



Newsletter – June 2016



Budget 2016-17

The Directors are pleased to advise that service charges for the next year from 1 July 2016 will be similar to those this year.

Some annual costs have increased, especially those of services like cleaning affected by Government policy on the National Living Wage and gardening. Insurance costs and the Insurance Premium Tax levied by Government have also increased.

However, periodic redecoration and replacing entryphones cost less than previously allowed for, so some reserve contributions are slightly reduced. These changes roughly balance out.

Charges for freehold houses are increasing by 0.7%, mainly because of the gardening cost. Those for leasehold flat are decreasing by an average of 0.7%, varying by block between an 8% decrease and a 2% increase.



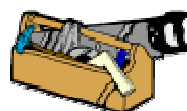
Entryphones

Entryphone faults are becoming more frequent and repair costs are increasing. The Directors have decided to replace units now rather than repair them, as money for replacement is already being collected in flat reserves. Otherwise, we would have to collect more for temporary repair. Two more failed recently and were replaced.

Units will be replaced over three years or when they fail. This will be done in the centre of St Benedicts Close later in 2016, in Limetree Walk in 2017 and in Abbey Drive and Church Lane in 2018. This is based on the state of units and reserves. Reserves for small blocks are lower, as explained last year, so they are last.

→ Items in communal areas

Residents of flats may not store items in communal areas because of the fire risk and the obstruction of emergency exits. Any items found will be removed without notice and a note left. Those not claimed are disposed of after a while.



Maintenance

Our local contractor, Rafal Wiatek, has cleared most of the backlog of maintenance work. We are seeking quotes from contractors on Rendall and Rittner's panel for larger jobs.

Grilles have been fitted over 6 air bricks in Limetree Walk to prevent pest entry. We have ordered another 24 to complete that block. If this is successful in reducing pest problems over the next year, they will be fitted to other blocks.

The website is updated with progress regularly.

We are due to speak to a local electrician in early July about carrying out small electrical work.

Unfortunately, the LED strip lights that we had planned to fit are no longer available. Owners authorised the Directors to do this at the 2015 AGM. It is only worth using LED lamps that can be put in our existing fittings, as the cost of replacing all the fittings would exceed electricity savings, especially as the lamps are expensive.



Tree work

We are arranging for work to non-protected trees and safety work like removing dead wood from the row of limes in Limetree Walk to be carried out in early July. When we have council permission, we will remove low oak branches overhanging the pavement in Rectory Lane.

On the tree surgeon's advice, we will leave the fallen tree on the bank between Abbey Drive and St Benedicts Close as it is still alive.

→ Possible drug use

Some residents have reported groups of youths seen gathering on the Estate in the evening, and at least one car seems to visit regularly for no apparent purpose. The residents believe this may be for drug use and supply.

If you see anyone behaving suspiciously, especially at night, or supplying or taking drugs on the Estate, please call the police non-emergency number 101 immediately.

