



HOME SAFEGUARD COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

'Help at the touch of a button'

Background

Home Safeguard Community Alarm Services is run by East Devon District Council's Housing Service. It monitors the alarms within East Devon's sheltered housing as well as installing and monitoring dispersed alarms in other properties, both council and private, throughout East Devon.

Our aims

To enable elderly persons, disabled people and people with special needs to live as independently as possible and remain in their own homes if they so wish (EDDC Housing Strategy 2008-11).

We have three key principles to ensure delivery of our aims. These are:

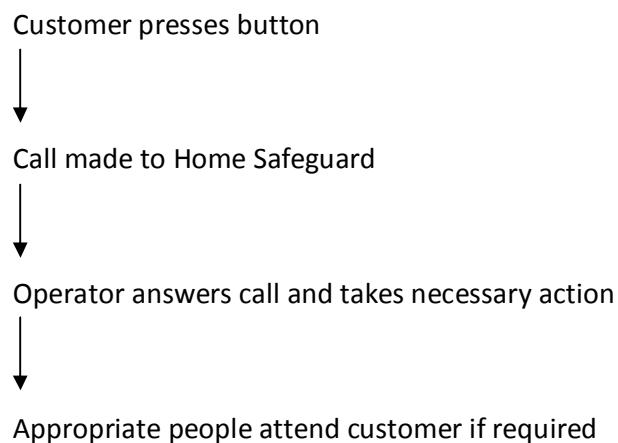
- to treat all customers as individuals and keep them at the heart of all we do
- to provide high quality, good value for money services
- to ensure our services are accessible to all and enhance the quality of life in the communities in which we work.

Our motto 'Help at the touch of a button' refers to the way in which customers make contact with us. Customers wear a small personal alarm, called a pendant, around their neck, on a wrist strap, or clipped to clothing. The pendant transmits to a small base unit connected to an ordinary BT telephone line which works alongside the existing telephone. When activated a call goes through automatically to our Control Centre where it is answered by a trained operator

Our services

Our services are delivered from our Control Centre, located in Sidmouth. We have a team of eight permanent and four casual dedicated operators, working on a rota system, to ensure that someone is available to answer calls 24hrs a day, every day of the year. We also have three Private Mobile Support Officers who go out into the community to install, demonstrate and test our dispersed alarms. All our staff is fully trained.

How the system works



Our operators respond to each call as appropriate and, if necessary, call out the emergency services or other assistance. We call on the services of Devon's SWAST team for rapid response to non emergency calls if required. We record all our calls, so that in the unlikely event of any queries arising, we can double check exactly what was said and what action was taken.

We currently have a total of 5,500 connections covering:

- East Devon District Council's sheltered housing
- private individuals living throughout East Devon
- monitoring of some Abbeyfield properties in East Devon
- monitoring for the Teachers Association property in Paignton
- monitoring of some of the alarm services for North Devon

As well as dispersed alarms the new Tunstall PNC6 equipment allows for the use of a range of other Telecare products including fall detectors, pill dispensers, smoke detectors carbonmonoxide detectors and a number of other sensors.

Our Performance

We are keen to deliver a high quality service that exceeds the industry standards set by the Telecare Services Authority. Our performance statistics show that this has indeed been the case for the year 2010/11.

Monitoring: During the year we responded to a total of 73,000 calls of which 98.50% were answered within 60 seconds.

Installations: We connect 40 new customers per month during 2010/2011. All these were connected within our target times of two days for urgent and five days for non urgent or standard installations, from the day we were first contacted.

Repairs: During 2010/11 we have repaired approximately 150 units. These were all repaired within our target times of two days for critical and ten days for non-critical, from the day we were first contacted.

Complaints: We received four complaints during year. Each had an initial response within 24 hours and a full investigation and explanation was completed within five days. Where necessary operators were given extra training.

Financial Information and costs

For 2010-11 the costs of our services were £3.17 per week. This included the installation and hire of the equipment and the monitoring of calls.

For 2011-12 our charges will rise, in line with the Retail Price Index, to £3.38 per week.

It cost us £644,742 to run the service per year. Funding for the services comes from:

- East Devon District Council - for the operation of the Outs of Hours contract
- Supporting People - for the monitoring of the sheltered properties
- Private contracts that we monitor
- East Devon customers who pay a small charge towards the service.

What our customers say about us

Customers tell us it gives them peace of mind. Having 'help at the touch of a button' through the pendant means that residents feel safer in their own homes, knowing they can always contact someone in an emergency. Customers also tell us that our staff are helpful and understanding.

Key achievements during 2010-11

The past year has been an exciting one for us and has seen several major achievements

June 2010	Installation of Tunstall PNC6 completed
June 2010	Disaster recovery site in Exmouth fully operational
December	Delivery of full service, including emergency installations, during bad weather

We installed new Tunstall PNC6 equipment at our Control Centre at Sidmouth in June 2010. It is fully Telecare compliant and allows for the provision of a range of telecare products, as well as alarm monitoring. It also gives us greater ability to analyse the service. It means we can deliver a high quality service that exceeds the industry standards set by the Telecare Services Authority.

During the year we completed work on a fully operational disaster recovery site in Exmouth. This means that, should our Control Centre in Sidmouth stop functioning for any reason, we have a second fully equipped resource centre where we can continue to run the service.

We also are proud that during the particularly bad weather during December we were able to remain fully staffed, deliver a complete service and carry out all the required emergency alarm installations.

Our plans for the year ahead

As well as the continued delivery of an excellent service to our existing customers we have four key areas for further development this year. These are:

- to set up a focus group of our customers, to get feedback from them and use this to further develop and improve our services
- to offer our services to other Local Authorities in the county
- to extend the range of other Telecare products that we can offer to our customers
- to encourage more of our private sector customers to have key safes fitted to their properties so that there is easy access in cases of emergency.

Further information

If you require any further information about the Home Safeguard Community Alarm Services please:

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