



## The Pain- Free way to take on your freeholder

- Check your lease- you can only be charged for items listed in it. If it does not mention fees for improvements to the development, you do not have to pay these.
- For a service charge demand to be valid, it must list the landlords name and address and include a summary of your rights and obligations.
- Work with neighbours- challenging service charge costs on your own is almost always impossible. Check the big-ticket items such as insurance, staff costs, door entry system, list contracts and utilities. TO challenge these costs, you will need comparable quotes showing significant savings.
- Exercise your legal rights to ask for a summary showing how the charge is worked out and what it is spent on, with receipts. If a freeholder refuses to supply this, they face a £2,500 fine.
- Don't withhold payment and don't admit that the charges are payable- for example, if you aim to sell, don't promise prospective buyers that you will pay all the chargers.
- Write to the landlord or management agent with evidence with the charges are unreasonable.
- You may be able to take over the right to manage the development. The Law Commission is consulting on ways to make this easier.
- The apply to England's first tier tribunal for a determination of whether the charge is payable.
- If you win enough of the tribunal case, you can apply for an order to limit the landlords right to pass on some or all of their legal costs through the service charge or administration fees.
- Get free advice from the governments Leaseholder Advisory Service.

[www.responsiblelandlord.co.uk](http://www.responsiblelandlord.co.uk)

[info@responsiblelandlord.co.uk](mailto:info@responsiblelandlord.co.uk)

0330 159 5311