



NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

I thought it would be useful to start 2021 with a newsletter to update you all on what has been achieved so far and what is planned ahead for your estate.

All best wishes for a happier year ahead.
Sol Unsdorfer | Section 24 Manager

COSTS

At times like these, costs are bound to be top of your agenda. Since taking over I have been reviewing costs root & branch across all sectors – from service contracts to staff overtime, cutting out waste as we go along.

Among the largest costs is the M&E service contract for the management of plant and equipment throughout the estate. By replacing Wates with DMG I have achieved a saving of 25% in the contract cost. By installing Ronnie McCarthy as facilities manager in place of Keely, we are achieving major savings in callout costs when faults can be diagnosed on the spot and abortive callout costs are avoided. I have required all bills to be vetted by Ronnie at site to ensure we are getting value for money.

My brief from the Tribunal includes management of services which are shared with the non-residential parts of the estate. Having reviewed the functions of various plantrooms, I have changed the M&E contract to exclude any plant that is not connected to the residential towers or car park and have required the landlord to take direct responsibility for their servicing and costs.

Another big-ticket item is staff wages. Whilst the security staff are on an external contract, all the concierges and ground staff are employed by us. After a thorough review of manning and shifts coupled with a simple clocking-in system we installed for the cost of an app and an iPad, overtime payments have been cut at a stroke. We have also made better use of our own ground staff in carrying out minor repairs and decorations instead of paying external contractors.

These are just a few examples which will translate to meaningful cost reductions being seen in the accounts for the year ending 31 March next, my first full financial year in office.

STAFF

Aside from Ronnie as site facilities manager and our own Jaime Rodas as property manager, I deployed my colleague Phillip Cove early on to review the staffing. He specialises in staff management and can be credited in large part for the overtime savings mentioned above. But a great deal has also been achieved in terms of staff appearance, presentation and morale which I hope has been noticed by you all. Along the way there have been one or two disciplinary actions where staff were obliged to leave. This happened on an even broader scale with the security staff which, last February, was almost fully replaced at our request to the security contractor. Standards markedly improved from that point and we have gone on to enhance security by installing 'guard tour' patrol points to log their movements throughout the estate.

You will shortly see a smartening-up in the appearance of the concierge stations in each of the blocks and we are installing a scanning app to register the receipt of parcels at each front desk, automatically notify residents by text or email and record their checkout and collection.

COMPLIANCE

A lot of effort has gone into compliance. The annual Fire Risk Assessment was completed and requirements fulfilled on a wide range of needs, from replacement of emergency lighting and power packs to overhauling of the automated smoke vents, upgrades of electrical switchgear and testing of the sprinkler system.

Other H&S requirements such as water hygiene and plant safety were brought up to standard.

A survey of the cradles showed up major failings. They are now very old and will cost over £100,000 to bring up to safe working standards. But here again I did a cost/benefit analysis – do we really need them? With a maximum load of 250 kg, they can barely handle the weight of two men and their most basic tools and safety equipment.

This is one of the reasons why we could not use them for the cladding exposure works. And since we are using abseilers very effectively for window cleaning, I saw no reason to spend all that money on refurbishing undersized cradles and paying for their annual servicing and compliance checks. At some future date there may be a case and a budget for acquiring heavier-duty cradles which are more fit for purpose.

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

Aside from daily attendance to faults and leaks throughout the estate, my management team has been proactive in cleaning up areas of neglect. We first redecorated the P1 and P2 lift lobbies and repaired their bruised and battered swing doors. More recently we have put the ground staff to work redecorating the car park entrance and pillars.

We bought the paint and materials and they have done a great job. You will have noticed the difference at P1 and the men will shortly get started on P2.



You will also have noticed the car parks looking a lot brighter following our wholesale replacement of old and faulty lighting with energy-efficient LED fittings. We have done the same with other residential common parts, stairways, landings and plant rooms. Less trafficked areas have also been fitted with sensors for even more energy efficiency. We will now be similarly upgrading the lighting in the grounds and gardens, again with LED units.

Wherever we have been obliged to carry out repair or compliance works, we have taken the opportunity to make best use of labour and materials. So, when we had to replace high level lighting over the main entrance, we used the same scaffold to jet wash the ceiling and soffits which were caked in years of grime. We have also upgraded CCTV coverage at the front entrance, car park entrance and lower garden area.

MAJOR WORKS

Aside from plant and equipment renewals as they become due, the main Cap-Ex considerations for Canary Riverside are external repair of the façade and balcony

features and refurbishment of the residential common parts, including recarpeting of hallways and landings.

Of necessity, plans for the exterior must await the outcome of cladding diagnosis, approval of a remediation plan and the extent of its government funding. If it is possible to use cladding remediation scaffolding to double-up for external cleaning and repairs, we shall of course try our best to do so and mitigate costs. I will therefore defer other capital commitments until we are certain that the cladding remediation will be fully grant funded and not impinge on your capital reserves.

An important priority is the replacement of your old and unreliable card-entry system. This is now very 'old tech', well beyond its serviceable life and no longer secure. I intend replacing this with a new system which will use unclonable fobs which are integrated with the CCTV system and more speedily logged and interrogated for improper or unauthorised use. Aside from better reliability and security, the controlled issue of new fobs will help us curtail the improper use of apartments for Airbnb-type rentals and the unauthorised use of residential car park areas.

ELECTRICITY

At almost £2m a year, electricity is the second biggest chunk of the annual budget, after staff and security. It has also been something of an albatross on the neck of Canary Riverside ever since it was initially wired up at a time when it was profitable for landlords to re-sell utilities at a profit. Although this was later outlawed by the regulators, the wiring remained communal and well buried. This means that the residential manager must contract for all the electricity each year even though more than half of the wattage is consumed by commercial parts, and mainly the hotel. My aim from the start has been to get the hotel moved onto its own supply for which it can then contract independently.

