

## **2013 AM Minutes for St Paul's Court Management Company held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September at All Nations Christian Centre, Reading**

**Attendees:**      42                      35                      44                      40                      22                      16  
                         5                            12                      3                        23                      39  
                         Neville Pedersen (Pedersen and Company)

**Apologies:**      8                            38                      2                            47

1. **Welcome.** Graeme Streets (GS) introduced himself, Michael Bright (MB), Paul Metcalf (PM), Deborah Winyard (DW) and Neville Pedersen of Pedersen & Co (NP).
2. **2012 Minutes:** No questions or comments.
3. **Matters Arising:** None
4. **Approval of the Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013.**

DW reported that the balance was high and this had given the Management Company the chance to do two projects, the emergency lighting and smoke alarms, which are dealt with separately.

GS said that DW will seek new accountants with NP's assistance in pursuit of lower fees, and that the insurance figure is high so he will look around for a better deal.

Flat 5 asked why the gardening figure was high. MB said this was because of mound clearance and bank clearance, and that this year the figure would be less. Gardening work includes mowing, tree pruning, tree clearance, disposal of large items of rubbish and litter picking so is more than simply gardening.

Aside from maintenance charges the income includes charges of £50 per flat transfer and £20 per lease extension.

### **5. Maintenance Report 2012/2013**

MB detailed the year's activities:

- Repainted garage doors
- Mound by north end of block B reduced in height
- Minor building maintenance work – including gutter repairs. Flat 16 asked about this. CCTV signs and cameras are a deterrent.
- Replaced 2 failed stairwell light sensors
- Replaced vehicle parking signs
- Removed dumped rubbish from bin areas. Flat 39 asked about this. The gardener can remove large items more cheaply than the council. Rubbish is particularly bad at month end because of tenancy changes.

### **6. Maintenance plans for 2013/2014**

- Removed dumped rubbish from bin areas
- Minor woodwork repairs to window bays and stairwells
- Stairwell B3 door entry system repairs
- Stairwell C2 door lock replaced
- Repainted parking bays white lines
- Stairwell electrical work

- Stairwell remedial work – holes in walls and ceiling will be filled, access panels broken when taken off will be replaced, and damage caused to banister by bicycle thief near flat 16 will be remedied.
- Stairwell decoration work
- Minor building maintenance work – including new doormats outside stairwells
- Fire risk assessment
- Winter gardening work – tree trimming

Bicycle theft damage: the repair will include welding. The insurance policy has a £100 excess. Flat 39 asked if we can claim the excess against the owner of the bike. As the bike's position in the stairwell was a health and safety issue the Management Company had raised, NP thought it was possible.

Insurance/water damage: MB said NP had looked at the claims history and referred it to another insurer, who said that the premium was good value given the claims history. Flat 5 asked who pays what in the event of water damage from a flat above to a flat below – GS said the excess was £500 which was paid by the leaseholder of the flat above, and the rest was paid by the insurer. PM said the broker was Deacon, and the insurer was Deacon. NP said normally the problem was with washing machines and showers. DW said it was possible to install plumbing which automatically turns off when flooding occurs. GS said water finds a weak spot and that is where the leak occurs. Flat 5 said that if there is a patch on the ceiling the problem is the seal around the bath, and if the outside pipe is dripping the problem is the ball valve in the tank. GS said MB contacts leaseholders about overflow leaks.

Flat 16 asked if a pressure spray could be used to clean off the marks caused by dripping overflows. NP said that care needs to be taken when undertaking this sort of work to prevent damage to brickwork and mortar, and was expensive because of the costs of working at height. We will consider this again when the exterior fascia boards are next painted.

## 7. Section 20 Notices – electrical work

- DW said that section 20 notices were required for all expenses costing more than £250 per flat within a year. These were necessary for the improvements to emergency lighting, smoke alarms and consumer boxes. The notices asked for feedback on alternative contractors, but none was received. CTS were not the cheapest quote but were the most responsive and helpful.
- MB said the work had gone smoothly.
- DW said the Management Company were obliged to test electrical circuits.
- Flat 39 asked about fire hydrants. MB said the fire hydrant by stairwell A3 and the washer by stairwell C1 were not owned by the Management Company, and that the fire engines carry water on board and could also use the Holybrook as a water source.
- DW said more section 20 notices will be needed for stairwell redecoration. The work will include internal and external stairwell doors, and varnish on flat doors. Flat 5 asked if the contractor will liaise with the leaseholder – and was told that liaison would be with the residents.

## 8. Maintenance Charge 2013/2014

DW said:

- Our reserve policy is that the reserve amount will not go below £30k.
- There will be a survey next year to get a handle on the next 10 years eg will the roof need to be repaired? At the moment the Management Company keeps the reserve artificially high – but could reduce it if things are all clear.
- 10% increase in insurance is allowed for.
- £8.5k per year on average is allowed for
- The proposal is to leave the maintenance fee unchanged for the next year, although it may have to be increased in the following year.

## 9. AOB

- Flat 22 asked when window cleaning occurs, as he had a bird mark for 2 months. MB answered that it happened at the end of March, May, July and September. Flat 39 said you can get windows which can be cleaned from indoors.
- Flat 12 asked why there was such short notice that the Electricity Board were working on the substation opposite flat 1 and taking up parking spaces. MB said that residents were notified as soon as notice was received.
- Flat 16 asked whether bike lockups could be provided. NP said that bike racks could be sawn off and cost £400-£500 each, and cyclists were unwilling to pay for them.
- MB said that entry systems were being fixed – the tradesman’s buzzer in stairwell B1 is still to do.
- Flat 39 thanked directors for their work