

QUEENSWOOD MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Issue 2, February 2004

Television Aerials

We have found it very difficult to find a contractor who is prepared to do even the smallest remedial work on the communal television aerial systems because they are in such a poor state of repair. Most of them need realigning – we hope that this will at last be addressed shortly.

Even when the aerials are realigned, the picture will not be very good because of the interference caused by the new buildings at Canary Wharf, and the poor system design. The signal might be improved if the aerials are relocated on the roof-tops, but this would be relatively expensive and there is no guarantee of success.

A further problem for the long-term is that the existing systems were not designed for digital signals. The government plans to turn off analogue terrestrial signals by 2010, leaving only digital terrestrial (for example, 'Freeview'). Without improved transmission, it is likely that reception via the communal systems will be woefully inadequate.

We don't want to spend significant sums upgrading the systems for what might be only a short-term solution – especially if residents do not use the communal systems. We need to hear from you – do we all need to 'bite the bullet' and subscribe to NTL's cable TV service, or should we still pursue a long-term communal solution at (possibly) significant expense?

We are particularly interested to find out how many of you already have cable or satellite TV and so don't use the communal aerials. Please send your comments, queries and ideas to Griff Griffith at 105.

Rodents

All internal drains have been baited and inspected four times over the past few months as have been the dustbin areas and various other locations, and the rats seem to have disappeared. Ongoing inspections are planned on a regular basis to keep on top of the problem.

Bin areas are going to be protected with wire netting across louvres and anti-rodent brushes fitted to the bottom of doors to prevent rats getting access to them.

Some residents have been putting out food for our skulk (or leash, if you prefer) of urban foxes. However, this also encourages rodents to view Queenswood Gardens as their local restaurant. Despite the joys of seeing the foxes, leaving food out for them must end in the overall interests of good hygiene. Sorry, foxes!

QMA Board

Board members have decided that each board member will take responsibility for day-to-day contact with the residents of individual blocks, as follows:

- A – Kim Crosby (Flat 83)
- B – John McElarney (Flat 75)
- C – Griff Griffith (Flat 105)
- D – Patrick Kennedy (Flat 7)
- E – Pauline Thurman (Flat 137)
- F – Len Kerridge (Flat 135)

To contact your designated board member, you can drop a note through their letter-box, or put your note in an envelope addressed to him/her and pin it on your block's notice-board for them to pick up.

Work in the Pipeline

INTERNAL DECORATIONS

Six quotations were received by Hull & Co. in response to their detailed specification. Your board has agreed on a recommended contractor; the required 'Section 20 notification' will be on its way to you shortly. You'll be pleased to know that £100 will be paid from the Association's reserve funds towards the costs for each flat.

*

DUSTBINS

Refurbishment to the bin areas to take the new bins has been completed. Fourteen new bins have already arrived to replace old bins. A further nine bins are on order. You'll again be pleased to know that we have managed to negotiate an extra discount on the purchase price for the new bins.

*

BLOCK F – BIN STORAGE AREA

Unfortunately, prolonged negotiations with our insurers have delayed the start of repairs to the damaged wall. This has been at least partially resolved, and we're pleased to tell you that our contractor will be starting on 23 February. In the meantime, please don't park close to the damaged wall, and please ensure that your children keep away from it when they're playing.

"We're a small community - let's be proud of it"

Car Parking

The legalities of parking permits and residents' parking in general have been looked at in depth and the formalities should be completed shortly.

We are studying possible options for overhauling the existing system and hope the revised scheme will be up and running in the near future.

On the subject of parking, we'd like to remind you that the yellow cross-hatched areas by each block's main entry doors are designated as emergency services access points. Please keep them clear at all times – don't park in them even if it's "only for a few minutes", and please ask your visitors to keep them clear, too.

Lighting

Fitting of the new internal lights started on 26 January, and should be finished by the time you receive this newsletter. We hope that you agree that they are an improvement on the old fluorescent tubes.

We are looking at how and where we can use low-energy lamps so that we can be more energy-efficient. Not only will this save money but it is also a good conservation measure.

We're also reviewing the canopy lights, to see if better illumination can be achieved as a security measure. On a couple of occasions recently, we've had reports of people lurking in the shadows – whilst the individuals concerned might have had legitimate reasons for being there, improved lighting should help to deter the less-well intentioned.

Security

Whilst we're on the subject (see the last paragraph under 'Lighting'), there are two other issues about security for your attention.

Firstly, we're considering setting up a *workable* Neighbourhood Watch scheme. We need one or more volunteers to co-ordinate it – please contact your board member if you're interested.

Secondly, some garages have been broken into recently. Opportunist thieves might well have been encouraged to look for rich pickings by seeing open garage doors. Even if your garage is empty, leaving the door open can be an invitation to a thief. For the sake of your fellow residents, please remember to close your garage door.

We Value Your Comments

If you have any constructive ideas or comments about this newsletter, or what's going on at Queenswood Gardens generally, please don't hesitate to let one of us know.

All we ask is that you put your thoughts on paper; it will make it easier for your ideas to be distributed to board members for consideration at our meetings, and it will also ensure that we don't forget your comments – we're only human!

Emergency Numbers

You might find the following numbers useful:

Thames Water 0845 920 0800

Electricity:
Emergencies 24/7 0800 028 0247
General Helpline 020 8279 9312

Police:
Crime: 020 8345 2662
Ilford Main Control 020 8551 4211
Wanstead (24 hours) 020 8345 2826

24-hour Locksmith 0800 526970

Council Clearance 020 8554 5000
(including disposal of household rubbish)

Emergency Damage Control
(Boarding up, glazing, plumbing, electrical work, etc.) 020 8208 3990

NHS Direct 0845 4647

Emergency Clinic
Whipps Cross 020 8539 4229
(ONLY if your GP uses the Whipps X
Emergency Clinic service)

Inclusion on this list does not signify any endorsement by QMA Ltd and the Association can take no responsibility for the quality of services provided by any of the above organisations. Residents are free to use any service provider that they choose.

Utility Cupboards

London Electricity have drawn our attention to items stored by residents in the utility cupboards in a number of blocks. They say that they are a fire hazard and *all* of them must be cleared completely. If you have anything in any of the cupboards, please remove it by the end of the month. Anything left at the beginning of March will be removed.

*

Ball Games

Sorry to be a kill-joy, but please remember that ball games are prohibited in Queenswood Gardens by the terms of your lease. Can you please make sure your children are fully aware of – and observe – this condition.

*

Noise

We're a small community and quietness is valued by us all. Please remember your neighbours and keep the noise from your radios, televisions, domestic appliances and exercise machines down. Please also be considerate when you use power tools – especially at the weekend.

Freehold Purchase

Please support Queenswood Gardens Ltd in its efforts to secure the freehold of our homes. If you haven't returned your acceptance letter yet, please send it back as soon as possible. The deadline is 10 March.

Remember, your home starts at the front entrance to Queenswood Gardens.

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