Adur District Council
Community Alarm & Telecare Service

Supporting Independence since 1986

Covering both Adur and Worthing and South Mid Sussex areas.

Information Book

To contact us please telephone
01273 263390

or email
communityalarm@adur-worthing.gov.uk

This booklet is available on audio tape or Braille.

If you require an interpreter, or this information in a different language please contact us as soon as possible.
Our core commitments

We will:

• Provide an alarm and telecare service to residents of the local community, who need support and security to continue to live independently.

• Offer the service to people at risk of domestic violence, bogus callers, rogue traders or potential victims of fire in the home.

• Provide a 24 hour response to emergency calls via partnership working with Chichester Community Careline Control Centre.

• Install your alarm within 5 working days.

• Repair faults within 1 working day of notification.

• Contact or visit at least twice a year to ensure that the alarm is working efficiently and that all your personal details are up-to-date.

We will involve you by:

• Offering a regular review of your support needs.

• Consulting with you through the Community Alarm User Group

• Monitoring information from completed surveys from new users

• Monitoring information from annual surveys of 10% of all customers

• Sending you a newsletter twice a year, giving information about other services, and publishing your stories and anecdotes.

You can help us to provide a better service by:

• Informing us immediately about any changes to your personal information.

• Informing us if you are away from home for more than a few days.

• Informing us when your keyholders are not available and providing a temporary keyholder to cover these periods.

• Letting us know about any problem you encounter with independent living so we can refer you to appropriate help and advice where possible.
About the Community Alarm and Telecare Service

Community alarm is a support service which is available to older, disabled or vulnerable people who live in the local community and has been serving the local community since 1986. Over 1,000 clients live independently in their own homes with the support of their alarm unit.

Telecare is the use of added monitoring of sensors which alert the control centre if something has happened to you. E.g. smoke detector, flood detector.

The alarm gives peace of mind not just to the customer but also to friends, family and neighbours who can be reassured knowing that help is at hand 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

The Community Alarm and Telecare Service works in partnership with:

- **Sussex Police**
  For cases of domestic violence, bogus callers and supporting Lone Workers in business premises.

- **West Sussex Fire & Rescue**
  For the installation of linked smoke detectors

- **Chichester Community Careline Control Centre**
  An accredited member of Telecare Services Association) – to monitor all alarm calls.
All alarm equipment used by the community alarm and telecare service is:

- approved by the Telecare Services Association
- meets the British standards applicable to the social alarm provider industry
- is disposed of within waste electrical and electronic equipment policies

What service does the community alarm and telecare service offer?

The community alarm service offers emergency assistance, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year via a telephone link to the control centre at Chichester, which is staffed by professionally trained operators.

There are a number of different packages, different alarm units and accessories available. The needs of each individual client are taken into account when installing the alarm equipment.

We accept referrals from any agency, or from family, friends, neighbours etc.

All enquiries about the service are dealt with promptly, and an initial visit is arranged with the prospective customer as soon as possible to demonstrate the equipment and discuss any personal requirements. This visit is at a mutually agreeable time and normally within 5 days and is **free of charge** even if the service is not taken up.
What happens when the alarm is activated?

- The unit automatically dials the control centre computer.
- The computer displays details of your name, address, doctor, keyholder and relatives plus any other relevant medical information. They can also keep a record of any contractors details that you supply; e.g plumber; or even somebody to care for your pet if you are unwell.
- The operator will talk to you via a microphone / loudspeaker facility on the alarm unit and send for the appropriate help. i.e. keyholder; Ambulance; Fire service; Police; Carers; Contractors etc.
- You can use the control centre to pass on a message e.g. if you are going away or to change your keyholders details. This will be treated as a non-emergency call and details will be forwarded to our office on the next working day.
- If at any time there are repeated false alarm calls, this would be reported to us. We would contact you to investigate the calls and contact you to find a solution to the problem e.g.
  - If the smoke detector went off while you were showering, we would get the detector moved away so as not to create a false call.
  - If a customer continually pressed the alarm and asked for somebody to get them a drink, we would contact carers or relatives to find a solution.
- Unnecessary calls block the control centre from receiving any emergency calls and the few minutes delay may be the difference between life and death.
- If the operator cannot hear you, or you cannot hear the operator, the operator will send for a keyholder to assess the situation before summoning the emergency services.
- If no keyholder is available, the operator cannot call for an ambulance unless they know it is a medical problem.
- They would however call the police and log a “cause for concern” call. The police would then decide the priority of the call.
Another option would be to subscribe to the Mobile Response Service

This service is for people who have no keyholders or who wish to set up a back-up in case their keyholders are not available.

