Willowhayne Residents'

November 2015

Willowhayne News

Outstanding Estate rate payments

At the end of September there were still nine people who had not paid this year's Estate Rates which amounts to £2,100. In addition, there are three people who seem to think they can decide how much they want to pay. This is not going to be allowed as it is a burden on the rest of the Estate. We have now issued our second County Court claim to recover unpaid Estate Rates and, in both cases, we have recovered the full amount plus interest at 8% and our court costs. We will take action against those who do not pay their Estate Rates. It is far cheaper to pay now than to have to pay the interest and court costs if we have to issue a County Court claim. If you are unsure how much you owe or you have difficulty in paying please contact Hobdens.

BT problems and your new driveway

Many of us are now upgrading to one of the high-speed broadband packages and finding that the speed may not be quite as high as expected. You may also notice that your phone land line becomes crackly after a period of heavy rain.

If so you are probably suffering from symptoms of the ageing telecoms infrastructure that we have on the estate, much of it dating back 40 or 50 years.

You have probably contacted BT to have the problem sorted and may have been told that rather than locate and repair the old cable it is better to fit a new cable from the road up to your house BT socket. This will certainly involve some excavation of your front garden and if you are really unlucky it may mean having your newly refurbished drive dug up to install the new cable.

If you are thinking of having your drive, paving or hard standing replaced then it would be a useful precaution to lay some trunking across the drive or paving in a convenient position to allow for future cable installation. This can take the form of some lengths of 75mm plastic rainwater downpipe or similar laid under the ground. It doesn't have to be watertight but any joints should be fairly smooth internally and without sharp bends. A piece of nylon rope to be used as a pull-through for the cable should be threaded through the pipe as it is laid and secured at each end so it can't disappear inside. Most importantly take some photos before the pipe is buried so you will be able to locate the ends in a few years' time when your phone connection fails.

Hopefully you will never need this hidden pipework, but if the day ever comes and you unfortunately find yourself faced with a BT Openreach engineer wanting to dig up your drive, you will be able to happily inform them of your advanced thinking.

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Japanese knotweed and your responsibility

A question that now appears on property sales enquiry forms is "Please confirm that there is no Japanese knotweed on the property". This question can only be answered by the seller of the property and can not be answered by Hobdens.

This is an extremely invasive plant and as such we have below given brief details of the plant and problems that may be associated with having this on your property.

Japanese knotweed is a strong-growing, clump-forming perennial, with tall, dense annual stems. Stem growth is renewed each year from the stout, deeply-penetrating rhizomes (creeping underground stems).

New legislation

An amendment to the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 includes Japanese knotweed and other invasive non-native plants. Full details of how this will work for the homeowner are not yet available, but here are some key points:

It is not illegal to have Japanese knotweed in your garden.

On your property, you should aim to control this plant and other invasive non-native plants such as Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed, to prevent them becoming a problem in your neighbourhood. If they have a "detrimental effect of a persistant or continuing nature on the quality of life of those in the locality", the legislation could be used to enforce their control.

Control can be carried out by the homeowner and doesn't require a specialist company. However, a specialist company will be skilled at control and can dispose of the plant waste.

Identification is important. Japanese knotweed can be confused with other plants including Persicaria microcephala (e.g. P. microcephala 'Red Dragon'), Leycesteria Formosa and Houttuynia cordata.

Where problems with Japanese knotweed occur in neighbouring gardens, we suggest that you correspond directly with your neighbours (who may already be taking action to control this difficult weed). These informal steps should be taken before contacting your council to talk about control using the legislation.

Fireworks and the rules—Reminder

We have often been asked "When can I use fireworks ?" The Fireworks Regulations 2004 prohibit the use of fireworks during the night (11pm - 7am) in England and Wales. However, there are certain extensions to the curfew for the following festivals. Fireworks are allowed:

- Until Midnight on 5 November
- Until 01:00 on the night of New Year's Eve
- Until 01:00 on the night of the Chinese New Year.
- Until 01:00 on the night of Diwali

Avoiding firework frights
Tell neighbours :

Especially the elderly and those with children and pets that you plan to have a firework display. Better still, why not invite them along?

Animals:

Please make sure that pets and other animals are safely away from fireworks. For animals, the impact of a noise can be frightening, and panicked pets may become aggressive and destructive.

Thursday 5th November Bonfire night

If you are having fireworks at home we hope that you have an enjoyable and safe time!

Tamarisk hedge cut

The tamarisk hedge has now had its annual height reduction cut. These works commenced 28th September and took a week to complete. The height has been reduced to approximately 2.5m (measured from the greensward—not the bank) and the depth (greensward side reduced by approximately 1.5m. In total approx. two tons of growth has been removed. There has been no reduction in depth on the seaward side of the hedge.

These works have again been undertaken by D&T Tree Surgery, who have done another excellent job. Cost for these works was £4200.00.

Work to estate owned trees

The following work has recently been undertaken on estate owned trees.

