

Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey Report 2023



Introduction

Over the past year at Care Connect, we have continued providing an excellent, 24-hour monitoring and response service to our customers across County Durham. We have received some lovely compliments from customers and their families, all of which have been shared with Care Connect staff. As a service, we are moving into a new digital world, with work planned by BT Openreach to upgrade telephone lines to digital by 2025. Care Connect will be ensuring all customers are updated on any changes which will affect them whilst making sure they still receive the best quality level of care and support we can provide.



Service Improvements and Developments

We've had a great year at **Care Connect**, striving to continually improve our services and develop staff skills to offer the best possible alarm monitoring and response services in County Durham. Here are some of our key developments over the past 12 months:

- ✓ **Care Connect** retained its accreditation to the **Telecare Services Association** (TSA) Code of Practice.
- ✓ Our preparations for the digital upgrade to the analogue telephone network continued and we started a project to upgrade customer's equipment.
- ✓ We have implemented new ways of working to speed up the customer journey.
- ✓ We have continued to deliver the **Home from Hospital Service**.
- ✓ We have continued to provide a service in partnership with the North East Ambulance Service to help with non-injury falls.
- ✓ We recruited new staff and saw excellent interest from new candidates who want to work for **Care Connect**.
- ✓ We implemented measures to procure a new call handling and data management platform to aid us as the digitalisation of telephone lines continues.
- ✓ We continued providing value for money and offering bi-annual promotions for new customers.

The demand for the **Care Connect** service continues, with **8,790** total customers using our services. We are currently seeing an average of **186** new customers joining each month which is fantastic.

Our service objective is to assist and protect our vulnerable customers to maintain their independence in their own home. The referrals for Telecare equipment continue, with **2,327** of our total customers being supported at home with this equipment.



In July 2023 we underwent an external audit carried out by our industry regulator, the **Telecare Services Association (TSA)**, an accreditation we have maintained for many years. The audit examined all our procedures and working practices to ensure we deliver a safe and responsible service. The following provides you with a summary of how we deliver the service:

Performance Indicator	Target	Achieved
% of emergency calls answered within 60 seconds	97.5%	97.19%
% of emergency calls answered within 3 minutes	99%	99.72%
Arrived at property within 45 minutes of an alert	90%	97%
Arrived at property within 60 minutes of an alert	100%	100%

We are working slightly below our target to answer calls within 60 seconds which is something we are very keen to improve upon. Although we are only **0.4%** from our target, we do intend to bring this figure back up and above this objective. We have recently recruited more Control Operators and training with staff is always ongoing.

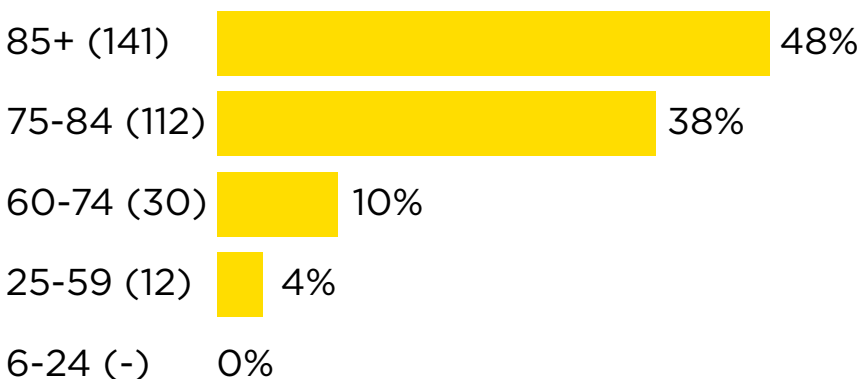
Survey Content

In this survey we requested the views of **10%** of our current customer base which were selected at random. The questions were aimed to gather information about how we delivered the service and we also asked for ideas about service improvements.

