

Help & Advice

Who are Zenith Management and what services do you provide?

We are the managing agent for your development. We have been instructed by either the Freeholder or Management Company, referred to within your lease, to provide various services and to manage the development. Our aim is always to ensure that the building is well managed to help protect the value of your asset.

What is a service charge?

A service charge is a charge that you are liable to pay under your lease - it represents your share of the cost of maintaining the building and development in which it is situated.

Service charge amounts vary from year to year and will be based on predicted expenditure. Once the financial year is over and the service charge accounts have been formalised any surplus or shortfall will be dealt with in accordance with the lease. See 'what is a balancing charge or balancing credit?'

What is the lease?

The lease is a legal agreement between the landlord and leaseholder (and in some cases the management company). It explains the rights and responsibilities that the various parties have. When an apartment is sold, the seller assigns the rights and responsibilities of the lease to the purchaser.

An important element of the lease is the responsibility to pay ground rent and service charge monies when requested. See 'what is ground rent?'

What is a reserve or sinking fund?

A reserve or sinking fund is usually included within the annual service charge budget for each year and is a fund built-up over a period of time to be used for a specific purpose such as a large scheme of work. This could be a roof renewal, re-decoration of the common parts or lift replacement.

The aim of the fund is to spread the cost of these works over a longer period of time to avoid a very large bill in one service charge year.

I've recently bought a leasehold property. Am I liable to pay service charges relating to a period prior to me purchasing the property?

Your conveyancer should ensure that service charge payments are up to date before you complete the purchase.

Where the service charge has already been demanded from the previous owner and they have not paid your landlord may still be able to take action to forfeit the lease.

What is ground rent?

The lease agreement will usually contain a requirement for the leaseholder to pay a 'ground rent' to the landlord. The 'ground rent' must be paid in accordance with the lease, subject to the issue of a statutory demand by the landlord or their agent.

What is a balancing charge or balancing credit?

At the end of the service charge period, a reconciliation of actual expenditure is compared to the amount requested in advance. Any variation between budgeted expenditure and actual expenditure (i.e. a surplus or a shortfall) is then apportioned to each leaseholder.

Who arranges buildings insurance?

The freeholder/management company (or managing agent on their behalf) arrange the building insurance for the development.

Leaseholders are responsible for arranging their own contents insurance.

Who is responsible for carrying out repairs within my apartment?

Typically the maintenance, repair, re-decoration and insuring of contents inside the individual property are the responsibility of the leaseholder. This usually includes the repair and maintenance of any conduit, pipe or supply that exclusively services the individual property.

What is forfeiture?

Leases often contain a clause allowing the landlord to terminate (forfeit) the lease if the tenant defaults upon their obligations.

If my contact details change what should I do?

It is essential for the efficient running of the development that our records are kept up-to-date with the correct contact information. If any of your personal details change, you can change your details online with my.Zenith or alternatively please download and complete a Contact Details Form from our website.