basis, the lounge can be used for dining, impromptu and organised gatherings and will be available for private hire by residents.



LIBRARY

This area is available to all residents of the apartments as a quiet room for reading and computer use.

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COMMUNAL LOUNGE TERRACE

This area is available to all residents of the apartments. The area can be used for impromptu and organised gatherings and is available for private hire by residents.



GUEST APARTMENT



The Guest Apartment is situated on the 4th Floor of Signature Apartments and is an en-suite double room which is available for Trust use or for rent by the residents of Signature Apartments friends or relatives. The apartment is reserved on a 'first come first served' basis

HAIRDRESSING



A facility is available within the adjacent care home for use by a hairdresser. The Independent Living Manager will organise the use of this facility with the residents.

DRYING ROOM

There is a drying room located in the basement area for the use of all residents. This is used on a 'first come first served' basis.

COMMUNAL GROUNDS AT SIGNATURE HOUSE

Designed to be a quiet, tranquil space where you can enjoy the fresh air in a peaceful environment. These large, secluded gardens are for the shared enjoyment of the residents of Signature Apartments and Signature House



SIGNATURE APARTMENTS INDEPENDENT LIVING MANAGER

The Independent Living Manager is a very important part of the community and is there to act as a reassuring presence, as the Signature House representative on the spot and your friendly neighbour.

Your home will benefit from a 24-hour emergency call system as well as an Independent Living Manager whose hours are Monday -Friday from 09.00 to 17.00. Your emergency call system is in the form of a pendant worn either on the wrist or round the neck. You must check your pendent monthly to ensure that it is still working.

Primarily accountable to the Amica Care Trust and responsible for the good management of Signature Apartments, independent living accommodation, and the Domiciliary Care Agency in providing, high quality, efficient and effective services for the residents as required by the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association and in accordance with Trust policy.

SIGNATURE APARTMENTS MAINTENANCE OFFICERS

The Maintenance Officer(s) is/are responsible for the maintenance of the exterior paths, car park and communal areas and works in conjunction with the Independent Living Manager for the benefit, security, and wellbeing of the residents.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Do you have to be a certain age to live in Signature Apartments?

A. Yes you do, these apartments are designed for anyone aged 55 years or over (or married to someone over 55). Ownership must comply with the age/disability restriction. Relevant disability is classified as a physical disability only and does not include those with a mental disability. No other persons, including family members (other than a spouse), under the restricted age are permitted to live in the property.

Do I own my own home?

A. Yes. Each property is sold on a long leasehold basis, 125 years. (Your solicitor will be able to tell you how long is left on your lease). It is your home, held as your own asset – and, of course, you are free to sell at any stage, at full market value so your capital is kept intact and you are able to enjoy the benefits of a continued investment property of your own.

Do I stay in control of my household bills?

A. You are responsible for paying your own utility bills, council tax and television licence fee as well as arranging your contents and personal belongings insurance. If you own a mobility scooter it is recommended that you take out specialist insurance for this vehicle.

Can I make alterations to my property?

A. Minor internal alterations and improvement can be made to your properties with the permission of the Trustees. Before work commences permission must be requested through completing an online form via <https://www.alphahousingservices.co.uk/contact-us/alterations-consent>. Once permission is granted, and the Trust has received the insurance details from your chosen qualified contractors, work can commence.

Will my home be looked after if I go away?

A. All properties are fitted with a fire alarm linked to the central monitoring system. There are also closed-circuit television cameras in the car park. You are kindly asked to inform the Independent Living Manager if you are going away.

Will I be able to stay in my home as long as I choose?

A. Our aim is to provide accommodation for you as an active, independent person, while also offering a range of services through our Domiciliary Care Agency. If you find that you require personal homecare at any point in the future, we can provide the expert help you'll need. We also provide general housekeeping needs for anything from cleaning to ironing. Our team is always available to lend a hand, be it for a few days or only on specific occasions. You're in complete control – and you'll only pay for the services you use.

Your home will also benefit from a 24-hour emergency call system as well as an Independent Living Manager whose hours are: Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Are there any social activities?

A. Residents can form their own Residents' Association with an elected committee. From here, events and activities are planned. The communal areas are available for residents to use individually or for organised events, activities or groups. The Independent Living Manager also provides a monthly activities calendar and places this on each notice board.

