Many of our tenants live in blocks of flats, maisonettes or sheltered housing schemes with shared facilities. Starting from April 2017, we are changing the way that we charge these tenants for their rent and service charges. This factsheet explains what the changes will be and how they will affect you if you are one of our tenants living in a block with communal (shared) areas.

This leaflet tells you:

- What depooling is
- What the charges are
- How to pay the charges
- How the costs may change
- What your rent statement will look like
- What we have done to tell you about this change

What is depooling?

Depooling means that we split the total you have to pay us into basic rent plus separate amounts for each of the services that you receive as part of living in a block with communal services.

Examples of the services that may be shown separately:

- Window cleaning
- Communal area cleaning
- Lift maintenance
- Lift sinking fund (this is the term we use to describe the amount of money we collect from you so that we can replace the lift at the end of its lifespan)
- Electricity/heating charges for communal areas
- Buildings insurance

How do you work out the charges?

All the costs are based on the actual cost of the services you receive. We do not make a profit.

How do I pay the charges?

These charges need to be paid along with your rent. The total amount due per week will be shown on your annual rent letter (sent to you in early March each year).
If you pay your rent yourself, you will have to pay the total amount due in the same way that you have always paid your rent.

If you pay your rent by direct debit, the total amount due will be taken automatically on your nominated day each month.

If your rent is paid in full by housing benefit you don’t need to do anything - you will continue to pay the separate water charge for your home.

**How will the costs change?**

The service charges are worked out from the actual cost of providing the services to you. If the cost of the service goes up during the year we will increase the charge by the same amount. Some costs may even go down, which would reduce the amount we charge you. For example, if we are able to introduce energy efficiency measures then we could reduce communal heating costs.

**What your rent statement will look like**

Here is an example of how we would show the separate costs for a tenant living in a high-rise block with a lift. Your own payments will probably be different from our example:

2016/17 Total Rent: £100.96 per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017/18 Total costs:</th>
<th>£100.96 per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>£90.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window cleaning</td>
<td>£0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning</td>
<td>£2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift maintenance and sinking fund</td>
<td>£7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>£0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>£0.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What we have done to tell you about this change**

We have sent information to all tenants affected by this change throughout 2016/17 along with your tenant and leaseholder magazine, Housing News and Views. The information is also on our website.

For more information about paying your rent please visit:  
www.dacorum.gov.uk/pay-your-rent  

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