

# QUEENSWOOD MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Issue 9, March 2008

## Talking Rubbish

Yet again we have to return to the subject of rubbish. Despite references to the problem in previous newsletters, some residents are *still* dumping over-sized rubbish in the dustbin sheds.

If you have a large item – such as old furniture/cupboards/doors, a washing machine, a fridge, a freezer, a bath, a sink – you must arrange for it to be disposed of properly. The London Borough of Redbridge offers a disposal service for a small fee – you can contact them on 020 8554 5000.

The regular Redbridge waste disposal teams will only take normal household rubbish away in their weekly collections and as a consequence we have to pay third parties to have dumped large items removed. The amount we have to pay is considerably more than a resident would be charged, since we are a company and have to pay the commercial, not domestic, rates for disposal.

This costs us a significant amount – in the region of £12 per flat a year – which we have had to add to the service charge. No doubt this makes you as angry as it makes the board. If you have firm evidence of a resident dumping a large item, please let us know so that we can send them the bill for its removal – instead of the rest of us having to pay for it.

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## Electricity Cupboards

The electricity cupboards in each block are now kept securely locked following a spate of vandalism. If you are having your electricity meter changed, the electrician will need access to the cupboard. You can arrange for the cupboards to be opened by contacting either Bob Haswell or Len Kerridge, giving at least *two* clear working days' notice.

## Entry Doors

New entry doors have now been fitted to all blocks. After a few initial problems, which have been fixed by the installers, they appear to have bedded down satisfactorily.

There have been some issues with the doors not closing properly. It seems that some residents have been trying to push or pull the doors closed, instead of leaving them to shut automatically under the power of the door-closer mechanism.

This has on occasion been counter-productive, with the doors failing to shut and the mechanism being damaged. We ask that you leave the closer mechanism to do its work and just gently check that the door has latched properly when it is fully closed.

## QMA Board

Board members and their block responsibilities are:

- Block A – Mike Thompson (Flat 73)
- Block B – Pauline Thurman (Flat 137)
- Block C – Griff Griffith (Flat 105)
- Block D – Bob Haswell (Flat 19)
- Block E – Glyn Murrill (Flat 143)
- Block F – Len Kerridge (Flat 135)

## Work in Progress

### EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

The external decoration planned for last year had to be postponed for a number of reasons – the aerial system took longer to install than planned, some lessees were slow in paying their share of the costs, and then the weather deteriorated. The work has been rescheduled and will start at the beginning of May. (A small number of lessees have *still* not made their payments, but we now have enough in the kitty for work to commence.)

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### IRS AERIALS

The installation of the communal parts of the IRS is complete and the contractors are now removing the old aerial system wiring. If you are still connected to the old aerial cabling, and haven't yet arranged for connection to the new IRS aerial, you can still get connected, but you should note that connection may only be made by our approved contractor – G A Evans Aerials Ltd – to protect the integrity of the system. Unapproved connections may be disconnected and removed without notice.

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### EMERGENCY LIGHTING

Following our recent fire-risk assessment, we are investigating options for emergency lighting in the corridors of each block. Initial investigations by our electricians show that emergency lighting can be co-located with the existing overhead lights. We will let you know before any work starts, as there might be some interruption to the existing lighting for a short time.

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### WINDOW CLEANING

You might have noticed that the window cleaner no longer uses ladders to clean the upper floors of each block – he now uses long brushes with a built-in water supply. This is for health and safety reasons and means that he is no longer able to close windows when he is cleaning them – you will have to do this yourself if you want to avoid water getting in through an open window.

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

### **Free Satellite Television**

Although the majority of residents now get excellent reception of Freeview television using the new Integrated Reception System, a very small number have reported some problems with signal strength, because the Freeview transmission is not at full power and won't be until the analogue signals are switched off.

If you have these problems, you might like to consider Sky's Freesat service. All you would need is a Sky box, available from Spectrum UK (020 8651 5030) – it costs around £30.00, plugs into the IRS satellite TV socket and there is no subscription to pay. It offers around 200 TV channels (including BBC, ITV, Channel 4 & five) and 90+ radio channels. If you have Internet access, you can find more information at [www.freesatfromsky.co.uk](http://www.freesatfromsky.co.uk).

### **Condensation**

A number of residents have recently told us that they have problems with condensation in their flats.

In most cases this is caused by inadequate ventilation. The original windows allowed for enough air to circulate to keep condensation down – or to eliminate it. If double-glazing has been fitted without trickle ventilators, or if it opens inadequately, condensation is likely to build up.

If you need information on condensation and what to do about it, contact the company secretary for a copy of a leaflet produced by the Property Care Association.

### **Queenswood Management Association Ltd – Annual General Meeting**

We'd like to thank the small number of lessees who turned out for the AGM. Although they only just out-numbered the board, the meeting was held in very good spirits.

The low turnout was disappointing, but we can only assume that those who didn't attend are happy with the way things are going and had no issues that they wanted to raise.

### **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!

### **External Lighting**

We're all aware of global warming, carbon footprints and the need to reduce dependency on energy that comes from fossil fuels. And we're also all aware of the ever-increasing cost of electricity.

We are doing our bit to reduce our electricity consumption and our carbon footprint. Incandescent light bulbs within the blocks have – as far as possible – been replaced with low-energy bulbs. We continue to monitor our usage of electricity on lighting.

The external lights are on throughout the hours of darkness – they light up Queenswood Gardens even through the early hours when few, if any, residents are about.

We have no intention of switching all lights off after, say, 1.00 a.m., as we believe that simply having reasonable illumination across Queenswood Gardens is a deterrent to crime. However, we have reduced the number of lights that are on overnight to avoid overlap with Redbridge's street lights.

### **Car Parking Update**

The parking permit scheme has now been in operation for almost a year, and it appears to have made a significant impact to the car-parking situation. We have successfully managed to deter non-residents from parking on the estate now, and the next issue to address is that of residents abusing the system themselves. As you may know, the lease only allows one private vehicle to be parked in the private bays per flat, and as there are fewer than 60 bays on the estate, this causes the problem. We would ask therefore that residents who are able to make use of their garages for their cars, to please do so.

Central Ticketing still patrol Queenswood Gardens, and they will be requested to assist in a crack-down this year on residents abusing visitors' permits by using them for their own cars. Central Ticketing have the right to charge, without notice, any car that is abusing a visitor's permit. Visitor's permits should only be used for short-term visitors. If their stay exceeds two weeks, then the visitor should be requested to find alternative parking after this time. Regularly-abused visitors' permits may be cancelled.

Central Ticketing have advised us that although the scheme is operated free of charge to Queenswood Gardens, they will be charging us for supplying permits. Any future requests for replacements for lost visitor's parking permits should be accompanied by a cheque for £1 per permit, made out to "Hull & Company (Queenswood) Client Account".

All applications for a new resident's parking permit must be accompanied by the old permit it is to replace.

### **Fire Risk Assessment**

As a result of the recent fire-risk assessment carried out across Queenswood Gardens, "Fire Door" and "Fire Exit" signs have been put up in accordance with the Assessor's requirements.

To comply with the Assessor's other requirements, would you please ensure that all passageways in the common areas of all blocks are kept clear of obstructions such as plant-pots, bikes, buggies, etc. Please make sure, too, that you do not park on the yellow hatched marks as these areas are reserved for emergency vehicles.

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