

Telecare Service – Consultation 2025

Telecare is a service that helps to support people to live independently. Telecare devices enable people to call for assistance when they have a problem. Some equipment can generate automatic alerts in the event of particular issues arising such as a person has a fall. Telecare provides a way for people to signal for help if they are in need in their homes. Anyone can use it, including older adults, disabled and vulnerable people. You may have heard of them being called 'Careline', 'Care Alarm' or 'Lifeline' systems.

A standard telecare alarm package usually comes with a base unit. This either plugs into your telephone line or connects to the internet. It also comes with a call button, which you can wear as a pendant around the neck, wrist strap, and sometime includes falls detectors worn on the wrist and sensor mats.

The call button is the part used call for help when needed or some equipment can generate automatic alerts in the event of particular issues arising such as a fall. When activated the call will be picked up by a response centre. The response centre will assess the situation and make a decision about the help is needed. This might be to call an emergency contact such as a family member or friend, call a service listed on the persons record or might be to calls emergency services.

In some areas, the Telecare Responder service provides 24/7 assistance and home visits to check on clients' wellbeing. While this service is not currently available in Shropshire, we are seeking your feedback through the survey to determine if it would be beneficial. Additionally, our supplier is responsible for the installation, repair, and maintenance of alarms and related equipment.

We commission several non-statutory services (services which the council is not obliged to provide) which can be used to meet a person's eligible needs, examples include: Telecare. In some cases, this service is used as part of a person's Support Plan to meet their eligible care needs; however, there are currently examples of people with no eligible needs receiving these services who are not being charged.

Shropshire Council would like you to have your say on a proposal to start charging for the telecare service. The current financial context for local councils means we are exploring ways in which to recover some of the costs associated with running telecare services. The proposal outlined within this survey (and in full within the supporting information) outlines the following:

The proposal is to ensure the following principles are applied consistently to non-statutory services:

- If a person receives a non-statutory service to meet their eligible needs, this would form part of their overall support Plan and financial assessment.
- If the council chooses to provide a non-statutory service to a person who doesn't have eligible needs or their eligibility has not been established, the council will charge the actual cost of that service.

This new approach should provide clarity on when people should be charged for using these services.

Charging proposals

- A commitment to continuing to fund the service for people who are care eligible (i.e. have a social care package) following assessment. Those entitled to after-care services provided under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act will not pay for telecare.

- Charges for people with lower-level needs or who require telecare as a preventative measure.
- Where charges are made for telecare the rate proposed is £3.45 a week. This charge would apply to both existing and new users of telecare.
- A one-off start up fee of £35 for new users of the service.
- A free 6-week trial for those new users who receive a reablement package (in line with legislation).

Other proposals

- The charge would be the same no matter how little or often the alarm system is triggered.
- All Telecare equipment remains the property of the Council.
- The charge will be reviewed annually when the Council sets its budget, fees and charges.

Please complete the survey to share your views on these proposals.

1. Which of the following best describes you?

- Someone who uses telecare services
- A carer of someone who uses telecare services
- Family or friend of someone who uses telecare services
- A local resident employed in the health or social care sector
- Employee or volunteer for a community/voluntary organisation or group
- Public sector employee (e.g. NHS, Shropshire Council etc.)

Other (please specify)

2. Do you currently use the telecare service?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Other (please specify)

3. If you use telecare, do you remember to test your equipment by pressing the trigger button once a month?

- Not applicable (I don't have Telecare equipment)
- Yes, I test the equipment regularly
- Occasionally (but not monthly)
- No
- Don't know

Other (please specify)

Testing equipment regularly is important, and it may help to prolong battery life. If you have a personal alarm, a life-saving device you rely on, you want to be assured that it will be there when you call for help. That's why we encourage all our customers to be proactive and test their alarm systems at least once a month so we can identify any problems and fix them as quickly as possible.

4. Some local authorities offer a Responder service. Trained staff, called responders, can visit your home to provide practical, emotional, planned, or emergency support to minimise risks and promote independence. Would you be interested in this service?

- Yes
- No

5. If you have answered 'yes' above, how much would you be willing to pay?

- £2.99 or less a week
- Between £3 and £4.99 a week
- £5 to £6.99 a week
- £7 or more a week

6. Please consider the following statements and select the response that best fits your opinion:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know or not applicable
Charges should not apply to people who are considered care eligible (i.e. have a social care package) following assessment including those entitled to after-care services provided under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act.						
People without an assessed need, e.g. requiring telecare as a preventative measure should be charged.						
Shropshire Council should introduce a weekly charge of £3.45 for telecare services.						
A one-off charge of £35 for new users should be changed (a contribution towards instillation and administration).						
A free 6-week trial of telecare should be introduced for people with a reablement package (before charges begin).						