However arduous Covid19 has been for us all, I saw an advantage when the hotel and other commercial parts were closed down. I used that opportunity to carry out much needed safety works on the high voltage systems and, in that process, I have come much closer to moving the hotel onto its own supply. This could potentially relieve your service charge fund of a £1 million-a-year funding burden.

As you will be aware, electricity is recharged to residential and commercial tenants by Clever Energy Ltd. This is based on data collection which has been managed by Energy Controls Ltd for many years using their

proprietary software. I am pleased to report that, over recent months, we have been upgrading these meters to 'smart' technology to give residents more transparency and control over their energy consumption and costs. I am hopeful that, before too long, all meters will have been upgraded in this way.

Also, we secured a reduction of 8 percent in electricity rates at the October renewal tender and although residential consumption may have been heightened during lockdown, it is hoped that the energy saving measures will further reduce the underlying costs when life returns to normal.

CLADDING

My thanks to all residents who returned their state aid declaration forms for the purpose of government funding of our exterior wall remediation needs. I append the latest in my series of bulletins to residents and will continue to keep you all updated on this vitally important issue which affects all flat owners' ability to sell or refinance their properties.

GARDENS AND GROUNDS

I remain underwhelmed by the gardening standards. My earliest intentions were to change the gardening contract, but I came under pressure from various quarters to retain the status quo. The gardens still fall below my personal standards so I was pleased to hear that the RACR have now got a committee together to review options for improvement of our gardens, so important in current times. Meanwhile you will soon see the dwarf walls to planted areas repainted and their rusting brick lights replaced with new LED fittings. I will use that opportunity to add backlighting for the shrubberies to add some cachet in the night-time.

OTHER PROJECTS

The estate has now been surveyed by Hyperoptic for the provision of 1Gb high-speed fibre broadband to all tenants. The report is with CREM who, as landlords, will hopefully agree to sign up to the wayleave agreement required by the installer as the essential prerequisite to running in their services and infrastructure.

Arising from the government's accelerated plans for electric motoring, our car parks are being surveyed for the necessary upgrade to electrical capacity and distribution to enable charging pods to be privately connected to parking spaces as and when required. The idea is that whilst the power infrastructure and connection points will be made available as a communal car park expense, charging pods will be the responsibility

of the owner of each space to order and pay for. Recommended options will be offered to maximise savings and standardisation, and to make it easy for you to make the transition



Finally, the weathered and 'tired' door handles to the main block entrances. I have finally found a firm that will recondition them as I have wanted to do since my first visit to the estate. See this picture of a sparkling sample we have just had done. I will now be having all these entrance handles switched out and refurbished to the same standard.

ESTATE MANAGER: RONNIE MCCARTHY

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YOUR CONCIERGE TEAMS

07:00 to 19:00

BELGRAVE COURT@CANARYRIVERSIDE.NET
VANESSA & AGENCY | 020 7516 0106

BERKELEYTOWER@CANARYRIVERSIDE.NET
LETICIA & MARGARET | 020 7516 0104

EATONHOUSE@CANARYRIVERSIDE.NET
JAMES & STEPHEN | 020 7516 0105

HANOVERHOUSE@CANARYRIVERSIDE.NET
MARTIN & RICHARD | 020 7516 0102

OUTSIDE THESE HOURS, CALLS WILL BE
RESPONDED TO BY THE SECURITY TEAM

PROPERTY MANAGER: JAIME RODAS

jaime@parkaspen.co.uk
020 8732 8888

Parkgate Aspen, Wilberforce House.
Station Road London NW4 4QE

Service Charge Payments: denise@parkaspen.co.uk
Service Charge Accounts: maureen@parkaspen.co.uk

PLEASE CHECK SMOKE ALARMS AND BATH/SHOWER SEALS REGULARLY

ParkgateAspen

STATEMENT RE EXTERNAL FAÇADE CONSTRUCTION

Re: Berkeley Tower, Hanover House, Belgrave Court, Eaton House
Canary Riverside Estate, Westferry Circus, E14 8RH

As we draw to the end of a really challenging year, please find an update below on the status of the external wall and cladding issues.

- Our applications to the Building Safety Fund (BSF) in respect of Canary Riverside are progressing well and we are working with a dedicated case officer at the GLA toward submitting a costed scheme for approval.
- Although the BSF deadlines were extended last week by 6 months, we remain broadly on track with the original timeframe which we hope will put us at an advantage in terms of maximising our opportunity to obtain funding.
- At the time of writing, Hanover House (not being high rise) has still not been confirmed as eligible for funding. However, based on our submissions we hope that this will ultimately be deemed eligible.
- We appreciate the patience and understanding of all residents whilst extensive scaffold was erected across the property to necessitate intrusive investigation to the external wall systems. The final sections are still on track to be fully removed before Christmas.
- The Chartered Fire Engineers at IFC have recommended that remediation to a number of areas of the building will be necessary before an acceptable EWS1 form can be issued. This will include remediation of the glazed curtain walls, spandrel panels, render and zinc cladding sections.
- Crucially however, IFC have recommended that the brickwork façades will not require remediation. This makes up the vast majority of the external elevations thereby saving us very significant expense and disruption.
- A timeframe for undertaking the works will become clearer in the New Year once our scheme is submitted after which we will be able to outline a more definitive timeline as to when an acceptable EWS1 form can be issued thereby unlocking many stalled sales and re-mortgages which have been affected by this crisis.

This bulletin is dated 22 December 2020.

Further updates will be provided as the process continues.



Parkgate Aspen Ltd.
Managing Agents