Can I have Sky TV installed?

A. We have a communal Sky Dish. All you will need to do is contact Sky and purchase your own package.

What is the procedure if I decide to sell my property?

A. You will be able to sell it on the open market. You will need to tell your Independent Living Manager and give them the details of your estate agent. Any sale must take into account the criteria that qualify potential buyers as residents. On this development there is an age restriction of 55 years or older for purchasers/owners. *Please see page 34 for more information*

What Services are covered by the Service Charge?

- Building insurance
- External upkeep of the building
- Regular clearing of footpaths
- Servicing the lifts
- Equipment purchasing and repairs to enable office administration
- Servicing of CCTV, emergency call system, door entry systems, sliding doors, token operated tumble dryer in basement and fire alarms
- Brewery Square Ltd Service Charge
- Reserve Fund
- Window cleaning
- Hair Salon Facility (Hair appointments are paid for separately)
- Independent Living Manager
- Maintenance Officer
- Housekeeping for communal areas
- Maintenance of car parking area
- Heating and lighting in communal and external areas
- Management and Admin Charges
- Pest control

Will the Service Charge increase?

A. The Service Charge fee is reviewed annually and set at a level to cover all foreseen costs.

The ground rent doubles every 25 years for the first 100 years.

How do I pay for my Service Charge?

A. The method of payment for the Service Charge and Ground Rent is by Direct Debit monthly in advance. A Direct Debit Mandate will be forwarded with the first service charge/ground rent invoice.

What isn't included in the Service Charge?

A. The apartment you live in is owned by you, you are responsible for the water and energy bills associated with your home as well as the council tax, television licence and home contents insurance. Personal and Domestic Care is also not included. We also recommend that you take out personal liability insurance if you own a mobility scooter

What additional services are available?

Meals:

Main Meal	£7.00
Main Meal with Pudding	£8.00
Supper	£5.50
Hot Supper	£6.50
Sandwich Tea	£4.00
Christmas Dinner	£19.00
Laundry (per load)	£10.00
Hairdressing	As charged by the provider
Chiropody	As charge by the provider
Guest Room (per night)	£45.00
Maintenance Staff (1/2hour)	£8.60
(1 hour)	£17.20
Refuse Collection	£1.50 (per week)
Prescription pick up (within 5 miles)	£5.00
Welfare Checks (Per Visit)	£2.50

What is the Reserve (Sinking) Fund?

A. This is a reserve account used for larger expenses such as replacement windows.

Can I extend my lease?

A. Once you have owned your property for two years the Trust has no objection to you extending your lease by a further 90 years.

Is there a Residents' Association?

A. No, although this is within the residents' rights. The current residents have chosen to have a resident's representative.

Are pets allowed?

A. Residents may keep a pet dog, cat, or caged bird, subject to two conditions. Firstly, prior permission must be obtained in writing from Alpha Housing Services Ltd through completing an online form via <https://www.alphahousingservices.co.uk/contact-us/pet-consent> and you must agree to sign our Pets Policy Agreement. Please ask your Independent Living Manager if you require further information. Secondly, the pet must not cause a nuisance to neighbours, other residents or to the Trust. If such a nuisance occurs, we have the right to revoke the permission and ask you to remove the pet(s) from the complex.

Nuisance behaviour by a pet includes:

- Roaming and unattended animals – not included is one that may occasionally escape
- Pets fouling in communal areas which is not picked up immediately
- Excessive noise
- Unpleasant odour from pets
- Aggressive animals
- Fleas.

Normally pets should not be taken into the communal rooms of Signature House except guide or hearing dogs. Dogs must be kept on leads within the communal grounds and exercised off the development. Should your dog foul in the communal grounds, this must immediately be picked up and disposed of within your own household waste.

If you have any visitors who wish to bring pets with them to the complex, prior permission should be sought in writing beforehand.

Who is responsible for the redecoration of my property?

A. External decoration is the responsibility of the Landlord within a planned maintenance cycle. You are responsible for the internal decoration of your own properties

Can visitors stay in my property?

A. Yes they can, and we also have an en-suite guest room which is available for use or for rent by the Trust and residents of Signature House for their friends or relatives. Details of charges, reservations and further information are available from the Independent Living Manager. The apartment is reserved on a first come first served basis.