In these cases, a council officer will attend within three-quarters of an hour as a back up to keyholders or in situations where the operator cannot determine what help is required.

This could be:

- If you are too far away from the alarm unit to obtain a good level of conversation e.g. in the garden etc.
- If there is too much other noise in the property e.g. from TV or radio
- If a medical problem has affected your speech.

**NB** To take up the Mobile Response service, you will need a keysafe.

No call will be cancelled until the operator is sure that it has been dealt with appropriately.

All calls taken by the control centre are recorded and the tapes kept for at least one year for monitoring purposes.

If you have a query about how an alarm call has been dealt with, we can get a transcript of the tape to find out if there was a failure in our service.
Requirements for connection

1. Electricity supply
Ideally the alarm unit should be plugged into an individual 13-amp power socket. It may be possible to use an electrical extension lead, but a new socket may have to be fitted before the alarm unit can be installed.
It is essential to keep the alarm unit plugged in as it has only a limited battery life. **If the battery runs down, the alarm unit will not work!**

**NB** We can, in some cases, provide an alarm unit with no power supply.

2. Land-line telephone supply
a) With many telephone providers in the market now, there are a number of different types of wiring being used to supply telephone lines e.g. copper, fibre-optic etc. All our equipment is tested to the “new generation network” standard, which BT are laying across the country. However, we have many alarms units connected through other suppliers
b) We can offer, at an extra charge, a piece of equipment which can ensure that your telephone line is always available; even if it is being used or if a phone is left “off the hook”.
c) If the alarm is likely to be disconnected for a period of more than 3 days due to a telephone line fault, we can supply, at no extra cost, an extra piece of equipment to enable the alarm unit to work over the mobile network.
d) If your telephone line is disconnected for a period of more than 28 days for any reason other than a fault on the line, we will arrange for the alarm unit to be returned and the account finalised. If the telephone service is restored at a later date, you can re-apply for the community alarm and telecare service to be re-instated.

**Before you change telephone suppliers, please contact us for advice.**
Alarm units are not always compatible with other telephone related equipment e.g. Smart boxes; computer modems; digital TVs; Broadband; BT 1571 messaging service etc. If you use one of these facilities, please ask for advice about using it in conjunction with the alarm equipment.

**NB** *We do not recommend that cables trail under doors or mats as the continuous wear on them will degrade them quickly causing loss of telephone service.*

3. **Keyholders may be asked to**

   Respond to a call from the control centre to give access to your property enter your property to assess the situation if the alarm has been activated and the control centre cannot get a response from you.

   They will not be expected to give first aid or pick you up if you have fallen. We will send each one a leaflet which explains “The Role of a Keyholder” and ask them to confirm their details and availability.

   **NB** *Please do not leave your keys in the doors or use door bolts or chains as your keyholders may not be able to gain access.*

4. **Confidentiality and Data Sharing**

   The Service Provider agrees to observe strict confidentiality in the use of the personal data supplied by the Customer and use the same in accordance with the principles contained in the Data Protection Act 1988. The information will only be used for the purpose of the services contracted, either by the Service Provider’s staff, or by sharing the information with nominated contacts, the emergency services or others such as Social Services, who may respond to requests for assistance.

   *Adur & Worthing Councils are committed to the protection of all personal information collected during the process of delivering services to our customers in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1988. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) came into force in January 2005. The Act governs and increases rights of access to information held by public authorities (other than personal information which continues to be governed by the Data Protection Act 1998). To view the Data Protection Principles or further information regarding Freedom of Information, you can either visit the councils’ website at www.adur-worthing.gov.uk and choose the Data Protection section from the A to Z or write to us and we will send you details.*
5. Personal details:

- Name, address and telephone number
- Keyholders - names, addresses and telephone numbers
- Doctor’s name and telephone number
- Medical information about yourself
- Next of kin - name, address and telephone number
- Access details for your property e.g. keysafe code
- Any other relevant information for an emergency situation e.g. about pets, special notes about keyholders, or holidays etc.

It is your responsibility to notify the community alarm team of all changes to your details. Any information can be added or altered during office hours by telephoning 01273 263390.

Out of hours, please use the alarm unit to tell the control centre the changes.

If a third party asks us to change any of your details, we will contact you and ask you to confirm the changes.

