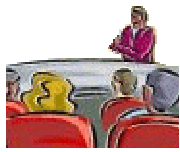




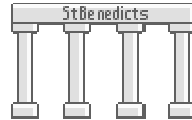
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Annual meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on 18 November. More information is available on the website at <http://www.stbentooting.co.uk/agm>.

- The minutes of the previous meeting and accounts were approved. £6,300 in overpaid electricity charges for flat landlord supplies is being recovered.
- The Directors explained the maintenance in the year. All work orders are now listed at <http://www.stbentooting.co.uk/maintenance>.
- Owners voted to defer the next maintenance from 2019 to 2020. This will reduce quarterly service charges from 2015 by an average of about £2 for houses, £17 for 1-bed and £25 for 2-bed flats but make future increases more likely if unexpected work is needed.
- Any past resolutions against property legal agreements were cancelled for clarity.
- Owners guided that sub-letting applications causing overcrowding should be refused.
- Partial payment from reserves to E Payne was authorised for hedge work done in error that was intended to be ordered in future.
- Owners approved work to be carried out to improve fire seals in flat block risers to modern standards, including protecting the roof space and fixing faults from construction.
- Flat owners chose to invest in LED strip lamps outside doors from reserves, to benefit from reduced electricity costs after two years.
- The fox nuisance and rubbish problems were discussed together as they are related. A pest control firm has strongly advised to remove food sources. Trapping and killing foxes is not likely to work and was rejected.
- There were serious drawbacks with the proposal to buy and charge owners for bins, so this was rejected. The situation will only improve if resident behaviour changes. An owner offered to translate signs. *See the wheelie bin petition over the page.*
- Owners wished Mr Ravi Joshi and Mr Kevin Herrmann to continue as Directors and there were no other volunteers.
- No significant other matters were raised.



Management Company myth buster

Comments received from some property owners and tenants show that the role of the Estate Management Company is not fully understood.

Mutually owned

The Company is mutually owned by the flat and house owners on the Estate and nobody else.

The covenants in the property legal agreements restricting what we can do are there to protect everyone and the Company has a legal duty to enforce these. It does not have the power to waive them nor to 'turn a blind eye.'

Not for profit

The Company is not for profit and any surplus or deficit in annual expenditure is transferred to or from reserves.

Service charges and fees for additional services are the only source of income, so are set at a level just to cover costs and not to make a profit. This is necessary so that owners do not end up subsidising work for others, is a key policy of the Directors and is required by the leases / deeds.

For this reason, two or three owners who have disputed charges have been charged the legal fees involved under the legal agreements, rather than these being paid by all other owners.

Directors and Managing Agent

The Directors are unpaid volunteers who also have family responsibilities and full time jobs.

It is not feasible for the Directors to deal with day-to-day matters, so a Managing Agent was appointed after competitive tender, agreed and selected by property owners. The Directors monitor its performance and hold the Agent to a service level agreement. This is much better than with the previous Agent, where there was no proper contract and no required level of service.

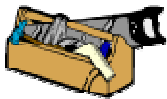
➔ Lock and key replacement

Remaining old and worn flat block entrance door locks were replaced in October. You must take care of keys as you will be charged to replace the lock and lost keys if you put others at risk.





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Flat blocks maintenance

Flat block repairs

There were further delays with flat repairs by Woodgrove because they did not order matching bricks soon enough and had to wait for delivery.

The more urgent repairs have now been completed. Less urgent repairs will be carried out in 2015 using the same lifts and scaffolding for periodic re-decoration, to keep costs down.

Flat block roofs and windows

Hobex supplied a large hoist and repaired flat roofs from mid September where problems had been reported. While the hoist was available, they examined all roofs and carried out additional repairs found necessary, saving cost.

Further roof work is being carried out from inside 2-12 Limetree Walk then the ceiling re-instated.

As roofing work has been carried out, it will no longer be necessary as part of the periodic re-decoration next year. It will still be necessary to repair broken vents or replace soffits allowing vermin entry, to improve mesh in gutters to prevent leaf blockage and to fit LED strip lamps.

After roof repairs, Hobex checked flat common area windows and sealed gaps between frames and walls that had also allowed water entry.

Pest control for mice

Once the building work was complete and holes had been blocked, Microbee started work to eradicate mice from flat block common areas following the pest survey earlier in the year.

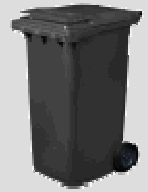
Owners and tenants must also take action within flats, especially in 1-71 St Benedicts Close and 2-24 Limetree Walk, otherwise mice will quickly return. You can contact Microbee on 020 8540 9968 or at <http://www.microbee.co.uk>.

→ Maintenance web pages

The web pages for maintenance have been re-designed to separate major and routine work. Adopting an idea from Rendall and Rittner, you can now track all maintenance work at <http://www.stbentooting.co.uk/maintenance>.

→ Wheelie bin petition

Wheelie bins would help our rubbish problems as they are larger, have hinged lids and would fit in bin stores. Unfortunately, local waste lorries cannot handle them. Please sign the petition for Wandsworth Council to change at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/70533>.



Ground works

Parking space markings

As requested at the last two general meetings, Hobex re-painted parking space numbers in September. It was much cheaper and tidier to refresh the divisions between spaces by painting a short line than to try to clean the faded pink blocks among the grey ones.

Short marks were used to avoid looking like a council car park. This allows divisions to be seen clearly and any vehicle over them or obstructing other spaces may receive a penalty.

Some residents told the contractor that a few numbers were wrong. There was an error in the original Laing Homes plan affecting four spaces, and new permits have been issued with the new numbers. If anyone else thinks their space number is wrong, contact the Managing Agent.

Uneven paths

The health and safety inspection last year reported that the path across Limetree Walk had become too uneven for safety. Following a competitive tender, Hobex re-laid this path level in late September and early October.

Owners reported other areas of uneven paving at the AGM, which will be investigated and those that are the Management Company's responsibility will be repaired if required.

→ Christmas and New Year

The Directors and Managing Agent wish all property owners and residents a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Rubbish will still be collected on Mondays. See the Council website for Christmas tree collection.