Where do I put my rubbish?

A. The communal refuse bin area is located on the Ground Floor. All residents are expected to take their refuse to the bin area for collection. The local Council will require rubbish to be sorted for re-cycling. We would be grateful for your assistance with this. If you are unable to do this Signature House offers a collection service at an additional charge. Food waste is collected weekly on Mondays after 10.30am and General waste and recycling is collected on Friday's after 10.30am. This service costs £1.50 per week
It is clearly in everyone's interest that the bin areas are kept clean and tidy and we would be grateful for your co-operation in ensuring that this is the case and that any dropped litter is picked up and deposited in the bins.

Rubbish collection days will be as follows:

Type	Regularity	Day
General waste	Fortnightly	Friday
Recycling	Fortnightly	Tuesday

The Independent Living Manager will publish any changes to the above.

Is there anywhere to park my car?

A. There are 38 parking spaces in the basement, 3 of these are disabled bays. The parking bays are sold separately.

Is there anywhere to store and recharge a mobility scooter?

A. A limited number of mobility vehicles may be parked in the basement of Signature Apartments. Re-charging points are available. If you are considering purchasing one of these vehicles, then you should liaise with the Independent Living Manager for an available space. Mobility vehicles are not allowed within the communal areas of the apartment block.

Can I rent out my apartment?

A. Yes for a period of 12 months only as long as any proposed tenant conforms with the requirements of the lease as to occupier. The tenancy agreement would contain similar restrictions, stipulations, covenants, conditions, and provisions. We would require you to ask the Trusts permission. Permission must be obtained in

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writing from Alpha Housing Services Ltd by completing an online form via <https://www.alphahousingservices.co.uk/contact-us/letting-consent>.

Can I change the lock on my front door?

A. No. These locks are especially designed for your safety. If you change your lock we may not be able to assist you during an emergency. (You may be charged a replacement fee if the locks are changed).

Can I smoke in my own property?

A. Yes as long as you are not putting yourself or your fellow tenants in danger

SMOKING POLICY

The Trust has a policy of no smoking in the communal rooms and areas of Signature House. Smoking is also not permitted in the communal gardens

SECURITY

Security is vital to any development and to help protect yourself and the interests of other Residents, you should observe a few simple rules:

- Secure entrance doors after use
- Do not give access to anyone appearing to be waiting for admission, always ask
- Do not allow any visitor in just because they look respectable or friendly. If in doubt, leave the caller outside and speak to your Independent Living Manager or Maintenance Officer.
- Always ask “official” visitors for their identity pass.
- Do not keep name tags or address labels on your keys, a telephone number should suffice.
- Use the door entry security system: it is there for your protection.
- Fire doors labelled as emergency exits and not in normal everyday use should only be used in an emergency.
- We would advise you not to leave ground floor windows or doors open at night or when you are out.
- If you do not recognise a caller on the door entry system, do not let them in.

It is crucial for your own security and that of others that you only allow access to personally known visitors.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A RESIDENT

As a homeowner, you will be responsible for items such as the internal decoration, maintenance, repair and cleaning. In order to ensure the safety and comfort of other residents, some simple guidelines should be followed. Most are obvious, such as respecting the privacy of your fellow residents and keeping noise to a reasonable level, but others need further explanation. We want you to enjoy living in your property and to help others to achieve the same by not causing annoyance through obnoxious smells, unsocial behaviour, unruly pets or other similar activities.

EMERGENCY CALL SYSTEM

This is an important feature and enables you to summon help in the event of an emergency.

There are a number of call points in your home, usually in the living room, kitchen and bathroom. You may also request a pendant, a personal alarm worn around your neck or wrist. If you pull a cord or press the pendant button during working hours then the call will go through to Signature Apartments Independent Living Manager's office or mobile phone. During out of hours the call will go through to the Nursing Home. You need only pull the cord or press the button once. The system has an integral assurance light and intermittent noise. This is quite normal and shows the system is working. You are advised to test your pendant at least once a month. *(Please look after your pendant as you will need to replace it at your own cost should it become damaged or misplaced).*

We would advise that any call point cords in your property are not tied up or shortened in any way as they may be out of reach should you need them.

The call points can be activated at any time of the day or night.

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

Your home was designed and built in accordance with the prevailing Building Regulations and other requirements relating to fire confinement and safe evacuation.

