

Netherne Management Limited



PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS WWW.NMANLTD.COM

To: All Members, Netherne on the Hill

March 2017

This is Netherne Management Limited's first newsletter for 2017, and is being distributed with the Q2 2017 service charge bills.

We send out all of our communications by email (from NMLupdates@gmail.com), to any member who is on our email distribution list. Emails will only be sent by blind courtesy copy to all recipients. If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please complete your details by typing the following link in your internet browser: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NMLEmails>

Finances

- Our finances remain healthy. We expect to continue to use our reserves able to withstand the cost of large, non-regular repair and maintenance work, and the costs of improvements to the Estate, Village Hall and Leisure Centre. This will include significant costs to attend to the damp issues at the Village Hall, discussed further below.
- Our debt (amounts due from members who have not paid their service charges) remains under tight control. Most of our debt now rests with just a handful of members. We do find it surprising that some members still choose not to pay their service charges on time, preferring instead pay a higher sum including interest and our legal costs of debt recovery.

Village Hall

- Last year, work began to improve the hard standing areas outside the village hall. However, these works uncovered a number of issues, including damp. Many of the problems seem to stem from the ground levels outside the hall having been raised too high by Gleesons. Other workmanship has been found to be defective and in some cases not adhering to Building Control standards. We have engaged a specialist to advise on remedial actions. Unfortunately there is no quick fix to the problems with multiple issues afflicting the building. We know many residents are curious on what is happening so (without going into too much detail), this is a summary of the current position:

- The existing drainage in the area needs to be investigated as it is unclear where some pipes drain to. A first ground penetrating radar survey was undertaken on 6 March and a second is scheduled for 14 March.
- A new below ground drainage system will need to be connected to existing manholes and down pipes.
- The ground levels will need to be lowered by 2 brick courses.
- A new drainage channel needs to be dug further away from the building to take water away
- Some of the foulwater drainage pipes have been found to be at odd angles and taped over; these will need to be made good.
- The rainwater down pipes will need to be replaced with new and more appropriately sized pipes to ensure water is shed properly from the roof.
- There is currently no cross ventilation below the stage area. The below stage vents will need to be unblocked.
- Various brickwork and even some stonework will need to be replaced.

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- Just prior to the quiz night, one of the two banks of lights in the village hall failed. Fortunately this did not stop a very successful quiz night from going ahead. The issue has now been investigated and largely resolved; with just one row of lights still out.
- A new intruder alarm has been installed at the hall, along with a fire alarm. Users of the hall will be provided with instructions on how to turn the intruder alarm off (and on) when they collect the hall keys.

Leisure Centre

- The weights area upgrade took place in December.
- We have also installed an advertising screen in the reception area, to promote activities and events, and local businesses.
- Please can we make a plea from the Nuffield staff to remember to bring your gym cards when visiting the leisure centre. Forgetting them just leads to disruption to other services and classes taking place.

Hooley footpath

- Everyone will no doubt be aware that the last deadline promised by the contractor was once again missed. Whilst the project initially suffered from several delays and setbacks, including vandalism, theft and an arson attack, ultimately the contractor was also extremely slow to progress the work. As he failed to meet the final ultimatum to complete the project last year, we took the decision to suspend his services.
- It has been very difficult to find an alternative contractor to take on this half-finished project and complete the work, at a price that is feasible for us to proceed. However, after many weeks of searching, we are pleased to report that we have now found a new contractor. Over the past 4 weeks we have been conducting the necessary checks including liability insurance and obtaining several references on the quality of the contractor's work. Reassuringly, these references have been extremely positive on all aspects of the contractor's work and we are due to sign the contract in the next few days.
- One benefit that has come from the frustrating delays this project has experienced is that we have been able to reassess with the new contractor exactly what lights we need. We have also taken into account concerns about more vandalism. As a result the style of lighting planned for the uphill part of the footpath has changed (from bollards to lighting posts) and then on the top half of the footpath we will install bollards which are concreted below ground to ensure extra stability. Additionally we will be able to increase the 'reach' of the lighting by continuing the bollards further along the top half of the footpath, reaching nearer to Gawton Crescent.
- The new contractor is expected to commence work before the end of March and they aim to complete the project within 6 to 8 weeks. We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their patience and understanding during this project. We have been as frustrated as everyone at the progress of the project since it commenced, and we assure you that we remain focused to deliver the successful completion of the footpath lighting.

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Estate

- Following the handover of the cricket pavilion from Netherne Cricket Club, we have engaged a contractor to deal with both interior and exterior works that need to be done. This is progressing.
- We have had enquiries from a couple of people considering using the pavilion as a coffee / sandwich shop. The pavilion would also be an alternative (to the village hall) for people looking for a venue for meetings / events. We envisage the Pavilion being ready for hire by the beginning of April so please contact SHW if you are interested in hiring it. The person to contact there is now Laura Ritchie (Tel – 0207 389 1514) Email - lritchie@shw.co.uk
- The cricket team that has played on Sundays at Netherne has indicated they hope to continue to do so.
- Last year we initiated a project to look at the feasibility of implementing a CCTV system in the village. We were unable to take that project forward last year, but have resurrected it this year. There is still a lot of due diligence to undertake, and a site visit by a potential supplier is scheduled.
- Following a full survey of the trees on the estate by an arboricultural consultant, we've appointed a company called Arbortech to start work on maintaining over 100 trees all over the estate. This maintenance work will include, amongst other things, pruning dead branches and wood, removing ivy at the base of trees and reducing a few trees in height. In addition, some new trees will also be planted in vacant sites (such as along the bottom of Netherne Drive).

Netherne Community Bus

The Netherne Community Bus is not funded by the service charge budget and is entirely reliant on fare income from passengers. The Bus Company is a separate company from NML, but has the same Board of Directors. We include it in our updates as we know many Netherne commuters rely on this valuable service. Without the Bus, many residents would not have moved to Netherne and it has undoubtedly contributed towards the rise in Netherne property values.

2016 was a difficult year for our passengers, due to the strike problems at Southern rail. Those problems appear to have receded for now, but we have suffered from reduced passenger numbers (and revenues).

The Bus reaches it's five-year anniversary in April 2017. It was purchased (second hand) and has served us well but now has nearly 150,000 miles on the clock. We are looking to purchase a replacement bus in the next year or two, and we need to build up the Bus Company funds in order to be able to afford to do so. With this in mind, we took the decision to increase ticket prices again from 3rd April 2017. Child fares and cash fares will also be increasing.

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NML Directors

Being a director of NML is a very responsible, varied and time consuming role. However all Directors volunteer for the role of running the Company and making the village a better place to live, and we are not paid for the work we do. We are pleased that Gary Smith and Alex Rodell have recently joined the Board, taking the places of Nikki Le Cluse and Jo Robins. Jo has however agreed to continue to support the Board by taking on much of the secretarial and administration duties - so freeing up time for the directors to focus on running the Company.

The Annual General Meeting of Netherne Management Limited will take place on 6 May 2017, in the village hall, at 10.00am. The Directors hope that many of our members will be able to attend the AGM, when we will give further details about our achievements during 2016 and our plans for 2017 and beyond.

Please also make a note of the following date in your diaries: Sunday 14 May 2017. This is the date of another spring walk of NML land, which is necessary to ensure no individuals can claim adverse possession of our land. The walk will be led by Robert Murdoch, and commence at 10.00am outside the village shop. Sturdy walking boots and walking sticks needed!

With best wishes

The Directors of Netherne Management Limited:

Steven Buczek Robert Murdoch Alex Rodell Rajen Shah Lee Sheldon Gary Smith