

# Our policy for charging service users



## What is 'Supporting People'?

The Supporting People programme pays for services that help you to live independently. These services include:

- sheltered housing (accommodation with a scheme manager who can give you support)
- supported-living schemes (where you can get housing and support); and
- alarm systems (like Lifeline) that let you call for help in an emergency.

The money comes from the Government through the Supporting People Grant.

Our policy on eligibility explains in more detail what services can be provided under the Supporting People programme and who is entitled to receive these services. See our separate policy summary leaflet 'Who is eligible for help from Supporting People?'

## Do I have to pay for Supporting People services?

We charge for some services, but not others. We do not charge for short-term services, in other words those which aim to help someone live independently within two years of receiving the service. You may have to pay for a service which is long-term, that is, if it is meant to last for more than two years, or is part of a permanent or open-ended arrangement. We will tell you if you have to pay for the service you are getting.

## Do I still have to pay if I am on benefits?

If you receive Housing Benefit, the guarantee part of Pension Credit, Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance, you will not have to pay for a housing-related support service from Supporting People.

## What about if I am not on benefits?

If you have to pay for your Supporting People service and you would like to ask for help towards this, you can apply for a financial assessment under the rules which apply for social-care services, called 'Fairer Charging'. Your support worker will give you more information about this. You can read more about fairer charging in our Adult Social Care leaflet called 'IL12 Paying for services'. You can get a copy by phoning Social Care Direct on 0845 60 80 191.

## How would I pay the charge?

The organisation providing the service (service provider) will collect the charge from you.

## What happens to the Supporting People grant if I am away on holiday or in hospital?

If you are receiving a 'floating' support service, which is a service which you get wherever you are living and that has to be paid for, we will continue to pay the grant to your service provider if you are away for less than one month.



If you are getting housing-related support in services provided with your accommodation, such as sheltered housing, you will usually still have to pay the support charge while you are away as it is part of your tenancy agreement.

## **What if my financial circumstances change?**

You must tell the Supporting People team about any changes in your financial circumstances, for example, if you become unemployed or you get a job as this may affect your payments.

## **What if I am a leaseholder?**

Please see our full policy for payments to leaseholders (as at June 2006) or our policy summary leaflet 'Our policy for payments to leaseholders'.

## **Who should I talk to if I have questions about this policy?**

If you have any questions you can talk to your housing officer, social-care assessor, nurse or probation officer. You can also phone us on the number at the end of this leaflet.

If you think that we have not followed our policy for charging properly or have not treated you reasonably, contact the Head of Supporting People at the address at the end of this leaflet. Your carer or the organisation that provides your support can do this for you if you prefer. We will settle all complaints in line with our Adult Social Care complaints procedure. If you make a complaint, we will treat you fairly and it will not affect the quality of services you receive in the future.

## **Where can I get more information?**

This leaflet is a summary of the main points in our policy on charging (as at June 2007). It is one of a series of summaries of Supporting People policies. If you would like to see the other summaries, or any of the full policies, or if you want any more information about Supporting People, please contact us.

Write to:     2nd Floor  
                  Sackville House  
                  Brooks Close  
                  Lewes  
                  BN7 2FZ

Phone:        01273 482805

Fax:           01273 482978

E-mail:       supportingpeople@eastsussex.gov.uk

Website:     eastsussex.gov.uk/supportingpeople