All fire control equipment is regularly tested and serviced by a specialist contractor. We also commission a risk assessment annually. The policy at Signature House is a **"stay put if safe to do so" policy if the fire is not originating in your property**. This is to allow the Fire Service to evacuate in a safe and controlled manner should it become necessary. The stairs must be kept unobstructed to allow the Fire Service ready access to apartments and residents; therefore, it is vitally important not to investigate the source of the fire if it is not in your property. **You must not use the lift.**

If the fire is in your own apartment, then you must come out, shut the door, and make your way down the stairs only as **the lift should not be used in this event**, immediately proceed to the fire assembly point which is **in the car park at the front of the building**. The alarm will sound alerting fellow residents. The apartments have fire doors that protect against fire for up to 60 minutes. Only qualified personnel are insured to use the fire extinguishers such as the Independent Living Manager and Maintenance Officer. To reduce the risk of a fire inside your property we strongly recommend having your electrical goods PAT tested. Please see your Independent Living Manager for information on how to organise for your goods to be tested.

ABSENCE FROM SIGNATURE APARTMENTS

If you leave your development for any length of time, say overnight, you should notify your Independent Living Manager. Not only will this save time and worry in the event of an emergency, but it will also stop unnecessary worry on the part of the Independent Living Manager if your presence is missed. Please ensure that all taps and electrical items are switched off/unplugged as appropriate. **It is the resident's responsibility to ensure the Independent Living Manager has a spare set of keys to be kept locked in her office for use in an emergency.**

DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM

A door entry unit is provided in all apartments, which will enable you to speak with visitors who are waiting at the entrance door. Should you be happy with their identity, you have the facility to allow them entry into the entrance hall by operating the door entry system from your flat.

It is crucial for your own security and that of others that you only allow access to personally known visitors.

LIFTS

There is a lift in Signature Apartments. The lift serves respective ground, first, second, third and fourth floor apartments and basement car parking areas. The lift is designed to accommodate passengers and for general transportation of furniture and effects for resident's assistance. Please do not overload the lifts above its recommended weight.

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INSURANCE

The development is fully insured by the Landlord on behalf of all residents. Insurance covers the building for fire and accidental damage including decorations to and any fittings or furnishings within the communal areas. The kitchen and bathroom within the accommodation will be insured under Amica Care Trust's commercial all risks policy. However, should the Tenant be found negligent for any damage caused, be it flood or fire as a result of negligence or malicious damage, Amica Care Trust has the right to pass the cost on to the Tenant, subject to contractual Terms and Conditions. Please bear in mind that certain measures have to be taken if your home is to be unoccupied for a period of time.

To protect residents from claims which may arise from accidents occurring to fellow residents or visitors in the communal areas or grounds there is also a public liability policy. Where a lift is fitted there is additional insurance which also covers public liability. Injury to your Independent Living Manager or Maintenance Officer is covered by an Employer's Liability Policy, and a Professional Indemnity Policy is also maintained.

A copy of the Buildings Insurance Policy is available to all residents or Residents' Associations on request from the Independent Living Manager.

As indicated above household contents insurance is not covered within the service charge. It is therefore strongly recommended that you make your own arrangements for the insurance protection of personal valuables and the furniture and contents of your home to the full replacement value. We also recommend that you take out personal liability insurance if you own a mobility scooter.

MONEY MATTERS

SERVICE CHARGE This is invoiced annually in advance, approximately a month prior to 1 April for the ensuring 12 months

Ground Rent 1 Bed £150
 2 Bed £250
 3 Bed £350

(£0.00 ground rent if the property has a lease extension)

The service charge is the amount you pay for the upkeep of the fabric of the building and the cost of services provided in accordance with the terms of your lease. In more detail, the usual costs incurred, which make up your service charge are:

Independent Living Manager and Maintenance Officer - Costs:

- Salary
- Employers National Insurance Contributions
- Pension Contributions
- Working Uniforms, tools, training etc.,
- Telephone, line rental and business calls.

