



Newsletter – June 2019



Budget 2019-20

Several specific costs have arisen this year and expenditure will be required in the next year or two, resulting in budget increases this year:

- 17-27 Carlisle Way had and 21-26 Abbey Drive needs major sewer repairs, both after the section 20 consultation needed by law.
- 1-71 St Benedicts Close had 3 roof repairs, may need another and is still paying for the air brick grilles fitted in the second trial.
- A number of flat blocks voted to fit air brick grilles after the trials when consulted and agreed to pay the costs in 2019-20.
- The revaluation needed every 5 years increased re-instatement costs, so insurance premiums are consequently higher from that and the poor claim record from water leaks.
- Estate street lights are being replaced.
- Estate roadways and parking need repair.

Contractors including the managing agent, gardener and cleaning firm are entitled to an index-linked increase of 2.5%. This provision works well and protects us from larger increases. For example, Rendall and Rittner sought to levy an additional safety fee but is not entitled to.

Without the additional costs described above, Estate charges, reduced in recent years, would have increased by a much lower amount and flat charges would have stayed the same, which represents a decrease in real terms. This shows that the Director and Managing Agent focus on keeping costs down continues to be successful.

With the additional costs, charges for houses and WHA are rising by 9.5% while those for flats are rising by 6.7% on average, with charges for individual flats varying between falling by 9.9% and increasing by 31.5% (where major sewer repairs are required and there has been the section 20 consultation required by law).

The main reason for the house and WHA charge increases are the need to replace Estate street lights and repair Estate roadways and parking.

Both houses and flats pay for Estate facilities, while flats additionally pay for services supplied only to them. No costs are borne only by houses.



Tree work

Work to the protected lime trees in Limetree Walk will be carried out this autumn, as they are in an area surrounded by buildings and to keep the paths open and lit by the street lights.

The shared service that replaced Wandsworth Council tree officers has a different approach, so work will be different from previous years. Rather than being cut at the side and top, the limes will have low branches removed, raising them above the paths, and will only be cut back to clear the clock tower and street lights by 3m for safety.



Estate lights and repairs

Two old Estate street lights failed and had to be replaced. We are taking advantage of this to replace all six with LED lights like those fitted last year by the council. Lights in St Benedicts Close were fitted in May, while those in Abbey Drive are due to be fitted in July.

Estate roadways and parking areas also need repair where tree roots have made them dangerously uneven. Both costs will be spread over six years to limit increases now.

See the website for
maintenance



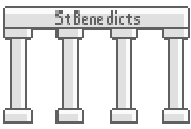
Various matters

We have looked at replacing the lock to open the **gate for the alley** behind 27-36 Abbey Drive from both sides as asked at the 2018 AGM but there is no suitable lock, so this is not possible.

It has been revealed that 15% of so-called **smart electricity meters** are faulty, even the latest SMETS2 ones may stop working after changing suppliers and the remedial work has been delayed to the end of 2020. *You are advised not to allow a smart meter to be fitted until 2021.*

→ Windows in flat blocks

Close flat staircase windows if it rains or rain is forecast. Do not try to open skylights! Water caused danger and damage in one block after this was ignored in recent very heavy rain.



Newsletter – June 2019

The diagrams below show where your money will be spent in 2019-20, to the nearest percent (those shown as 0% are less than 0.5%). Annual expenditure is shown on the left, reserves on the right.

