

Rent and service charge customer webinar

Questions & Answers

Here's a summary of the questions and answers from rent and service charge webinar for leaseholders and shared owners on 30 January 2024.

We've answered general questions below, but if you have a question specific to your development that wasn't answered please get in touch with us by emailing moneymatters@a2dominion.co.uk

The recording from the session is available here: <https://youtu.be/bKlql67eT2Y>

When fire safety works have been completed, should we see a reduction in buildings insurance costs?

Yes, the work that is being carried on our buildings to ensure fire safety should reduce costs. However, we don't have much influence in how the insurers arrive at their final premiums.

Insurers take a different view on safety to the government. They look at building risk as opposed to life risk. There are also many different safety considerations which are out of our control.

We speak with our brokers and insurers regularly and share information about our building safety program with them. Although the fire safety works are considered when insurers set the premium, there are other factors which influence the cost.

How do you evaluate the quality of services provided by contractors who carry out repairs and maintenance?

Having listened to customers' feedback, we've put in place an [improvement plan](#), developed to improve the quality and speed of our repairs service.

We're also shortly introducing a live-tracking system which means customers will be kept better informed about their repairs. You'll be able to view your repair status updates online and get a text reminder the day before the appointment and at each stage of the repair.

The live tracking system is one of many changes being made to [improve our repairs service](#). It follows the appointment of Mears as our new repairs contractor for London and across Southern England in October 2023.

Other improvements include better diagnosis and categorisation of a repair when a customer first contacts us, new timescales for completing repairs and greater emphasis on on-going maintenance works to reduce the number of customer repairs requests over time.

What steps are A2Dominion taking to improve energy consumption in developments?

Our aim is for all the homes we manage to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of A to C by 2030. This helps us to meet our sustainability goals and ensure customers live in homes that are warm and affordable to heat.

Over the last financial year, we've taken steps to help reduce carbon emissions and energy bills by installing 867 band A gas boilers, 400 low energy lights, 300 double-glazed windows and 269 loft and cavity wall insulations into your homes.

We understand that the rising cost-of-living means it's more important than ever to make homes as energy efficient as possible. Visit our website to find out more about what steps we're taking to improve [sustainability across all our developments](#).

What will you do to minimise the cost of bulk refuse removal?

Bulk refuse is an ongoing challenge for our housing managers. The cost of removing bulky items increases year on year and that clearly impacts on your service charge. We've set out below the steps we take to keep costs down:

- We look at redesigning bin areas where possible. For example, if the bin store is open to public view and if there is an alternative place to put the bin store, we can look at relocating them.
- We can make sure that residents understand where they can dispose of bulky items. Quite often, one person will leave something and that attracts others to do the same.

We have also held events at our developments, where we visit and talk to residents and get their feedback. As part of this, we might bring a skip onto a development and encourage residents to use the skip to move their bulky items. If you think your development might benefit from a 'Customer Impact Day' [get in touch with us](#).

This year, we've also made changes to the way we calculate some aspects of service charges. This is to make sure the amount charged is more specific to each development. We've included more information on this in your service charge booklets which are being sent out this month.

Are you able to provide itemised invoices?

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide itemised invoices. This is because our contractors provide bulk invoices. Asking providers to produce itemised invoices would be costly and requires a lot of administration time. This would significantly increase service charge costs.

If you are a homeowner and would like to see a copy of the invoices relating to your actual service charge costs, you can request this through our [online service charge query](#) form. Or call us on 0800 432 0077 within six months of receiving your statement.

Is A2Dominion working towards providing quicker response times to customer emails?

We have listened to your feedback and are taking steps to improve our email correspondence with you. A new IT system is launching this Spring which will mean we have all our contacts in one place. The new system will give us greater visibility of what's coming into our business and will allow staff to share the workload more efficiently.

Customers have told us they often have to repeat themselves, with the new IT system, all customer interactions will be held in one place. This means we'll be able to see what emails customers have sent us and respond in real time. This will improve our communication with you and give you a better customer experience.

We are also improving our digital and online experience so that customers can contact us without having to call. An example of this is our [new live chat service](#).

Is there a specific contact manager looking after each development and do you do regular inspections?

Each of our developments has a dedicated Neighbourhood, Leasehold, or Property and Safety Manager. We hold regular estate inspections. The frequency of these is different for each estate depending on their size and the type of services that are on the development. As part of the inspection, your dedicated housing manager will look at the condition of your development, including the building and communal areas to see if anything needs fixing. If you don't know who is responsible for your building, please [get in touch with us](#). You can also [report an estate issue online](#) or contact us on 0800 432 0077.



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