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# Management companies and management agents

If you are a shared owner, leaseholder or a tenant who lives in a Sovereign property, your Leasehold Officer or Housing Officer will have explained your rights and obligations under the terms of your tenancy agreement or lease. They will have also explained the responsibilities of the management agent who operates on your estate. The management agent costs are recovered through the service charge you pay.

## 1. What is the role of a management agent?

Your property is situated within an estate or block which has shared communal areas that you are able to use. On most developments, the Local Authority requires the estate to be managed. This task is normally undertaken by a management company. A management company is made up of property owners who live on the estate.

A management company may be responsible for looking after the entire estate, or just for the management of a block (this is referred to as block management).

The management company will normally appoint a private company (otherwise known as a management agent), to oversee the day-to-day running of the estate. In some cases the management company will provide services directly, without appointing an agent.

## 2. What services does the managing agent provide?

Each property and development is different, so the information below is an overview of the types of services a management agent may provide. All of the services below may not apply to your estate, please contact your Housing Officer or Leasehold Officer for specific information.

Some examples of services a management agent may provide:

- Manage specific areas, roads pathways and public open spaces that are excluded from the responsibility of the Local Authority.
- Co-ordinate and manage the regular gardening and maintenance of the communal grounds.
- Make sure the lighting in communal areas is working.
- Provide block management services.
- Organise repairs and maintenance of the building structure, including communal areas.
- Make sure maintenance contracts are provided for items such as lifts or pump systems.
- Co-ordinate and manage the regular cleaning of the communal areas (individual window cleaning services are normally excluded).
- Organise and implement the maintenance and upkeep of communal installations.

- Provide a planned and day-to-day repairs service.
- Maintain a reserve fund which will be used to carry out long term maintenance requirements. (This is known as a 'sinking fund')
- Carry out scheme inspections.
- Make sure the building is insured.
- Collect the service charge
- Produce annual accounts detailing expenditure

### 3. I live in a house, why do I have to pay for a management agent?

Increasingly, freehold houses are being built as part of residential developments where the owners benefit from the use of communal facilities. These may include shared car parks, open or landscaped spaces, waste treatment plants and roads. In these cases, owners must contribute towards the running costs of the communal facilities.

### 4. So if I need to speak to someone, do I contact Sovereign or the management agent?

Your Housing Officer or Leasehold Officer is your first point of contact, they will manage the partnership between Sovereign, the management agent and you. We will report repairs on your behalf and monitor the performance of the agent to make sure they are delivering an excellent service.

### 5. What should I do if I am not happy with the service the management agent is providing?

If you have any concerns with the service the managing agent is providing, or if there is anything you wish to dispute, you should start by reporting this to your Housing Officer or Leasehold Officer. They will investigate and feedback to you with an outcome.



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