

FOUR OAKS ESTATE NEWSLETTER



Issue Number 19 – September 2020

Traffic Mitigation & Potential Gating Update

We continue to be frustrated by Birmingham City Council (BCC) for a decision on our application for a Certificate of Lawfulness to potentially install gates. The issue seemingly preventing BCC from making a decision is its contention that Estate roads may constitute 'highways', whereas our legal advice clearly indicates otherwise. Our retained planning consultant is making further submissions to BCC and we expect a decision to be forthcoming in the next two months. If this proves not to be the case the board at its December meeting will look at alternative strategies to finally move this important project forward, potentially including an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. It is particularly galling that BCC published our Legal Opinion on its website and that this Opinion was subsequently used by Little Aston in its successful application for a Certificate of Lawfulness from Lichfield District Council. Naturally we have pointed this precedent out to BCC.

Hartopp Road re-surfacing

Re-surfacing works at Hartopp Road commenced on Monday 14th September and are due to be completed on Friday 25th September. The area being re-surfaced is from the junction with the park gate/Ladywood Road to the junction with Stoneleigh Close. The works are being supervised by a Building Surveyor on our behalf to ensure technical specification correctness, compliance and contractor management.

In addition to the re-surfacing works some minor profile alterations to roadway edges and driveways will be made to improve drainage and neaten up appearance and two additional speed bumps will be installed.

Grounds Maintenance

Edges & Hedges maintain around seven miles of frontages and this includes mowing of the grass verges, clearing of the footpaths/pavements/roadways, weed removal, tree feathering, hedge cutting and leaf removal (last year over 200 tonnes of them!). The roads are mechanically swept at least monthly and after stormy weather this can be increased to two or even three times a month.

Richard Bakewell recently sold his house and left the Estate and we would like to thank him for seven years' enthusiastic and passionate service on the Grounds Maintenance Committee. Nick Humphrey will be replacing him on the committee, which is chaired by Neil Andrews.

Road Frontage Charge

The Road Frontage Charge for 2020/21 has been set by the board of directors at £19.95 per yard frontage. This is an increase of 70p (3.64%) over last year. Demands will be issued around 1st October and there is a 5% discount for settlement by 31st October.

Road frontage charges provide around 98% of the Estate's day-to-day income and early settlement is appreciated to help cashflow and financial planning.

Streetlighting Columns

There are sixty five columns across the Estate and they are currently being cleaned. Over the years algae, exhaust emissions and general debris builds up on them and a thorough clean will smarten up their appearance. Just after the clocks go back we will commission a darkness survey. This is a survey where our electricians check each column in hours of darkness to check its functionality and light output. A few faults are usually detected in this annual survey and these are then immediately repaired.

Works to Estate Land

It is very important to remember that **no works to Estate land can be carried out without prior consent**. Works carried out without consent may need to be removed, leading to considerable wasted time and expense.

Estate land includes:

*** Footpaths & Verges * Driveway crossings * Roadways**

If you wish to carry out any work to Estate land please contact us and we will provide an application form so that consent and specification can be formally recorded.

Circulation Information

This newsletter will be sent in a format that allows easy reading on a mobile device/ tablet. A PDF version will be uploaded to the website and is available by email.

Four Oaks Estate Ltd

Registered in England: Company Number 00224411

Secretary: Stuart Tullah (01543 – 481376)

Email: stuart.tullah@gmail.com

Website: www.fouroaksestate.com