



BLACKHEATH
CATOR ESTATE

Blackheath Cator Estate Residents Limited

Annual Review and Estate Accounts December 2022

ORIGINS

The Company was set up in 1965 by residents of the Estate as a means of preserving the unique character of their environment – now designated as a Conservation Area of outstanding interest. The Cator Trustees sold the roads and common areas to the new Company for a nominal sum, and with the acquisition went the benefit of covenants and agreements giving the Company the right to recover the costs of repairs and maintenance from residents. Although Greenwich Council were showing some interest in taking the roads over at the time, most residents wished to keep them as private roads under their own control.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives are set out in the Company's 1965 *Memorandum of Association*. These are: *"To promote, maintain and improve the amenities of the estate known as the Blackheath Cator Estate"*, and to *"serve the interests of the residents...by managing, maintaining, repairing and providing for the upkeep of the roads and open spaces...taking such steps as may be considered necessary to prevent such roads or any of them becoming public highways"*.

ORGANISATION

The Company is managed by an elected board of directors which meets regularly throughout the year. The directors give their time and professional knowledge without remuneration. Elections to the Board are held at the Annual General Meeting, and the next meeting is scheduled for Spring 2023. The Company employs a part-time Administrator and Estate Manager, and is responsible for pursuing its constitutional objectives, and managing the relationship with owners and residents, the majority of whom are also shareholders.

The Board delegates much of its work to committees covering Road Maintenance, Traffic Management, Development, Governance and Finance. A board member chairs each committee and volunteers are co-opted to share in the committees' activities. The Board tries in this way to secure a flow of residents with appropriate qualifications and experience.

The Board is always pleased to hear from residents who wish to seek nomination for election, or who are willing to offer help in areas of Company work. There is a current need for planning, development and financial skills, and a Company Secretary.



BLACKHEATH CATOR ESTATE RESIDENTS LIMITED

FINANCE

The Company spends in the region of £350,000 each year on the management, repair and maintenance of the roads, footpaths, verges and trees, including related expenditure for office administration, legal, insurance and finance. Our contractors Seasons are responsible for the majority of routine maintenance work on the estate and gate manning.

The Company also has recurrent expenditure items, and future planned maintenance commitments, that include a rolling programme of patching, resurfacing and reconstruction of estate roads, and the repair and maintenance of pavements, verges, open spaces, street lighting and drainage. A major road repair programme is being planned for commencement in late spring/early summer 2023, and a more detailed update will be provided before the next Annual General Meeting. The Company is holding significant reserves to cover the projected costs of road repairs and maintenance .

The principal source of income to fund these activities is the Estate Charge that is payable by each individual property, and levied, in arrears, for the previous year, at the beginning of each January. Other sources of income include parking permits, development fees and voluntary contributions.

Attached to this review is a draft of the current Income and Expenditure accounts for 2022, and the current Budget for 2023. Audited accounts will be presented at the next Annual General Meeting, if available.

ESTATE CHARGE

For more than 30 years now the Company has financed two main elements of expenditure - one based primarily around the repair and maintenance of roads, pavements and verges (including related administration), the other around a wider range of activities aimed at delivering the Company's main objectives.

These objectives include (i) managing traffic through the estate at peak times, thereby reducing the impact on the roads, as well as improving safety and preventing the estate's roads becoming public highways, and (ii) generally improving the amenities of the estate, and promoting the wellbeing of its residents, for example by tracking planning applications, working with developers, providing seating, removing graffiti and disposing of waste. Delivery of these wider objectives contributes to the preservation and enhancement of the unique environment of the Cator Estate that so many of us take for granted. The Company reports on these issues in its regular newsletters, and at the AGM, to inform residents, and consult with them, on wider matters of interest to the Estate and its residents.

The Board has undertaken a review of the Company's operations this year. Residents will be aware that their liability for the conventional Frontage Charge arises from covenants in their property documents. There has been some debate in the past as to whether some of the costs



incurred are covered by these covenants. To continue to meet the Company's objectives and responsibilities, and to increase transparency, it is proposed going forward that, with the exception of some residents who have purchased their property or executed deeds of grant during the last 10 years or so, a part of the Estate Charge will be non-mandatory. This contribution relates to the costs of delivering a range of specific traffic management measures including the traffic calming, parking control, and gate closure arrangements which the Company has been managing for the benefit of residents over many years, and that residents have come to expect, together with dealing with developers, planning applications, and certain other ancillary costs and expenses. These expenses have been incurred and paid by the Company for 30 years and are critical to the operational responsibilities of the Company and the preservation of the unique environment of the Cator Estate, and it is essential that residents continue to contribute to these costs.

Based on previous levels of expenditure, this contribution equates to approximately 17% of the Estate Charge for 2023. While all charges will continue to be assessed using the Frontage calculation, residents will therefore observe a change to the presentation of the 2023 Estate Charge Invoice, a copy of which is enclosed with this review.

The Board is in the process of putting together a forward programme to increase efficiency over next two to three years, including improvements to the current traffic management arrangements, new computer-based office systems, an interactive Company web site, and communications with and provision of information to residents.

Blackheath Cator Estate Residents Limited (BCER)