**NB** All staff members are professionally trained, have DBS (formerly CRB) checks and receive regular training which includes making sure that you remain as safe as possible within your home. They will not be able to receive personal gifts or other recompense for any service given to you or can offer any service within your home, other than relevant to the provision of the community alarm and telecare service.

You must ensure that any hazards within your home e.g. vicious pets; trailing cables; restricted height doorways; hidden steps; stored boxes / papers etc. do not hinder any council officer who visits your property either on a notified visit or in response to an emergency. Any hazards must be removed or stored away from any access to the alarm equipment and its connections to both electrical and telephone sockets.
Making an alarm call

Each alarm unit is programmed with an individual identification number and emergency telephone numbers which link your alarm unit to the control centre.

There are 2 ways of activating an alarm call. Either - press the red button on the radio trigger which sets off the alarm unit which is plugged into the telephone & electricity or - press the red button on the alarm unit itself.

Accidental calls

If you press the trigger or alarm unit by mistake and the call goes through to the control centre, tell the operator it is an accidental call. The operator will be pleased that the alarm unit worked and that you are safe.

Occasionally, the alarm call may have to wait in a queue while another emergency is being dealt with. If after 3 minutes your call has not been answered, the alarm unit will automatically re-dial the control centre until there is a response.

The Radio Trigger

The most important part of having a community alarm unit is wearing the small radio trigger either on a wrist strap, on a neckcord or on a clip. We will test the range of the trigger on our initial visit to you and on later visits as requested.

The trigger is completely waterproof and should be worn at all times.

We try and leave you with a spare cord or wrist strap so that you have one to wear while the other is “in the wash”. (Wash at no more than 40°)

You may prefer to sleep with the trigger on at night but if not, please remember to pick it up when you have to get up.
When leaving your property, leave the trigger by the door so it is accessible upon your return.

Each alarm unit is provided with one radio trigger. If there are 2 residents in a property, we are happy to supply a second trigger free of charge, but this MUST be returned when it is no longer needed.

Lost or damaged triggers are charged to a maximum of £50.00.

**Testing the alarm**

It is really important that you test the alarm unit every month.

The failure rate of the alarm units is extremely low, but we recommend that you test the alarm each month. This will not only reassure you that the alarm is working, but will also build your confidence in using the alarm in case you need it in an emergency.

To do this, sit in the room where the alarm unit is plugged in.

Press the trigger and when the operator answers the call, say that you are fine and “just testing.”

The operator will thank you for testing and reset the alarm from the control centre.

We will be notified of any faults which have occurred immediately so that we can take appropriate action e.g. change the batteries or unit etc.
How to recognise a fault

Failure of the power supply
Your alarm unit will either emit an intermittent high pitched beeping noise or a recorded voice message to say “There is no mains power”.

If the fault is not rectified within 2-3 hours the unit will automatically call the control centre using its back-up batteries. The operator will talk to you to try and find a solution to the problem.

Possible causes of power failure:

1. A power cut in your area - check other electricity in your property and neighbouring properties is working
2. The alarm unit has been switched off or unplugged from the electric socket **NB** if the alarm unit is plugged into an extension lead, you will need to check that the extension lead is plugged in and switched on as well.
3. A problem with the fuses or trip switch in your electrical cupboard. If you are able, check the switches in the fuse box or get a neighbour or relative etc. to help.

What to do:

1. Check other electricity in your property and neighbouring properties is working. If it is not, contact the electricity supplier to see if it is a localised power cut.
2. Check the plug is securely in the electric socket and if it is plugged into an extension lead, that the socket or extension lead is switched on.
3. If you are able, check the switches in the fuse box or get a neighbour, relative or key holder to help.
4. If you are unable to resolve the problem telephone us on 01273 263390.
   There should be no immediate reason to panic as the inner batteries will allow the alarm to continue working.
**Failure of the telephone line**

Your alarm unit will either emit an intermittent high pitched beeping noise or a recorded voice message to say “The telephone line is disconnected”.

If this happens, it must be dealt with as soon as possible as there is no line for an emergency call to get to the control centre.

**What to do:**

1. Check whether your telephone is working - have you got a dialling tone?
2. If so, contact us directly on 01273 263390.
3. If not, and you have a mobile phone, contact your telephone line supplier – e.g. BT; Talk talk; Virgin Media etc. to check the line for any faults. If you do not have a mobile you will need to get a neighbour, or somebody who visits you to call on your behalf.
4. If your telephone supplier can find no obvious fault, then you should contact us and we will visit within one working day.
   - Office hours - 01273 263390
   - Out of hours - 07713 889128

BT Customers may be entitled to register for a “free priority fault repair”. Contact BT on150 for more information.

