



## Newsletter – March 2017



### Flat doors and letterboxes

Thank you to those owners who have responded to recent enquiries about flat front doors reported as changed by recent health & safety inspections and about damaged or inoperative letterboxes.

Where door fire certification has been provided, this will be recorded. Appointments will be made for the health & safety inspector to examine other doors during their next quarterly visit.

Following inspection, owners of flat doors not fire certified will be required to replace them with doors meeting building and fire regulations for the safety of other residents. If they do not, this will then have to be referred to our solicitor as a breach of the lease, at the owner's expense.

**Where owners have asked us to get letterboxes repaired, have not responded or letterboxes remain damaged or inoperative after 17<sup>th</sup> March, the Management Company's contractors will repair these.** The costs (£25 per hour, £15 for a new lock, total not exceeding £65) will be added to flat service charge accounts. Landlords must make sure their tenants are using letterboxes properly to avoid incurring these costs.



### Cleaning and gardening contracts

Mara asked for the third year running to increase the cost of cleaning flat communal areas in excess of the index-linking in its contract. The Directors refused and, as Mara advised that it would not continue on the current basis, carried out a tender and selected a new contractor.

Rendall and Rittner uses the new contractor elsewhere and the work specified is the same, so no difference should be seen from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

The gardening service arranged by previous Directors allowed additional charges and costs have recently increased. The current Directors have negotiated to put it on a standard contract with slightly higher monthly payments to include all usual services, giving certainty on costs.



### Parking permits

A few people have advised that they do not have the parking permits that were posted directly to properties on the Estate in early February to avoid delays with landlords forwarding them.

**If you live on the Estate and did not receive your permits, please advise Rendall and Rittner immediately.** Telephone 020 7702 0701 and ask for property team 2 or email [raja.hussain@rendallandrittner.co.uk](mailto:raja.hussain@rendallandrittner.co.uk).

Old yellow permits with an expiry date of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 will be accepted until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. As soon as it is received, display a new pale green parking permit to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019. Permits must match the bay number and cars must not overhang the space or cause an obstruction, or you may receive a penalty notice.



### Tree work

This summer, dead wood will be removed from a protected ash tree. Non-protected trees last pruned several years ago will also be cut back on the bank between St Benedicts Close and Abbey Drive, in Abbey Drive and in Carlisle Way.

**Please advise any small trees needing pruning by 13<sup>th</sup> April**, by using the website fault report form or by contacting the Managing Agent, Rendall and Rittner. If you miss this deadline, the next opportunity for tree work will be in 2018.



### Maintenance

Maintenance carried out over the last quarter includes roof and gutter repairs, adjusting doors to close securely, replacing old door closers, repairing loose stair treads and repairing broken fencing and a fence post.

Sewer and drain repairs have been carried out and LED lamps have been fitted to wall and ceiling lights in blocks of flats. There are separate articles on this work.



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### Sewer and drain repairs

In response to a report of damp in Abbey Drive, nearby drains and sewers were investigated and found to need cleaning and repair. Unbloc has completed this work for those which are the responsibility of the Management Company.

Another shared pipe under Abbey Drive is damaged, which is the responsibility of Thames Water to repair. It has been contacted and provided with evidence that it is responsible.

Several pipes serving flats were found to be clogged with fat. Another sewer in Limetree Walk had a blockage recently including fat and this caused sewage to overflow in a flat.

**Do not pour fat down drains, or put items down toilets that do not disintegrate. Otherwise you may cause blockages and overflows of sewage in your flat or in neighbouring flats!**

The proper way of disposing of fat is to allow it to set, then scrape it out. Solid fat and items that do not disintegrate should be put into the normal household waste as they cannot be recycled.



### LED lamps

Almost all flat block wall and ceiling lights have now been re-wired and fitted with LED lamps by the electrician. This cuts electricity consumption and should reduce our electricity bills by about 15% and pay for the work of fitting in just over 3 years. Maintenance will also be reduced.

To complete the work, two incompatible fittings installed by contractors over the years will now be replaced so LED lamps can be fitted.

Tests on LED lamps for the strip lights by flat doors were not successful, so these will have to remain with low power fluorescent lamps.

The orange SON lamps used for Estate security lights are already efficient. These will not be replaced with LED lamps as a similar light level could not be obtained at economic cost.

### Alleyway

At the 2016 General Meeting, residents asked the Directors to look at the alleyway round 73-103 St Benedicts Close to Rectory Lane.

Two camera boxes will be put up as suggested. Another suggestion was to cut down bushes in height. This will not be done as they provide important visual and sound screening for flat bedrooms from Rectory Lane, which has increasing traffic from noisy lorries ignoring local road restrictions.



### Sky Q dishes

Community Vision, which provides Sky television on the Estate, recently installed new Sky Q dishes on each flat block. This was paid for by Community Vision and Sky. This will allow any flat which wants the new service to take it. Contact Community Vision on 01892 722887.

Over the years, the existing wiring had become very untidy as instructions not to run it externally on walls had been ignored, it had been run down drain pipes preventing maintenance and old roof dishes had been left even if no longer in use.

In exchange for being allowed to install the new dishes, Community Vision agreed to remove all the old dishes and external wires, leaving only the new dishes and wires into the risers, where the signal is distributed to flats taking the service.

Where possible, dishes have been mounted on the communal area walls or the ends of blocks where they can point at the satellite and can be maintained without risk of damage to the roofs.

Residents are reminded that flat leases do not permit individual aerials or dishes.

### → 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.