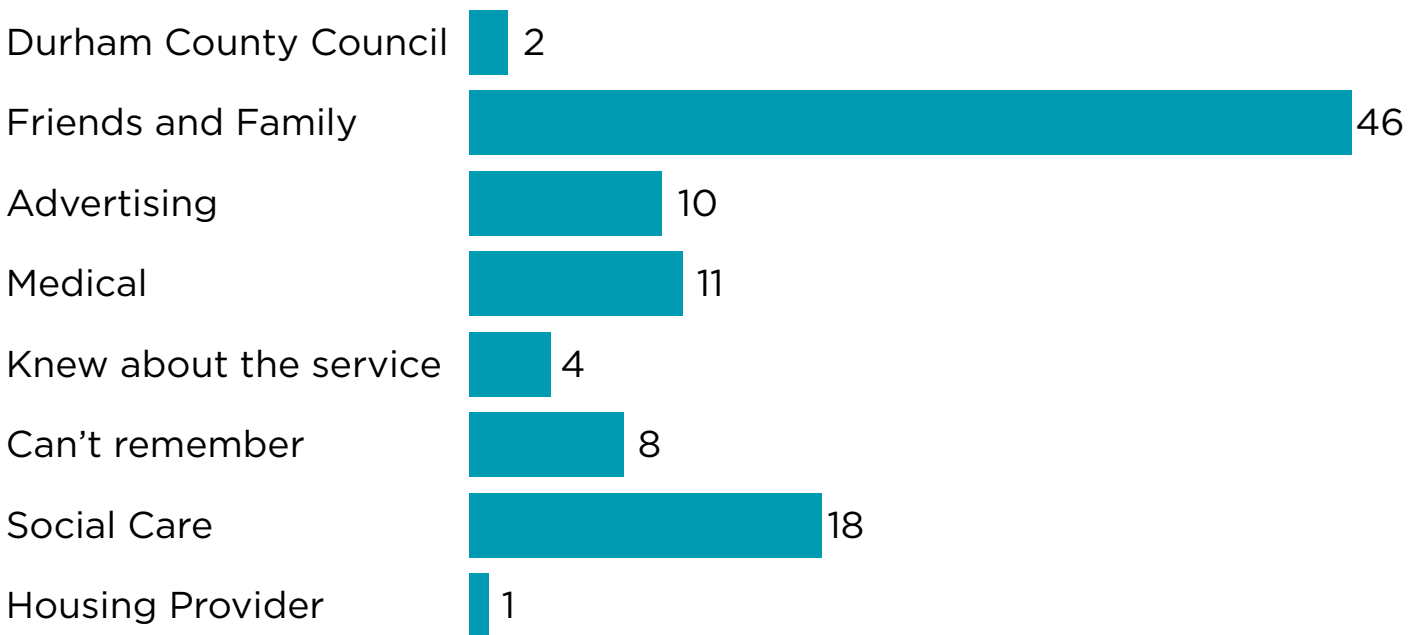
Feedback is very important to us. We listen actively and log all feedback, taking the time to analyse, and then thinking of the best possible solution to perform better. It provides positive criticism and allows to see what we can change to improve the **Care Connect** service offering.

We sent out **850** surveys to which we received **297** responses, providing a **35%** response rate.

The age range of customers who completed the survey is as follows:



How did these customers hear about the **Care Connect** service?



Understanding this data is important to us. It shows us what more we need to do to reach people in County Durham who could benefit from our services. Our marketing strategies work very well, however there is always more that can be done to make sure as many people in our County know about the **Care Connect** service that need to.



Top-line survey results

- ✓ **100%** would recommend **Care Connect** to family or friends if they needed it.
- ✓ **100%** agreed that the service helps to provide reassurance to their family or carers.
- ✓ **98%** agreed that the service helps them to remain independent at home.

Installation

- ✓ **100%** said their appointment for installation was made at a suitable time.
- ✓ **100%** said that during their installation, they felt comfortable and confident that **Care Connect** would help provide peace of mind for them at home.
- ✓ **99%** said that their equipment was installed within 5 days of requesting the service.
- ✓ **99%** reported that the service was fully explained to them.
- ✓ **99%** said they were shown how to use the equipment and features in a manner that was easy to understand.
- ✓ **95%** of customers said they were asked to place a test call using their equipment or pendant to demonstrate their understanding of its use.
- ✓ **91%** said they were informed that all calls they make via equipment are recorded and the reasons why.



