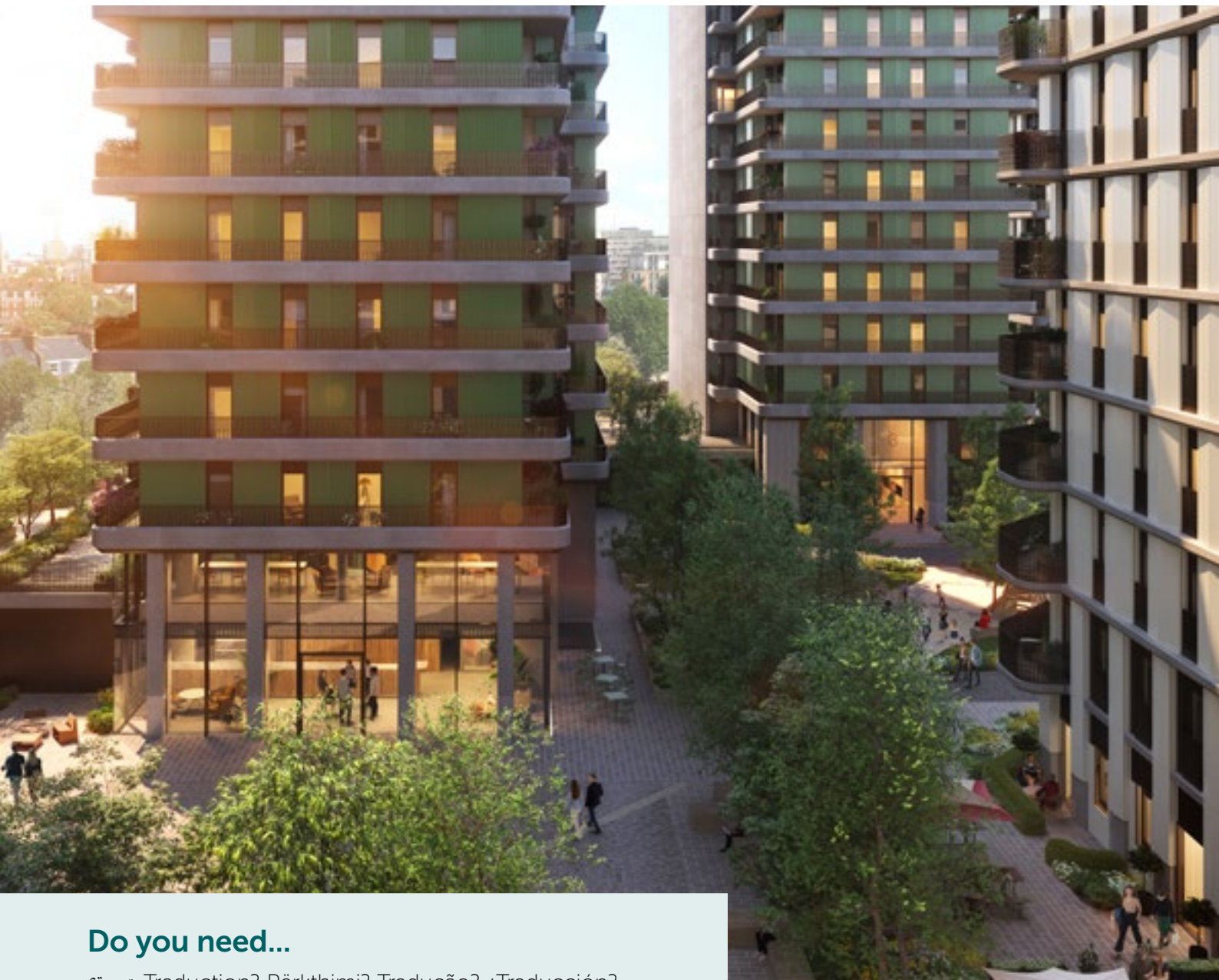


RETURNING TO EBURY BRIDGE

For Tenants

What to expect from your future estate services and service charge

August 2024



Do you need...

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City of Westminster

Management of the Estate

As part of the regeneration of Ebury Bridge, the council has worked with the existing community on how the new estate should be managed once work has been completed. This includes the types of services residents wanted to see such as better security, cleaning and maintenance.

Earlier this year we consulted with residents on a management approach for the new Ebury that will support the running and upkeep of the new buildings, communal areas, energy systems and green space.

This management approach will ensure that everyone living in Ebury Bridge will enjoy a high level of service across the new neighbourhood and that a dedicated team will ensure the new buildings and facilities are secure, safe and kept in the best possible condition.

Following supportive feedback from residents, the council has now appointed an estate management provider, called Rendall and Rittner, who will provide an estate-wide service to all residents regardless of tenure.



Who are Rendall and Rittner?

Rendall and Rittner are a highly experienced property management company who have an excellent track record of delivering building management for residential estates and mixed-use block services.

They will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the estate and will be based at the Management Hub on the ground floor of Sutherland Apartments.

