

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Cabinet for Housing and Preventing Homelessness
Subject:	Update on Safe at Home Service
Date of meeting:	8 th December 2022
Report by:	James Hill - Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Authors:	Clare Hardwick - Head of Private Sector Housing Ellie O'Day - Telecare and Home Safety Team Leader
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by Councillor Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing and Preventing Homelessness

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To update councillors on the progress of work undertaken to action the agreed changes to the Telecare service, to launch the rebranded Safe at Home service.

3. Information Requested

3.1 Background

3.1.1 On 8th March 2022 Cabinet agreed the following:

- 3.1.1.1 That councillors recognise the developments in the Telecare service, the new service offer, and agree to the changes proposed.
- 3.1.1.2 Approve the financial fees for the new service, set on a cost recovery basis.
- 3.1.1.3 That officers bring back an update report before the end of 2022 on the progress of the new service, and also outline how community and voluntary groups could be used to support service users to stay safe in their own home.

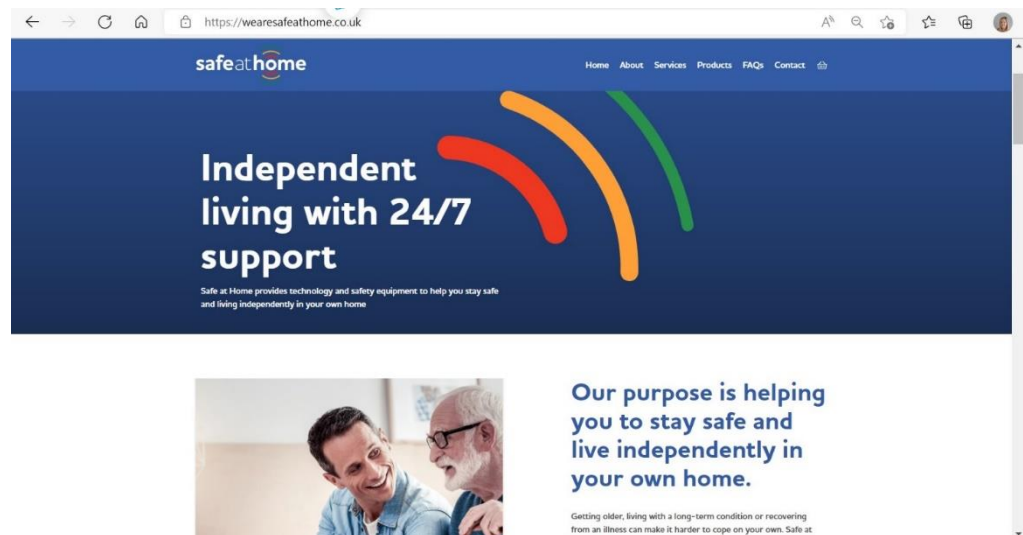
THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.1.2 This report provides the agreed progress update as outlined in the previous report of 8th March 2022.

3.2 New Brand Launch

3.2.1 On 24th March 2022 the rebranded "Safe at Home" service was launched. This included a press release, live event at the Hive in the City Central Library, Social Media campaign, as well as the launch of the new Safe at Home website <https://wearesafeathome.co.uk>.



New and existing customers are now able to access the new service offer designed to meet the purpose "Help the customer stay safe and living independently in their own home" including new digital equipment, customer management system and alarm receiving centre.

3.2.2 Since the Safe at Home launch in March 2022, there have been a number of actions taken to promote the service to colleagues and professionals working within the City Council with the aim of raising the profile of the service and increasing referrals into the service. This includes:

- Regular communications in the Adult Social Care (ASC) staff newsletter and bulletin.
- Attendance at several ASC staff meetings.
- Team meetings with other equipment suppliers to develop the link and usage of equipment in the home.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- An open day on 27th September 2022 held at the Civic Offices inviting staff from across the Council to learn more about the service and see equipment demonstrated
- A simple referral process through the new website
- Engagement with health & care professionals to have their say for future joint working.

3.2.3 Officers have also worked hard to promote the service externally, including:

- Promotion in the city wide Flagship magazine
- Leaflet distributions
- Social media campaigns, and promotion of the new website
- A new eye-catching branded van wrap, and distribution of other promotional material including branded pens, hand sanitisers and lanyards.
- Events at the central library, GP surgeries, community centres and coffee mornings with carer centres and day care services, and the local 'Carers Count' event.
- Reaching out to local practitioners and GP surgeries within the city
- Securing a place in the GP weekly bulletin
- Creating a simple bespoke referral process via the practitioners patient management system.