Staff feedback

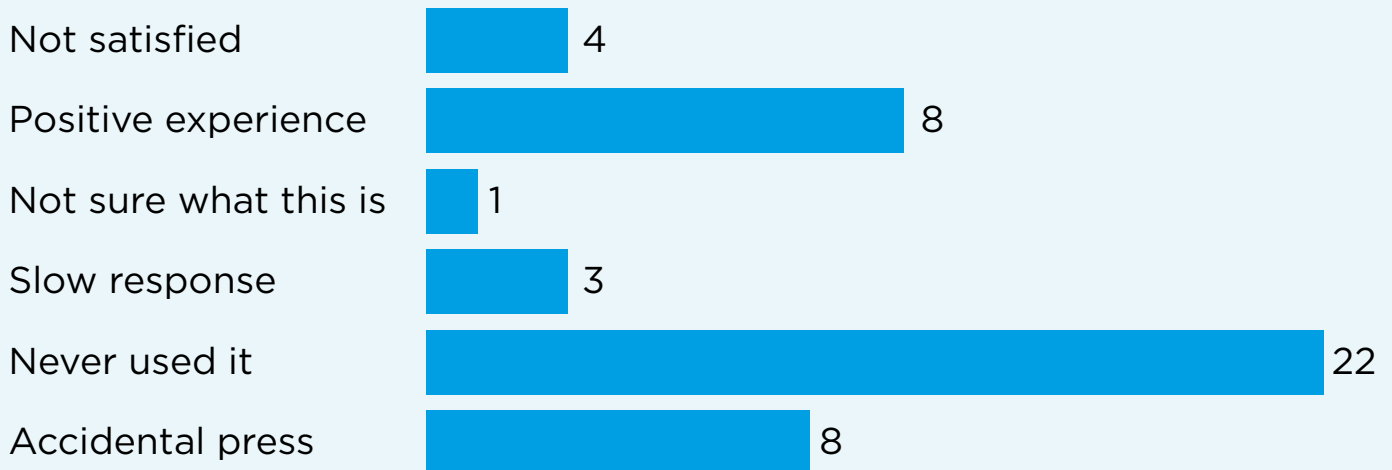
This survey has provided us with some amazing feedback to pass on to our staff. They work very hard to provide our service 24/7, offering the best help and support possible.

Please see how their actions have helped our customers:

- ✓ **100%** agreed that during installation they were treated with dignity and respect by staff.
- ✓ **100%** said that staff were polite and professional.
- ✓ **100%** found the staff helpful. We asked customers to describe how they helped them, and we received **109** responses. Here are some examples of those:
 - They help me to keep me in my home
 - Considerate and polite, explained the alarm system well
 - Helpful but didn't realise you have other services
 - Friendly and efficient
 - Caring and understanding
 - Explained everything more than once so I understood
 - Took my disabilities into consideration, were kind and respectful
 - Early 2023 I collapsed - immediate response
 - They were friendly and courteous, patient when answering questions
 - Always very helpful, friendly, and comforting
 - Able to put mind at rest, easy to understand
 - Down to earth
 - Kindness and care and having a laugh with you
 - Checked a previous phone call to see if it was genuine
 - Great explanation done in a friendly and supportive way
 - Arrived as quickly as possible - always friendly and get straight onto what they need to do regardless of the time of the day
- ✓ **99%** of customers reported **Care Connect** staff introduced themselves.
- ✓ **99%** of customers reported staff showed them their identification badge.
- ✓ **99%** of customers said staff handled their call appropriately.

Customer satisfaction

- ✓ **97%** said that the overall impression of the services **Care Connect** provided were 'very good' or 'good'.
- ✓ **97%** agreed that the services they had received so far left them either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.
- ✓ **96%** said they were satisfied with how quickly we answered their call and responded to their home. If customers were unhappy with their response, we asked them to explain why and we received **50** responses:



As you can see, most customers who commented had never needed to use the service, which is fantastic, and means they are successfully staying independent at home. Just **3** of customers were unsatisfied with the service they received; their comments are below:

- When I had fallen outside, I could not be heard. The pendant wouldn't work so used the phone I was told they were very busy and that I shouldn't have used the landline.
- I fell in the garden and used my wristband, but no attempt was made to contact my daughter and I had to use my wristband again 20 minutes later my daughter was only contacted after the second press of my wrist band.
- Service did not contact responders until the team were at the house. We requested to be contacted immediately for future events.

3 customers reported that they would prefer a quicker response; their comments are below:

- Not quick enough.
- Takes some time to get here because of the distance.
- Sometimes during the night, response times are slow.

As outlined in our performance targets at the beginning of this report, we aim to be at a customer's property within **45** minutes or less. Unfortunately, on some occasions, our response time may be in excess of this due to:

- Distance required to travel (we cover County Durham and borders).
- Traffic issues or roadworks.
- Your call not being an emergency - emergency calls are always prioritised.