Their service will be responsible for services such as:

The Residential Blocks

- Communal repairs including maintenance of lifts
- Cleaning of communal spaces such as corridors and foyers
- Cleaning the refuse and recycling areas and making sure our waste teams have access to pick up the rubbish
- Estate and block security
- Door entry systems, vehicle access and fire protection

The Structure of the Blocks

- Gutter and façade cleaning – jet washing hard landscapes and walls
- Maintenance of the mechanical and electrical machinery that heats and cools the blocks
- Managing the heat and cooling contract with the energy provider External Spaces
- The amenities including the landscape, parks, walkways and pavements (trees, plants and play equipment etc)
- Car parking, cycle stores and estate roads
- Estate security including CCTV

Inspections and Health & Safety

- Carry out quarterly inspections of the estate and buildings
- Carry out surveys including the structure, fabric and machinery
- Undertake Health & Safety inspections, water quality testing, portable appliance testing, fire, and general risk assessments
- Ensure staff receive Health & Safety training

Once you move in, you will be further introduced to Rendall and Rittner and their onsite team for Ebury.

What will the council still be responsible for?

You will still receive your service charge bills from Westminster City Council. For tenancy management issues (through your Housing Officer) you will still contact the council's Housing Service Centre.

Services delivered by the council would include;

Tenancy Management (for Secure Tenants)

- You will remain a Secure Council Tenant (with a Westminster City Council Tenancy Agreement)
- The council will provide tenant welcome packs and your tenancy handbook
- Any housing related issue around your tenancy (such as successions, mutual exchanges, downsizing etc) will be managed by your Housing Officer or Area Team
- You will pay rent to Westminster City Council and we will deal with rent queries and arrears
- Antisocial behaviour and managing tenancy management matters

Repairs and Maintenance

- All repairs inside your home
- Customer contact and satisfaction

Tenant Engagement

- Provide regular updates and communicate with tenants
- Carrying out bi-annual satisfaction surveys
- Tenant Engagement Programme

A dedicated on-site housing officer service to book appointments and provide support will be available when you first move in.



What will I expect after I have viewed a new home and once I move in?

When you move into your new home you will receive key information such as:

- Westminster Council's tenant handbook
- Home user guides and access to instructional videos for using new equipment in your home.
- Good neighbourhood agreement, outlining the considerations of being a 'good neighbour'
- Fire safety and waste management information

You will be provided with further information about these documents as part of welcome information when you move in.



Your Service charge

Service charges are the costs to pay for the day-to-day running of the new estate (such as managing and maintaining the homes). Tenants and Leaseholders will contribute their share of the total cost through their rent or an annual bill.

With new services and dedicated estate management (that the estate did not previously have), service charges will increase to reflect the additional benefits and services to residents. We're committed to providing all our residents with value for money and quality services. The

council does not make a profit from the money collected and will ensure that a high-quality estate management service is provided and maintained.

At the new Ebury the service charge will vary depending on the size of your property and some of the specific charges delivered to your block and estate. For tenants within block 8 (Mandeville Apartments) the table below outlines these costs:

	Service Charge Per Annum*
1 Bed 2 persons	£478.53
2 Bed 4 persons	£957.06
3 Bed 5 persons	£1,196.32
4 Bed 6 persons	£1,435.59
4 Bed 7 Persons	£1,674.85

* Estimated service charge

What services are eligible for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit?

Your service charge is eligible for Housing Benefit. If you receive Housing Benefit Support or Universal Credit, you will continue to receive this support at the new Ebury that will cover your service charge.

Housing Benefit and the housing element of Universal Credit do not pay for any water, heating and hot water charges. These will be supplied directly to your home, and you will be billed individually based on your consumption.

Why are my service charges different to my neighbours?

The service charge paid by each individual household varies due to the bedspaces within your home. It is possible for properties that seem very similar to have different numbers of bed spaces, which means you will pay a different proportion of the costs. If different works or services are provided, then the service charges are also different.

How is my rent calculated?

Rents are calculated in accordance with Government rules for setting social housing rent rates. These are reviewed yearly and the rent at the new Ebury will be set using the same formula.



What support is available to support with service charges?

We will continue to work closely with our residents who require any support and assistance with their service charges. For those on low income or receiving benefits you may be eligible for support to pay your rent and service charge if you do not already.

We offer:

- Access to benefit support and how to apply for universal credit
- We created a rent support fund to help tenants who were struggling with the increased cost of rent. Rents last increased in April 2024, and the fund has been created specifically to help those in financial difficulty and to help cover some or all of the upcoming rent increases for households who are not entitled to full housing benefits.
- You can find out if you are eligible for Housing Benefit or other support payments, including applying for Discretionary Housing Payment at www.westminster.gov.uk/benefits



You can also access the council's cost living support hub by visiting the QR code www.westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support



Help and support is available with rising energy costs. Scan the QR code to find out more.

Bookable One To One Support

If you are worried about how to pay your service charges, please do not hesitate to contact us. We will work with all our tenants on a case-by-case basis to ensure we are offering you means of support available.

To help support tenants in understanding their future service charge we are holding bookable appointments at Ebury Edge on 10 September 12-8pm. This will be with advisors from our service charge collection team and Citizens Advice Westminster will also be available to offer free, confidential, and impartial information and advice on benefits and housing issues.

To book an appointment please email eburybridge@westminster.gov.uk

You can also book an online one-one 20 minute appointment to discuss your rent and service charges with one of our income advisors.

Appointments are Monday to Friday between 9am to 5pm.




To book an online appointment scan the QR code.

Further support can be found at www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/tenants/rent-and-service-charges



For further information

If you have any queries in relation to your rent and service charges, or any other housing matter please contact us:

 0800 358 3783 (freephone)

 housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk



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