**Blackheath Cator Estate Residents Ltd**

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**NEWSLETTER – January 2020**

**The Board and the estate office wishes all residents a happy and prosperous new year.**

**BCER ESTATE CHARGE**

The Board is pleased to announce that it has approved a modest reduction in the estate charge to £8.00 per foot plus VAT. The revised rate will be applied to the 2019 estate charge (1 January to 31 December 2019) and will be invoiced, in arrears in January 2020. The reduction reflects shareholders comments made at recent AGMs about the level of reserves held, whilst ensuring that BCER has sufficient reserves to enable it to deal effectively with any eventuality that may arise. Board would remind residents, however, that the rate per foot could go up or down in future years and that the matter will be kept under review.

Invoices and vehicle permit/gate pass renewals will be mailed to all direct frontage charge payers early January 2020. Residents of the autonomous estates, blocks of flats, houses in multi-occupation etc, will be mailed their vehicle permit/gate pass renewal letters in February 2020.

**AGM**

The Company’s 54th Annual General meeting will take place on Tuesday 30 June 2020.

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**ARE YOU A SHAREHOLDER WITH PLANNING EXPERTISE?**

Notice of planning applications for properties on the Cator Estate are automatically sent to BCER by Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG). They are reviewed by the estate office and applications of sufficient scale are forwarded to our planning consultants, NT&A; on receipt of their comments, a decision is taken by BCER whether to raise any objection with RGB.

The Board is of the view that it would be helpful to provide NT&A with greater direction to assist them in defining the distinctive characteristics of the estate and propose trying to identify a shareholder with planning expertise who could be encouraged onto the Board. Are you a shareholder that would be willing to be co-opted onto the Board and provide this expertise? If you are, please contact the estate office.

**BCER ADMINISTRATOR**

Our Administrator, Vicki Graham is retiring. Working with the Estate Manager, the successful applicant will run the estate office in Blackheath Village, maintain estate records, organise meetings, take minutes, handle correspondence and telephone enquiries, liaise with contractors, solicitors, etc; deal with estate charge invoicing and issue vehicle permits and gate passes. Keyboard skills and knowledge of Access database would be useful. Average hours 24 per week (occasional evenings), would consider job/share initially if preferred. Email the estate office for a job description and any further information.

**TRAFFIC CALMING**

Our traffic consultants, PJA, have prepared a report proposing various options to control both speeding and unauthorised traffic, and this is being considered by the Board. The Board has also resolved to upgrade road surfaces where they are sub-standard and to ensure that gate and parking management are as good as they can be before spending substantial funds on traffic speeds and management.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS**

The Gables, 2-4 Blackheath Park

The building, which is locally listed, designed by Sir Aston Webb, was constructed originally as two separate residential dwellings in the late 1890’s before being joined and converted in 1952 for use as a nursing home for the elderly. In 1978 the use changed to a care home for adults with learning difficulties. We have now been informed that the owners, a Charitable Trust, are marketing the property, and it has been confirmed that the care provider and residents will be moving out of The Gables on 31 December 2019.

BCER is in contact with the owners to ensure that its rights are protected in regard to future use. No planning application or application for change of use has yet been submitted, but BCER will be notified of these and will make sure these are carefully scrutinised.

**RESERVED PARKING BAYS**

Residents are reminded that the two reserved parking bays outside **7 – 21 Blackheath Park** and **21 – 35 Brooklands Park** are allocated for the use of those residents because they have no garages or front drives. Only those residents are able to use these bays. Any other drivers, including those with BCER vehicle permits, are not permitted to park and are liable to be issued with a PCN by our parking operatives. Your co-operation in this matter would be appreciated.

**GRASS VERGES**

Thank you to all those residents who commented on the artificial turf trial. Comments received confirmed that the vast majority of residents were against the use of artificial grass. A number of suggestions had been put forward for dealing with areas where grass did not grow well, The estate office has identified areas where improvements are required and is currently considering options

**FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH: social media initiative**

**New initiative**: please join our Facebook page Neighbourhood Watch on the Cator Estate so as to be on top of crime prevention and issues affecting the safety of our community. All you have to do is type the name of the group into Facebook's search function and click on Join. The quicker word gets round, the less vulnerable we all are.

**Crime in the past quarter**: there were no robberies (defined as cases where a victim is attacked in the course of a theft) but there were 3 burglaries, 2 in Lee Road, though nothing was stolen, and one in Quaggy Walk (break-in and theft from garage). There were 5 cases of theft of or from a motor vehicle, in Casterbridge Road, in Morden Road (two incidents), in Morden College and in Papillon's Walk. A thief is targetting catalytic converters - garage your car or back close up to a wall to make it difficult for him. NB vehicles with high ground clearance are particularly at risk. There were 2 cases of common assault, in Meadowcourt Road and in Casterbridge Road; one case of theft from a person in Pond Road; and 3 cases of criminal damage in Morden Road, Pond Road and Blackheath Park (we have no further details of these).

**Scams to beware of:** calls from mobile no. 07405489347 purporting to come from a police officer or trading standards officer regarding recent works carried out at your property are bogus: there have been several recent cases. Always check the identity of callers: if checking police callers ring 101; if checking Royal Borough of Greenwich staff ring 020 8854 8888 and ask for the department they claim to be from. Never give personal information over the telephone and if in doubt, hang up.