We are currently operating **8%** above the national standard set by the **TSA** for response times, showing we do provide a very swift response across County Durham.

93% said that **Care Connect** presents 'excellent value' and 'good value' for money.

93% reported they received a follow up call **7** days after their installation to check they were happy with the service.



Customer retention

To gauge how long our customers plan to use the **Care Connect** service for something we have been interested to find out. We hope that **Care Connect** will become a comforting background presence in our customers lives; a service that is always available if help is required. We understand that some customers may also only be interested in joining us for a short period of time.

We asked our customers: Do you plan to continue using **Care Connect** in the future years to come? We received **106** positive comments from customers which outlined they would continue to use the service in future years, which is excellent! Here are just some of their comments:

- Living on my own it provides reassurance for me and my family to know that there is always someone.
- Because of the reassurance it gives me. I am bed bound and it is a lifeline.
- Peace of mind for family members, we know there is another pair of ears keeping her safe plus a backup when we are not with her.
- I do as I feel at my age, almost 80, the service provides support always someone at the end of the phone if I needed help. I found that out when I first got **Care Connect** installed before my husband died. I was never in doubt about keeping it for myself.
- Just the press of a button I know someone is there to help me. Makes me feel very safe and sure.
- Yes, if I am well enough to stay in my own home, as I have confidence in the service provided.
- I have mobility issues and I am now quite unsteady after an accident. **Care Connect** is always there for me. It's a huge reassurance to me and I know I am in need, or an emergency, the helpful person on the other end of the line will get me help.



Service Improvements

Part of delivering the **Care Connect** service means we are always looking to improve our service offering to our new and existing customers. Direct feedback from our customers enables us to understand what our customers want to see from us and what we can implement. We used the 2023 survey to gather data on how we could improve the **Care Connect** service and asked customers to leave comments about how we can improve their experience with **Care Connect**.

We received **101** comments, and **73%** of these were positive comments such as:

- Service is excellent and completely fulfils its function. No improvement necessary.
- How can you improve on perfection.
- My family and I can't think of anything **Care Connect** could do better than it is now.
- You cannot improve on excellence. Thank you for **Care Connect** - pat on the back to all your staff.

25% of the customers who left a comment suggested improvement such as:

- Make it wider known to encourage older people to use it. Make it cheaper for some people.
- When you go digital make sure help is available 24/7 without the need to pay more for the service. Some people will be left without any help.
- I would like a visit for a chat now and again.
- Response time to my property needs to be quicker.
- The pendant could have a microphone.
- I would like to be updated on services and what is available.
- Telephone calls every now and again just to check equipment is working.

As part of service delivery, we regularly assess the services we provide. We believe that our 24-hour monitoring and response service along with excellent technology to keep people safe in their homes, provides our customers good value for money. You can see how we aim to make some changes to accommodate our customer feedback in our '**Next Steps**' section on page 14.

What do you like best about the Care Connect service?

We received **100** comments from customers who filled out our survey.