**Any customer who has a telephone supplier who uses BT Outreach as their contractor e.g. Talk talk; Post Office; Southern Electric etc. should explain when reporting the fault, that the customer has a lifeline alarm and ask if they can pass it to the engineers as a “Welfare Case”. The engineers may then be able to prioritise your and get it repaired more quickly.**
Failure of the alarm equipment

1. Neither of the above procedures has cured the problem.
2. The alarm unit may emit a “Battery low” message if the internal battery power goes below 25%.

What to do:

Telephone the community alarm office on 01273 263390 to arrange a visit.

The battery packs are in a maintenance programme to be replaced after 5 years but occasionally there is a shortfall in their anticipated life span.

Pendant triggers and other telecare sensors are programmed to make a silent call to the control centre if their batteries get below 25% and they send this information to us weekly.

NB If we visit you because of a fault and the problem is not with our equipment, we reserve the right to charge a call out fee of £25.00.

Our officers will need access to your property to install and maintain the alarm equipment. You must ensure that there are no hazards which may cause an accident while they are in your home including locking your pets in a separate room if requested to do so.

We will make an appointment with you prior to calling and we are very happy if you have a relative or carer with you on any visit.

All team members have identification cards which should be checked on each visit.
Home visits

Initial visit
This is our first visit to you to discuss the community alarm service. There is no obligation to go ahead with the installation at this stage.

Installation visit
The initial and the installation visits may be combined if you have already made the decision to have an alarm unit.

- we will install and test the alarm unit and any other equipment as necessary
- ask you to sign the contract
- answer any questions you may have about the service.

Courtesy call
This visit is usually about 10 weeks after installation and gives you an opportunity to ask any questions about the alarm unit, the account, or any other matter which we may be able to help with.

This visit also gives us an opportunity to ensure the alarm equipment is plugged in correctly and to monitor our service standards. We will also collect any forms, survey papers, keyholder confirmation leaflets that are outstanding or cheques to cover the new invoice.

We will also complete a Support Plan with you. This is a means of ascertaining whether there are any referrals that we can make on your behalf, to other agencies, both public & voluntary, to try to ensure your continued independent living. It covers areas of practical daily living skills, safety in your home, social activities, and other support needs.
Programmed maintenance visits
On each maintenance visit we will:

a) Test the alarm equipment and carry out any necessary maintenance e.g. battery changes
b) Check all personal details held at the control centre
c) Offer advice about the alarm service and other services which you may be interested in
d) Offer advice about benefits for which you may be eligible
e) Take referrals for other agencies e.g. Social Services, and update your support plan as necessary.

Cost of the alarm service

Renting the alarm
All charges are kept to the minimum, and they represent excellent value for money for a 24 hour a day, each day of the year service.

The weekly rental charge Apr 2019 to March 2020 is £3.75 or £5.00 per week for a GSM unit (if you do not have a landline).

Please contact us for up to date charges on 01273 263390

You may not need to pay VAT if you claim exemption under the Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act.

Insurance
You must have an insurance policy covering household contents, to insure against loss or damage to the alarm equipment by fire, lightning strike or any other cause.

Other expenses
You will be responsible for all electrical and telephone call charges incurred by the use of the alarm equipment.
Care of the equipment

The trigger is completely waterproof and can be worn in the shower etc.

However, the alarm unit is susceptible to damage by water invasion and we ask you to only wipe the alarm unit regularly with a soft cloth.

NB The cost of repair of alarm equipment will be recharged to the customer, other than repair needed by fair wear and tear.

Your Account

After the 21 day “cooling off” period, you will receive an invoice to cover the period from installation to the end of the current financial year i.e. to the end of the following March.

The invoice will include:

- the rental charge
- any sundries e.g. electrical extension lead etc.
- VAT if applicable.

If you have previously chosen to pay by cash or cheque monthly, or by direct debit, an instalment plan will be included with the invoice.

Methods of payment

Methods of payment are listed on the back of the invoice. These are:

- **Pay the entire account** - the whole account can be paid by sending a cheque through the post made payable to or in cash at Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing, BN11 1HS.
• **Pay the account in 2 amounts** - we divide the account into 2 parts. (This is not a viable option towards the end of the financial year as the instalments are collected in April & October.)