Emergency Alarm system costs, including:

- Monitoring charge/ Maintenance/Contracts

Maintenance and running costs of common parts:

- Cleaning of communal parts (labour and materials)
- Redecoration of internal and external communal areas
- Maintenance of paths and grounds (labour and materials)
- Window cleaning of communal rooms and exterior of apartment windows
- Lighting, power and heating
- Light bulbs and sundries
- Provision and maintenance of equipment in communal rooms.
- Water and sewerage charges on behalf of the water authorities (Where applicable)
- Pest Control

Maintenance Contracts, including:

- Lifts
- Emergency lighting
- Fire prevention equipment
- Door entry system and emergency call systems
- Communal TV, internet and other data/media equipment

Insurance, including:

- Buildings
 - Communal equipment including furniture, carpets etc.
 - Lift (engineering)
 - Public and Employer's Liability
 - Professional Indemnity
- (As previously stated, the insurance does not cover the contents of your own home)

Maintenance Reserve

The development has a maintenance reserve to finance longer-term repairs, renewals and minor improvements.

The recommended value of the fund is assessed by calculating the cost and lifespan of items which may need major repair or renewal in the foreseeable future.

You are required to contribute to the fund as part of your service charge according to the terms of your lease.

It is the Trust's policy to obtain 2 quotes from contractors before agreeing to hire. These quotes are available to view on your notice board for two weeks.

Provision will be made in the fund for items of which the following are examples:

- Maintenance of the structure and fabric of the buildings
- Resurfacing of roads/car parks
- Renewal and maintenance of communal window frames
- Replacement of communal internal and external light fittings
- Renewal of fencing and gates
- Replacement of communal heaters
- Renewal of roof coverings and recovering of asphalt areas
- Replacement or renewal of such items as:
 - alarm systems
 - entry phones
 - lifts
 - TV aerials
 - Telephone and broadband cabling
 - communal carpeting, furniture and fittings
 - emergency lighting
 - refuse equipment
 - gardening equipment
 - cleaning equipment
 - Maintenance and upkeep/replacement of all communal fixtures and fittings.

All Maintenance Reserve monies are held in trust for the residents of the development. Any interest earned, net of tax, is credited to the fund.

Income

Charges for private bookings of the Signature Apartments communal rooms will be credited to Amica Care Trust

Miscellaneous Charges

All other costs which are covered by the terms of your lease.

Accountancy Fee

This is payable to independent qualified accountants who produce the developments Service Charge accounts.

Ground rent

Ground rent is collected by Alpha Housing Services Ltd on behalf of the Landlord in accordance with the terms of the lease.

The ground rent doubles every 25 years for the first 100 years unless you have extended your lease.

Personal costs

You are responsible for the payment of the following items in respect of your own property:

- Internal decoration, repairs and maintenance
- Electricity
- Gas heating (where installed)
- Television Licence
- Council Tax
- Telephone and internet charges
- Contents Insurance
- Internal window cleaning
- Charges for false call-out to intruder alarms, where installed
- Water and sewerage costs

THE BUDGET

How are the service charges calculated?

The service charge budget will be based wherever possible, on actual expenditure in the previous periods considering any inflationary increases or allowance for planned expenditure.

Many costs in the service charge are beyond our control - e.g. the level of any future increases in the cost of gas, electricity, VAT etc. - so we can only anticipate any rises or reductions that may occur.

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Before the end of the financial year, a draft budget is prepared of the estimated service charges for the next financial year.

Invoicing the service charge

The budgeted costs for the development are divided amongst the Lessees, in accordance with the terms of the lease. If you live in a one-bedroom apartment, your share may be smaller than for someone occupying a two-bedroom apartment.

You will receive demands for service charges in accordance with the terms of your lease. Demands will generally be annually in advance. Ground rent is payable at the same frequency.

It is requested that payment of the Service Charge should be by Standing Order. A mandate for completion will be supplied

Bank accounts

Monies paid in advance for the Signature House service charges are deposited into a client account under the name of Alpha Housing Services Ltd re: Signature House Client A/C. Any interest earned from the account is credited to the account.

Cheque payments are paid into our general client account (Alpha Housing Services re: General Client Account).

These bank accounts are interest-bearing and held with Metro Bank plc, One Southampton Row, London WC1B 5HA.

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COMMUNICATING WITH US

Procedures

In the first instance, we ask you to speak to your Independent Living Manager. Your Independent Living Manager will speak with the relevant person if they cannot answer your query themselves.