**Reassurance/
peace of mind**

51%

**Friendly and
caring staff**

24%

**Provide a quick
response**

12%

**Prompt and
always there if
needed**

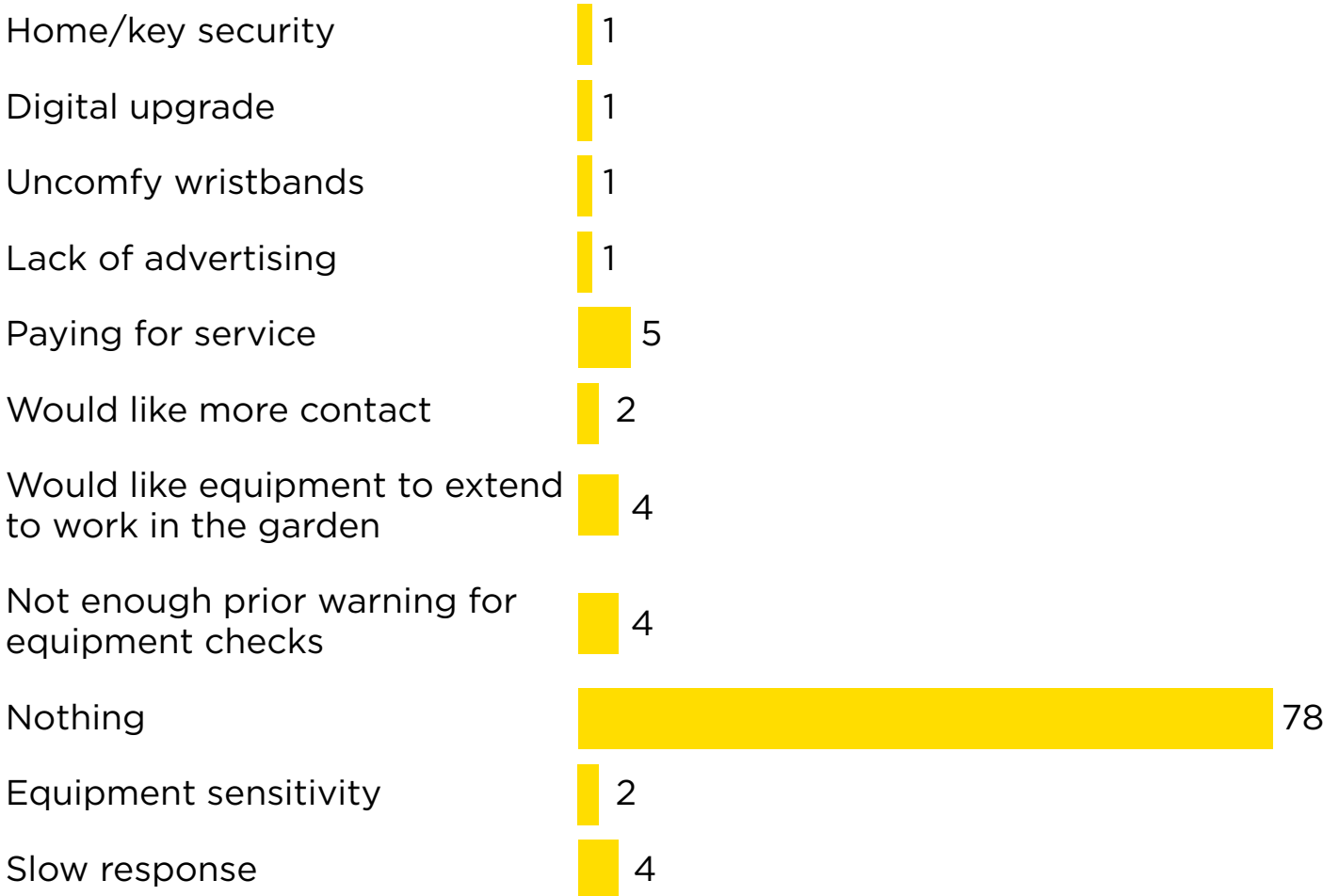
10%

Everything!

3%

What do you like least about the Care Connect service?

We received **100** comments from our customers.



78 of the comments said that they had **nothing** to dislike, which is brilliant. The remaining **23%** of comments are displayed above.

From your experiences with Care Connect, what would you like us to do differently?

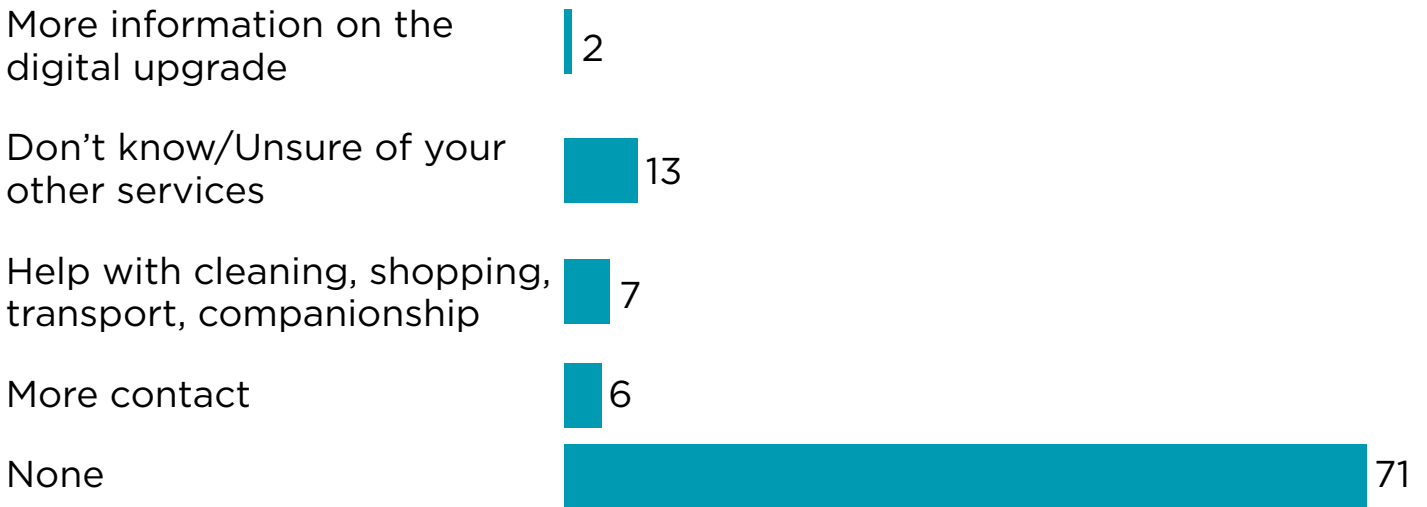
We received **96** comments from our customers.