3.2.4. In addition, Safe at Home staff have direct contact with the new HIVE Portsmouth Link Worker to support with admission avoidance and be represented with Adult Social ASC early prevention. This new role has been created to strengthen the links between community and primary care health services and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. Safe at Home is in close communication with the Link Worker as the service has been identified as a non-medical alternative to traditional care; additional links have already been made with The YOU Trust Social Prescribing Portsmouth, empowering people to thrive in their communities.

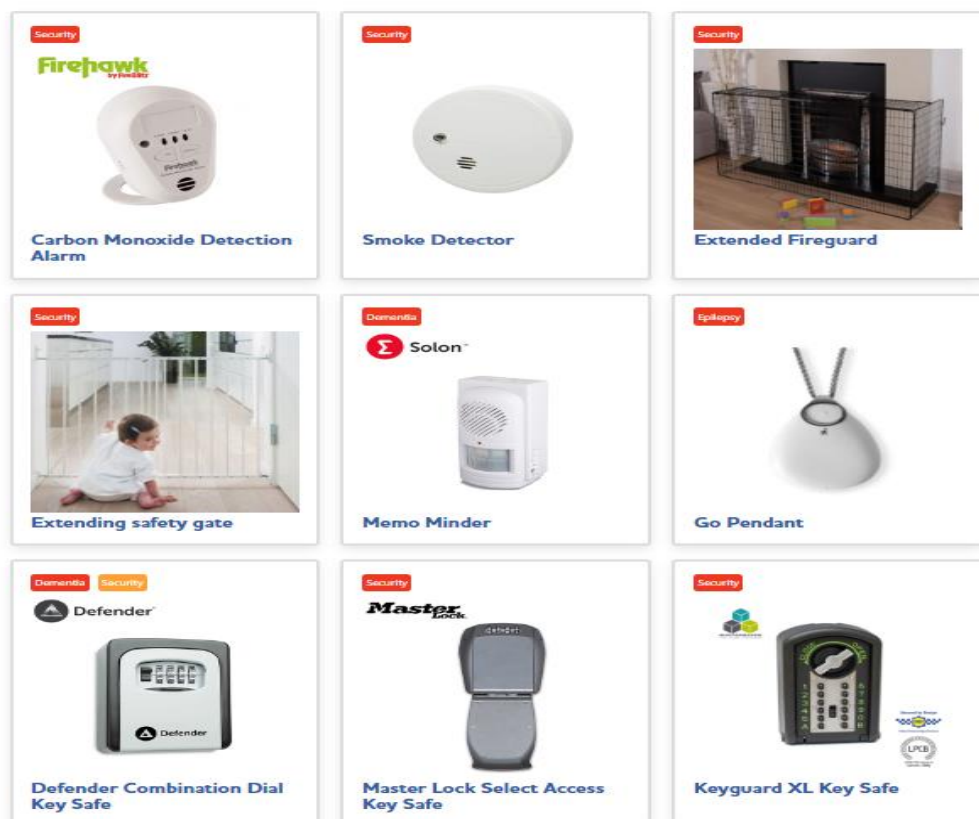
THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.3. New Contracts for equipment, Customer Management System and Alarm Receiving Centre commenced on 1st April 2022, as detailed in the Cabinet report of 8th March 2022.

3.3.1. The new digital equipment is enabling quicker installation times, fewer faults, and supporting customers who have already undergone the digital switchover with their telecoms provider. The variety of equipment now available through the Safe at Home service is considerable. All customers receive a base unit and pendant, which is what is often thought of when "Telecare equipment" is mentioned. However, every customer is also assessed by a TSA trained officer to establish if additional equipment is required to help them to stay safe and independent in their home. This may include a falls detector or Epilepsy monitors, for example, and are provided at no additional cost to a customer's package. Appendix 1 provides a list of the most popular equipment available through the service. In addition to this, from the end of 2022 the service will also be offering a Chiptech Go device, which is a wearable device with 4G cellular and GPS technology working outside the home. This piece of advanced technology is anticipated to be a popular addition to the already vast equipment offering available through the Safe at Home service.

Products



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.4 Roll out of new digital equipment

3.4.1 As outlined in the previous Cabinet report of 8th March 2022, in 2025 the traditional, Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) will be switched-off and replaced with a digital 'all-Internet Protocol' network. This therefore requires the roll out of new digital equipment to all new and existing customers across the service. This new equipment roll out commenced on 21st April 2022. As of 1st November 2022, 562 have been changed over out of 839 existing customers requiring this new equipment, which equates to 67% completed. This is currently ahead of the planned programme of changeover by March 2023. The digital changeover is being completed using Safe at Home officers within the existing team and capacity.

3.5 Implementation of the new service fee structure

3.5.1 A new fee structure was agreed by Cabinet on 8th March 2022 to achieve full cost recovery for the service (see Appendix 2) and included the introduction of a new installation fee of £55 for new customers. The fees will be reviewed annually as agreed by Cabinet in March 2022 and may be revised to reflect changes to officer visit time/costs as the Service develops.

