

# Sinclair Residents Committee Minutes

## 23/09/2015

Present:

Rosina Weightman	7 Sinclair Place
Pamela Gidney	6 Sinclair Place
Barry Moore	1/8 Sinclair Gardens
Jean-Baptiste Richon	7 Sinclair Place
Kieran McCallum	4 Sinclair Place
Basil Morrison	31 Sinclair Place
Fiona Whyte	CRM, DCPM

### Minutes of the previous meeting

No minutes available from last meeting. Will be posted onto the web site as a matter of urgency.

### Fountains

- Pamela summarised the decision of the committee not to go ahead at present with electrical work on the fountains (problems with electrics shorting out, cost to fix £17.00 per flat).
- The request is for Water Gems to perform usual maintenance work over the winter, then the electrical work will be reconsidered in the spring.
- Request to Fiona that DCPM get other quotations for the work before proceeding with Water Gems, who have not given an adequate description of the work that needs doing. Fiona agrees to get two other quotations ASAP.
- Fiona agrees to get a quotation from Water Gems for their routine maintenance of fountains in 2016.
- Jean-Baptiste and Barry ask to join in on the site visits by companies quoting for the fountain work.
- There was a discussion about the desirability of retaining the fountains considering the cost that Water Gems have given of major repairs needed. It was agreed to get quotation and other opinions on the necessity of the work. There will be no tendering charge involved in this process.

### Stairwell Lights

- The committee queried the cost for a qualified electrician to change the stairs timers. The initial suggestion of a £552. call charge for one change over the whole development was queried by Pamela as too expensive. This has not been reduced to £100. per call, with an expected 4 calls / year.
- Fiona presented some previous costs. the cost for providing this service over the 07/08/2013 – 07/06/2015 period was £831.
- The cost of going to astronomical light timers would be £25.00 per flat. This applies to stairwell lighting only.
- Some bulky items (one being a bathtub!) were found wrongly stored in service cupboards under the stairs. They will be disposed of.
- Fiona will get a report for the light timers stating which ones have already been adjusted and which ones are still outstanding, as the timings still seem to be wrongly set for this time of the year.

- Other solutions that would altogether dispense with timers (involving light sensors or timed push buttons) were discussed, Fiona will find out more about them.
- Fiona also mentioned smart meters. The installation cost per flat would be £11.00 for installation then £18.00 per quarter.

### Gardens

- Fiona reported on a “walk round” with Trevor. Rosina, Pamela and Barry agreed to meet with Trevor on the estate at 8:30 on October 2<sup>nd</sup> for a walk round. We will try to do roughly 6-weekly joint walk rounds thereafter.

### Building Insurance

- Pamela discussed the proposed change to make individuals pay the excess on insurance claims. The estate incurred a charge of £1,500. last month. Fiona reconfirmed that no other estate she manages runs an insurance scheme whereby the excess liability is shared throughout the estate. A discussion followed on how to get a good turnaround on a postal ballot. It was suggested that we use an electronic voting system, e.g. Survey Monkey. Fiona will look into how best to do it.

### DCPM Report

- The current level of debt stands at cc. £27,000 as of today. This is spread between 123 customers who pay by Direct Debit, and 5 who do not. These 5 owe £4632.08 between them. They are being actively chased. If they sell their flats DCPM can recover the outstanding monies from the sale proceeds.
- The wording on invoices has been changed to ask people paying by D/D to clear any balance. A change from currently saying people on D/D don't need to take any action, which has frequently resulted in increasing arrears (due to cost increases) which then have to be cleared when the next bill is received.
- Fiona explained DCPM outsource the D/D system and therefore it is totally inflexible as far as changes in charges are concerned. The committee complained about this. Fiona will take our complaint back to DCPM management regarding the reason for using their current D/D collection agency.

### Financial Reporting

- An invoice summary is sent every quarter to the chairperson. It was agreed that from now on the statement would be sent to everyone on the committee one week before the money is due out. Any issue with the invoice needs to be highlighted within that week.
- The logic of stairs cleaning costs were questioned (proportionality of fortnightly vs weekly).

### Communication

- It was requested that the Newsletter contents be more specific and informative about estate management. The committee made suggestions regarding the contents providing information as listed in Pamela's draft letter.