7. Please add any comments you may have to explain your views.

8. Please consider the following statements and select the response that best fits your opinion:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know or not applicable
The charge would be the same no matter how little or often the alarm system is triggered.						
All Telecare equipment remains the property of the Council.						
The charge will be reviewed annually when the Council sets its budget, fees and charges.						

9. Shropshire Council's current proposal is based on evidence from other local authority areas where charges are made for telecare. The proposal considers needs and ability to pay (i.e. excluding people with a social care package). To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

10. If the telecare service is charged for (and you are not eligible for financial support) would you still use the service and/or keep the equipment you already have?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

11. Is there anything you dislike about the proposal? Please explain any concerns you may have including any negative impact the proposal could have.

12. Is there anything you like about the proposal?

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13. What are your views on the potential impact of these proposals?

	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Unsure/don't yet know
I would be affected				
A member of my family/someone I care for would be affected				
My group/organisation/service would be affected				
None of the above or don't know				

Any other comments about impact?

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14. Do you have any alternative suggestions that could be introduced to raise income and cover the costs of the service other than the proposal outlined?

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15. Overall, how do you rate the current telecare service?

- Very good
- Good
- Neither good nor poor
- Poor
- Very poor
- Don't know/ not applicable

16. If you have any ideas or suggestions for improving telecare services in Shropshire please add comments below.

The next questions are more personal and are about you. You do not have to complete this section if you don't want to (all questions are optional). We do not use this information to identify individuals but to make sure people of all different characteristics have been engaged in the survey and that the feedback we have is representative.

17. Are you?

- Female
- Male
- Other (e.g. prefer to self-describe)
- Prefer not to say

18. Is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth?

- Yes, it's different
- No, it's the same
- Prefer not to say

19. What age group are you?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 15 or under | <input type="radio"/> 55 - 64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 16 - 24 | <input type="radio"/> 65 - 74 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25 - 34 | <input type="radio"/> 75 - 84 |
| <input type="radio"/> 35 - 44 | <input type="radio"/> 85+ |
| <input type="radio"/> 45- 54 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |

20. Disability: Under the Equality Act you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

21. If your day to day activities are impacted by a long-term- condition, illness or disability please can you describe below. Please don't feel you have to complete this if you would rather not say. We ask this to check we understand the needs of people who are responding to the survey.

- Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
- Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
- Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
- Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
- Learning or understanding or concentrating
- Memory
- Mental health
- Stamina or breathing or fatigue
- Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)
- Prefer not to say

22. Caring responsibilities: A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

23. Do you, or the people you support, receive any of the following benefits? (Please tick all that apply)

- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Working and child tax credits
- Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Council Tax Reduction
- None of these
- Other

Other (please specify)

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24. What is your ethnic origin?

- Arab
- Asian (Asian British; Bangladeshi Chinese; Indian; Japanese; Pakistani; any other Asian background).
- Black (Black African; Black British; Black Caribbean; any other Black background).
- Mixed (White and Asian; White and Black African; White and Black Caribbean; any other mixed background)
- White (British; Irish; Welsh)
- White (Gypsy, Roma or Irish traveller)
- Other white background e.g. Bulgarian, French, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, White South African, etc.
- Other Ethnic Group
- Prefer not to say or don't know

25. Do you belong to any particular religion or hold particular beliefs?

- Christian
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Sikh
- Judaism
- Veganism (as a belief)
- No Religion
- Prefer not to say
- Other

26. Are you any of the following?

- Armed forces (veteran)
- Armed forces (serving member)
- Armed forces (member of the family or a veteran or serving member)
- None of the above
- Prefer not to say

27. Your postcode (this will be used for mapping where respondents to the survey are from and will not be used to identify you or for any other purpose).

How we will use the information you have provided

The information you have provided will be used by Shropshire Council to influence the work of Commissioners and Social Care Services. We will only publish anonymised responses, parts of responses, or a summarized version of responses and will ensure individual survey respondents cannot be identified. Your response will be stored and kept in line with Shropshire Council's Retention Schedule.

The survey results will be shared with other services within Shropshire Council and anonymised data may be shared with services commissioned by Shropshire Council. We will not share your data with any external third parties. A summary report will be developed and made available. We comply with data protection laws concerning the protection of personal information, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For more information please see our corporate privacy policy at www.shropshire.gov.uk/privacy

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.