3.5.2 This new fee structure was implemented from 1st April 2022. Since this time there has been a reduction in customers joining the service, detailed in section 3.6 below. This is believed to be in part due to the new upfront installation fee of £55, although there are likely to be many other factors that have contributed to the reduction in new customers, including the current cost-of-living crisis. The service is now offering the option for customers to pay the installation fee as part of the weekly rental charge to overcome the barrier of this upfront cost in accessing the service. This has shown a small positive increase in new customers accessing the service.

3.6 Customer numbers

3.6.1 As outlined in the Cabinet report on 8th March 2022, the customer numbers for year 1 of the launch of the rebranded service were projected to remain static, at an estimated 1,029 customers.

3.6.2 Current customer numbers however have decreased to 994 as of 26th September 2022 as take up from new customers has been less than expected.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.6.3 To address this reduction in customer numbers the team are focusing on increasing referrals. At present the vast majority of Safe at Home customers access the service directly, or through their next of kin, at approximately 50% of the customer base. Referrals from QA hospital account for 15% of the customer base. In contrast few referrals are received from Portsmouth City Council Adult Social Care staff. This was identified as a key area of potential growth for the business from a systems thinking intervention in 2020, as well as market research for the digital transformation project. The team are therefore increasing engagement with ASC colleagues, as well as promotion for self-referrers.

3.6.4 Another focus for the service to increase customer numbers is to examine how customers access the service and fund this. At present the service is only available to customers who can pay the weekly service charge themselves (ranging from £4.80 to £15 per week). Some other local authorities include telecare costs in their package of care meaning more vulnerable adults within the city are supported with the use of technology and is available to all those assessed as having a clinical need; not only those who are able to afford it. Safe at Home will work with ASC colleagues to review how PCC may be able to work to a similar model.

3.7 Responder service

3.7.1 When a Safe at Home customer triggers the alarm on their equipment, a call goes through to alarm receiving centre (Astraline) who assess the situation and either deploy an ambulance or contact the customers responder, which is usually a relative, friend or neighbour. The Safe at Home service offers four customer packages, two of which include a responder service, a unique feature of Safe at Home not offered by private equivalent services locally. It enables customers to access the service who do not have friends or family nearby who can respond to them in the event of their alarm (or periphery equipment) being triggered.

3.7.2 The Safe at Home team have worked with ASC and Health colleagues to explore ways to improve the responder service to ensure customer responses are appropriate for each individual situation, and to alleviate pressures on ambulance and hospital services wherever possible. Safe at Home have an existing relationship with the Portsmouth Rehab and Reablement Team who already provide a night-time response service between the hours of 9pm-6am. To improve the outcomes of the customer,

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

the service is also currently trialling an additional response service (8am-8pm) utilising the new Urgent Community Response (UCR) Team via Solent NHS, who are able to offer clinical support and lifting to Safe at Home customers in their home. This is an opportunity to reduce strain into the emergency services and support customers with hospital avoidance and rehabilitation.

3.8 Feedback

3.8.1 Feedback from customers and stakeholders has been very positive regarding the new Safe at Home service. Many customers prefer the overall look of the equipment and the flexibility of installing anywhere within the home now a phone line is no longer required; the feature of the pendants now being waterproof and having an extended range has especially been well received giving customers further independence in their homes. The Safe at Home service recently received a compliment from an existing customer, Mrs P, a 99-year-old who lives alone in her own home. Mrs P unfortunately had a fall and was admitted to hospital but with the use of the falls detector, this activated a prompt response where the right help was deployed resulting into a reduced lie and shorter hospital stay. Mrs P quoted, "if it wasn't for the personal alarm, I wouldn't have been found."

The new and developed offering has also enabled the Safe at Home Team to support 5 out of the 13 supported living flats in Patey Court to date where these residents now have digital units with peripheral equipment to suit their specific needs and care, empowering independence and wellbeing for those individuals. From the successes seen here, the Safe at Home team will continue to reach out to other supported living homes within the city to improve independence with the use of technology and home safety equipment for both residents and professionals.

.....
Signed by James Hill - Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Products available through the Safe at Home service
Appendix 2 - Fee Structure approved in March 2022

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Cabinet Report 8 th March 2022 Developing the Telecare Service	Developing the Telecare service.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)
Cabinet Report 8 th March 2022 Developing the Telecare Service - Appendix 2	Developing the Telecare service Appendix 2.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)
Cabinet Report 8 th March 2022 Developing the Telecare Service - Appendix 3	Developing the Telecare Service Appendix 3.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)
Cabinet Report 8 th March 2022 Developing the Telecare Service - IIA	Report for Decision - Developing the Telecare service Appendix 1.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)