You can write to us at Gatchell House. We will aim to reply to your letter in full within seven working days of receipt. However, if the queries raised are complex or involve a lot of research, it may take longer to deal with the matter. In such cases, we will acknowledge your letter and give you a response, which will not be longer than twenty-eight days.

In some cases, it may be sensible for the Independent Living Manager to visit you to discuss the contents of your letter. We may therefore arrange this by prior appointment with you.

You can also telephone Gatchell House during normal office hours, 9.00 to 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday. 9.00 – 4.00pm on Fridays. For emergencies, out of normal office hours use your helpline system.

If your Independent Living Manager is unavailable, Alpha Housing Services are also available during normal office hours, 9.00 to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday on 01823 270661 or info@alphahousingservices.co.uk.

Maintenance and Repairs

Alpha Housing Services Ltd is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the structure and communal areas of the site. To report a problem, please speak to your Independent Living Manager or the Maintenance Officer.

Consultation

Amica Care Trust accepts its responsibility to consult with Residents on the services it provides, whilst fulfilling its obligations under the terms of the lease.

- Alpha Housing Services Ltd hold up to two general meetings with residents a year to discuss budgets, accounts and wider policies and procedures.
- In addition, we will consult on any matter which is likely to have a significant effect on the quality of services, level of service charges or which will otherwise significantly affect some or all Residents.

Residents' Complaints Procedure

We aim to give good service to Residents in a polite, fair, and efficient way. However, we recognise that things can occasionally go wrong. When this happens, we want you to tell us, so that we can improve our future performance. We are always receptive to new ideas.

Here is what we advise should be done if you have a complaint:

Stage One

We encourage all Residents to speak in the first instance to their Independent Living Manager as we know most complaints can be dealt with on a "face to face" basis. The Independent Living Manager may need to speak to the General and Senior Manager of Signature House before an answer can be given. We aim to provide a response to your complaint within 28 working days of you making it.

Stage Two

If you are still not satisfied your complaint has been dealt with properly, you should write to Alpha Housing Services Limited at their Taunton office. A response will be given within seven working days of receipt of your letter.

If there is a complaint to raise relating to the services of Alpha Housing Services, their complaints procedure can be found: <https://www.alphahousingservices.co.uk/complaints>

What if there is still a dispute?

If you have pursued a complaint through the above procedures and are still unhappy, the following information may be helpful:

YOUR LEASE

Your solicitor will be able to advise you on the precise terms and effect of the Lease in respect of your property. These notes are provided only for the purpose of helping you to understand your lease and to draw your attention to some of the more important points. Leases will vary from development to development and this summary cannot cover all of them.

The Term

Your title is leasehold and the full term of the lease is 125 years commencing on 1 October 2012. If you have bought your home since the lease was first granted, the term remaining will have been reduced.

Ground Rent

The initial rent is specified in your lease. The ground rent doubles every 25 years for the first 100 years. If you have extended your lease then the ground rent is reduced to a 'peppercorn' rent which in practice means this has been reduced to zero

Charges for Management Services

As management agent for the landlord, Alpha Housing Services Ltd charges a fee for its services.

Maintenance Reserve

The lease contains provisions for a Maintenance Reserve to be built up to meet major items of repair, replacement or renewal.

Contributions to the fund are collected each year through the service charge.

In the event that the RMF becomes much larger than seems likely to be required, the landlord can apply part of it to the discharge or reduction of the service charge. Conversely, if the contingency fund appears to be inadequate to cover likely capital expenditure, the landlord can add to the contingency fund through the service charge provisions. In either event, the landlord will endeavour to exercise such a right in accordance with the principles of good estate management.

Rights and Easements

Your property is sold with the benefit of rights and easements normally set out in a schedule in the lease. Similar rights are reserved for the benefit of the owners of other apartments as set out in the same schedule. The grant and reservation of rights is an essential feature of a leasehold development because of the various communal facilities and the extent to which rights necessarily overlap.

Your attention is drawn in particular to the right to use the access road, the forecourt and the various passages, landings and staircases leading to your apartment and the lift, if appropriate. You also have the right to use the paths on the estate.

You have a right to use the Communal areas in Signature Apartments and other facilities as made available from time to time. There use is subject to any directions from the Independent Living Manager or any regulations about them issued by the Trust.