- ✓ **85** said nothing.
- ✓ **4** said more contact.
- ✓ **5** said quicker response time.
- ✓ **1** said don't just call family.
- ✓ **1** said advertising.

85 of these comments stated that there was nothing we could do differently to improve their customer experience.

Are there any new services we could offer that would support you further?

We received **100** comments from our customers.



71 of these comments stated that there were **no extra services** we could provide to support them further. **Care Connect** has a list of services that can be provided, but these do come at an additional cost. Read more on the next page about how we are adapting in light of these responses.



Next Steps

This survey requested feedback from customers to gather a well-rounded view of how we have performed over the last year, and what we can improve on in 2024.

The feedback this year has been mostly positive, and all compliments will be passed along to **Care Connect** staff. We note from this year's survey, that our areas of improvement are:

1. Awareness of additional services

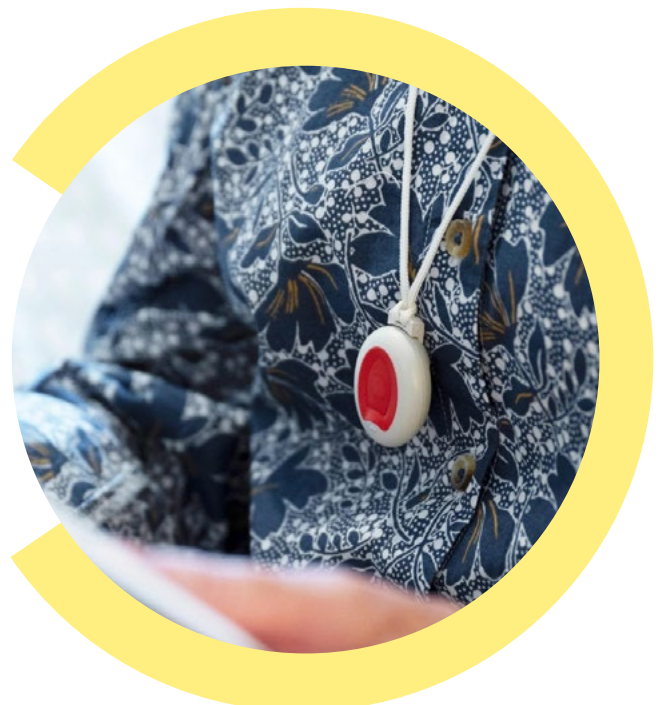
We appreciate some of our customers have had the **Care Connect** service installed for many years may not be aware of our additional services that could benefit them. We will be organising communications to all customers which will include a service update and a list of all services and charges in April 2024.

2. More contact/check in calls

Once we have upgraded to a fully digital Control Room in 2024, this will enable us to review our service offering, and make any necessary updates. This could include a review of our services to introduce a more personalised approach where our customers can build in what services they require from us, based on their needs. A lot of customers highlighted the need for more contact, therefore we are keen to develop our services with this in mind.

3. Faster response times

We always endeavour to arrive at a customer's property as quickly and as safely as possible after an alert. We have made note that this has been highlighted as an issue for some customers and we will continue to review our response times to ensure they stay on track and if possible, above the recommended national requirement.



Conclusion

We'd like to take the opportunity to thank all our customers for their input into this survey. All **Care Connect** staff will be briefed on the results and a copy of the survey will be available on our website:

www.durham.gov.uk/careconnect

You can also follow us on Facebook for news and updates here:

www.facebook.com/CareConnectDCC

Ashleigh Phillips
Care Connect
Service Development Manager

15th December 2023