• **Direct Debit** - we ask you to complete a direct debit mandate. We forward this to your bank and each month we will ask your bank for the appropriate remittance. This will continue each year without the need to complete any further forms.

• **Payment at a PayPoint outlet** - This can be monthly, quarterly, half yearly or one lump sum. Please keep all receipts as proof of payment.

• **Credit / Debit Card** - payments may be made with a debit or credit card at:
  a) In person at the, Cash Office, Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing
  b) Telephoning 01273 263276 or 01273 263390 during office hours.

• Pay online at www.adur-worthing.gov.uk
  a) Step 1: Choose payments.
  b) Step 2: Choose do it on-line.
  c) Step 3: Choose electronic payments on-line.

**Please note:**

1. Whichever method you choose, we would ask that you pay your accounts promptly. This will keep the cost of the service to a minimum.

2. Final accounts should be paid within 4 weeks unless there is a problem with Probate. Please advise us where this is the case.

3. If somebody deals with your financial affairs, or has agreed to pay the account for you, we are able to arrange for your community alarm invoice to be sent direct to them.

4. During a complete financial year the account will be divided into 10 monthly instalments, April to January inclusive. This allows time to follow up unpaid accounts and arrange for the new accounts.
Termination of service

Termination of the service should be made in writing, and should include a 28 day notice period. However, we will accept telephone requests.

NB We will charge until the alarm equipment is returned even if this date is more than 28 days.

- We can arrange to call and collect the equipment from the property
- You can deliver the equipment to Civic Centre, Ham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea or to Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing.
- A receipt will be issued logging all the pieces of equipment returned.
- You will be asked to supply details of a nominated person to deal with the final account.

NB Any missing equipment will be charged for.

Keysafes

These offer a secure back-up for access by emergency services in the event that no keyholders are available:

- The secure coded box is located on the exterior of your property and stores your keys
- The code that you have chosen is kept with your personal details at the control centre and only given out to emergency services when necessary.

For more information and current prices, please contact us on 01273 263390 or by email to communityalarm@adur-worthing.gov.uk
Newsletter

You will receive a newsletter every 6 months containing:

- Information about Adur District Council services
- Information from statutory organisations e.g. benefits agency
- Information about local voluntary services such as lunch clubs, etc.
- Contributions from other community alarm customers e.g. reminiscences, local history, poems etc.

Community Alarm & Telecare User Consultations

When you have an alarm unit installed, we will leave you a survey form to complete and return.

A survey will be sent out annually to 10% of our customer on a random basis asking how satisfied with various aspects of the service they are. It is important that we get responses to these surveys in order that we may improve the service for all customers.

If you are interested in having a say in how the Community Alarm & Telecare Service is run then we can give you details of the “User Group”, which plans to meet twice a year.

The group will discuss:

- any proposed changes to the service standards
- ways in which the changes can be implemented
- proposed changes to charges
- ways of marketing of the service.
Telecare - Keeping you safe at home

There is an ever increasing range of telecare sensors available to help manage risks to your health, safety and independence at home.

These can be purchased, but rental of the equipment includes maintenance and battery changes within a maintenance programme so they are not forgotten.

**Fall detector** – will activate even if the fall renders you unconscious.

**Property exit sensor** - to detect if somebody has wandered off and not returned in a designated time frame

**Linked Smoke detector** - in conjunction with West Sussex Fire and Rescue so that help can be summoned by the control centre if you are not able to dial 999.

**Flood detector** - will warn you if taps are left on or pipes are leaking.

**Medication Dispenser** - provides audible and visual alerts each time you need to take your medication. Raises an alert at the control centre if medication is not removed from dispenser.

**Extreme temperature detector** - monitors very high or very low levels of temperature in your home.

**Bed or chair sensor** - monitors if you get up and are not back within the set time period due to a fall.

Please ask for more information and prices.
If you have a complaint

We try to ensure that the service you receive is of high quality and delivered in the most appropriate way.

If you do have a complaint about the service that cannot be resolved to your satisfaction by speaking to a member of the community alarm team, you can write in confidence to:

   Supported Housing Manager
   Adur Homes
   Portland House
   Richmond Road
   Worthing
   BN11 1HS

If the response is not sufficient, you can also:

   • Telephone the main switchboard on 01273 263000 and ask to speak to the Customer Services Manager, or
   • Complete an on-line form on Adur & Worthing Council’s website: www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/complaints
Pendant alarm test checklist

Please use this grid to tick off when you have tested your alarm pendant each month.

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