

# North End House News

Issue No. 28

26<sup>th</sup> March 2018

## Dear Residents,

Welcome to the 28<sup>th</sup> edition of North End House News. We send with it the Notice of Estimates of the Section 20 notice for the high level external redecoration of the north, centre and south blocks. As you are aware, the high level redecoration of the three square blocks and the replacement of the two fire stairs will be undertaken by the same construction company. We are pleased to report that the stairs will be funded on the company account and there will be no additional demands made to leaseholders.

The funding will be as follows:

1. The High-Level External Redecoration through the surplus of the service charge which is presently available in our funds.
2. The funding for the Fire stairs will be through the company together with ruthless cost management, relying on existing funds and careful cash flow management.

To explain the whole process better we are expecting to hold a meeting with the leaseholders towards the end of April or beginning of May 2018 along with the approved contractor and surveyor before we embark on these projects. At this meeting, we intend to have the board and the Residents Association present. This will be a comprehensive

meeting where questions from leaseholders will be welcomed.

We would encourage all leaseholders to attend but more importantly, we would like to see leaseholders from the square blocks to be present as these works will have the most impact on them.

### **Financial year end:**

The FY will close on 31/03/2018 and we are pleased to report that we will close the year on budget. The details will be shared with you as usual once the accounts are finalised in time for the next AGM.

There is no plan to increase the service charge in the FY 18/19 you will be pleased to hear. We as the management team are reviewing and re-negotiating currently every single contract, which has already created important savings.

However, we need your help and support to realise further cost savings and to make NEH a more efficient business. The areas where you can help are as follows:

### **1. Banking Fees:**

Not all of you are paying the Service Charge, Parking & Cubicle, Ground

Rent or Service Charge invoices by bank transfer or standing order. This needs to change because cheque and cash payments do create more costs to NEH. We are intending to charge a handling fee for cheques or cash payments. This does not apply for visitors parking where the fees can still be paid in cash.

## **2. Cash Flow:**

We have currently over 50 outstanding invoices and over £40,000 which is overdue. This represents a big cash flow issue, which is down to only a few of you not paying on time. In fairness to the majority of all residents and leaseholders we will have to enforce the terms of the lease more strictly and involve legal action straight away.

## **3. Gas & Heating:**

The gas bills are the biggest cost item on our service charge account. Whilst we try to negotiate better prices this is an area where all of you can help to control the cost. Now comes the time where outside temperatures are going up and you can be more conscious with controlling the radiators inside your flats. Rather than opening the windows, please consider switching off the radiators during the daytime when it is warm outside. Another option is to install thermostats on your radiators. The office can give advice on how to book this in. You will have noticed that in all common parts of the estate thermostats have been installed on the radiators, which contributed already to the cost savings.

## **4. Electricity and Lights:**

Electricity bills represent a big cost item on our accounts. Where possible we have introduced energy saving bulbs to reduce consumption. You can help by reporting to the porters lodge any faulty lights in the common parts which are on all the time or don't switch off so that we can act faster to fix the problem.

We are required to conduct works on the Electrical Distribution Boards and you will be notified in due course.

## **5. Cleaning and Litter:**

Unfortunately there are still residents or visitors who disrespectfully leave behind litter, e.g. empty cans, plastic bags, cigarettes, dog fouling etc. in the common parts of the estate.

This is not only unsocial behaviour but also means higher cleaning costs. Hence if this doesn't stop we will introduce a fine to cover the additional cleaning cost. Whilst porters routinely monitor these instances through the improved CCTV system, residents are requested to please report any of this unsocial behaviour.

We hope we can count on your support in the abovementioned cost control initiatives. We continue to work closely with the Residents Association and welcome further ideas from your side on how we can generate even more cost savings.

**From North End House Estate Management**