Your covenants with the landlord

The covenants you enter into with the landlord comprise the main obligations which govern occupancy of the apartment. They cover the obligation to pay the rent and service charge, the usual council tax, water and sewerage charges, to repair the apartment, to decorate it, etc. These covenants need to be read in conjunction with the restrictions set out in the lease and any further rules and regulations made by the Landlord.

Resale conditions

You are not allowed to divide possession of the apartment by assignment, underletting or part with possession of part of the apartment. Subject to that, you may assign, underlet or part with possession of the whole of the apartment, subject to any age restrictions set out in the lease and subject to the landlord's consent. The age limits are in accordance with the requirements of the local planning authority and include disabled persons. On this development the age requirement is fifty-five years or older for residents and purchasers/owners. or those with a Relevant Disability. Relevant Disability is classified as a physical disability only, and does not include those with a mental disability.

If those age limit requirements are not complied with, there would not only be a breach of the terms of the lease but probably also of the planning requirements. You must notify your Independent Living Manager that you are selling and provide your estate agents details.

The landlord's covenants

These include the important obligation to maintain, repair, decorate and keep clean, lit and tidy all the common facilities.

Development rules and regulations

These are normally set out in Schedule 7 to the lease and may be added to from time to time. Residents are required to comply with such further rules and regulations as the landlord shall reasonably make for the good management of the estate and the benefit of the residents as a whole.

The normal rules and regulations which apply are: -

- No noise audible outside dwellings between 11.00pm and 7.00am
- No washing or banners to be hung outside
- No window boxes
- No signs or placards, including estate agent's boards, are to be displayed on or in any window or any other part of the site.
- Not to shake mats out of the window
- Not to keep a pet, without the permission of the Landlord.
- Not to re decorate the exterior of the property
- Not to erect any external radio aerial or satellite dish
- Not to alter the structure and services of the apartment without the written consent of the Freeholder.
- Not to keep firearms or other dangerous weapons
- Not to keep any paraffin or bottled gas heater or other inflammable liquids
- Not to obstruct common areas

AMICA CARE TRUST



SELLING YOUR HOME

Your home is designed as part of a retirement community so there are some restrictions on selling. However, your lease has been drawn up to allow you to sell with as few restrictions as possible.

- You can sell your home on the open market
- You can instruct local estate agents although no advertising board may be displayed
- There is an age restriction of 55 years for purchasers/owners and residents on this development or those with a Relevant Disability. Relevant Disability is classified as a physical disability only, and does not include those with a mental disability.
- You must notify your Independent Living Manager that you are selling and provide your estate agents details
- The Independent Living Manager may keep a list of interested prospective purchasers

Please Note: This Information Guide is an important reference document and should be retained in a safe place. It relates to those Independent Living complexes where Amica Care Trust is the Landlord and Alpha Housing Services Ltd is the managing agent. It is for information only and applies to properties in England and Wales and does not purport to be a comprehensive statement of law. No liability can be accepted by Alpha Housing Services Ltd for itself or on behalf of any Landlord for which it acts as agent, for any errors or omissions or for any loss or damage sustained by anyone acting in reliance on this document. Purchasers must rely solely on the advice of their own legal advisers. (Produced January 2019)

Introduction of OUR TRUSTEES



John WHITTAKER
Chair of Trustees
Chair of the Property
Group



Adam RAWICZ
Vice Chair of Trustees
Chair of the Care
Governance Committee
Member of the Property
Group & RAR* Committee



Jim BAKER
Board member
Member of the Property
Group & Care Governance
Committee



Graham BRISCOE
Board member
Member of the RAR*
Committee



Vanda CROW
Board member
Member of the Care
Governance Committee



Will DALTON
Board member
Chair of the RAR*
Committee



Gary GEORGE
Board member



Jacqueline LACEY
Board member
Member of the RAR*
Committee



Alan LADD
Board member
Member of the Property
Group



Anna WARMAN
Board member

*Remuneration, Audit and Risk

AMICA CARE TRUST



Alpha Housing Services Limited

**ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
IS AT**

**1st Floor, 1 Chartfield House
Castle Street
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4AS**

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday | 9:00 – 17:00 (Excluding Bank Holidays)

If you wish to see us in the office, please telephone us to make an appointment as we are often out on-site visits



01823 270661



info@alphahousingservices.co.uk



www.alphahousingservices.co.uk/contactus