Dead wood & crown lift macrocarpa (cupressus) outside 31 Tamarisk Way

Crown reduction goat willow (salix)

outside 43 Angmering Lane

Reduce overhang from road corsican pine (pinus nigra)

outside 28 Angmering Lane

Crown lift off road leylandi (cupressus)

outside 19 Angmering Lane

Total cost for all works

£825.00

To help explain what this work entails and why we have had this done we have below given a short layman's guide.

The crown of the tree is the upper core and is what gives the tree its regular shape.

If the tree becomes too tall, the crown loses definition and also the upper sections become a hazard as they are weaker. Remedy: crown reduction

If the crown is not kept to shape, the tree can grow "sideways" and again be a hazard. Remedy: crown lift.

Crown lifting: Lifting the crown by removing lower branches will allow access for mowing, mulching and enjoying the shade cast by the tree.

Crown thinning: Thinning crowns to let in more light by removing some, usually up to 30 percent, of the branches and concentrating on dead or congested shoots is another strategy. It is very easy to spoil the appearance of the tree so this is best attempted in stages evaluating the effect before removing more.

As with previous works these have been undertaken by D&T Tree Surgery.

Recycling reminder

The following items can now be put in your blue recycling bin:

All plastic bottles e.g. drinks, bathroom and detergent bottles.

All plastic pots e.g. yoghurt, cream and cottage cheese pots.

All plastic tubs e.g. ice cream, margarine, cosmetics, and laundry tubs.

All plastic food trays e.g. food, meat, fruit, microwave trays and Easter egg packaging.

All plastic lids e.g. container & jar lids.

The following items can NOT be recycled:

Plastic films e.g. cling film, the covers of food trays and peel-back lids.

Plastic bags e.g. carrier bags, bin liners, cereal bags, sandwich bags, and bread bags.

Plastic bottle tops.

Crisp packets and wrappers.

Polystyrene.

Plastic toys.

Garden plastics e.g. Plant pots, seed trays, tools and furniture.

Remember ALL recycling MUST be CLEAN, DRY and LOOSE.

Seagulls

Seagulls are a typical feature of the coastal environment in the UK and a natural part of our country's wildlife. All species of gull are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This makes it illegal to intentionally injure or kill any gull or damage or destroy an active nest or its contents. Where nesting gulls pose a real risk to public health, the RSPB accepts that measures to prevent them nesting may be necessary.

The most effective measures involve reducing the availability of food and reducing the attractiveness of nest-sites. However, this is not an instant solution, and requires planning and action well ahead of the nesting season.

It is preferable to leave nesting birds undisturbed, especially since the populations of some gulls are declining. However, if there is a genuine reason for not having roof-nesting gulls, it is best to try and deter them.

A simple system of wires on a frame (30 cm deep) can be fitted into the area the birds are using, for example, between the chimney pots. This prevents gulls from landing and folding their wings. On flat roofs, wires can be stretched and held in place with brackets, again 30 cm high, though this becomes difficult if the roof is large.

Check all fixtures with your local fire brigade to make sure they do not breach fire regulations or constitute a fire risk from lightning strikes. Any physical barriers need to be regularly checked and maintained to ensure their effectiveness and prevent them from turning into traps.

Website

Since the new website was launched over 800 pages have been viewed.

If you have not had a chance to look at the new look site please take a few moments and let us know what you think. We would welcome your feedback on what additional information you feel would be useful to both existing and potential residents.

The website address and password are unchanged but if you need a password reminder please just give Hobdens a call.

willowhayne.org

Royal Mail scam

The following information has recently been circulated in the Rustington & District neighbourhood watch association newsletter and we have reproduced it for the benefit of those residents who may not have seen it.

A scam email is currently being sent to victims, fraudulently claiming to be from the Royal Mail. Attached to the email is the CryptoLocker virus. The victim receives an email purporting to be from the Royal Mail stating that they are holding a parcel/letter for the victim, who is then required to contact the Royal Mail to arrange for the item to be resent/collected. By following the instructions within the email the CryptoLocker virus is subsequently downloaded to the victim's computer. This virus encrypts files on the victims system and requests a ransom be paid in order for the files to be decrypted. Additional incentive is added for early repayment as the ransomware states that the cost of decrypting the files will increase the longer the fine is outstanding. Protect yourself by looking at who the email is addressed to. Is it generic or specifically addressed? Look at the quality of the images included on the email. Are they of sufficiently high quality that they could come from Royal Mail? Do not open attachments from unsolicited emails regardless of who they are from. Do not click on the link supplied. Instead, go to the relevant website and log in from there. Check the address of any email received to see if it appears legitimate.

Drain cleaning

Monday 12th October saw Xylem come and gully suck all the drains on the estate. This job is now undertaken on an annual basis. The cost is estimated to be between £3000 and £4000. The actual cost is very dependent on the amount of debris that is removed. To further help keep our drains clear and in good condition, it would much appreciated by all, if you could please sweep up any leaves or debris that may have accumulated outside your property, before they get a chance to enter the drainage system. Thank you in advance!

Regular request for directors

With this being the last newsletter of 2015, please consider volunteering as a director so we can continue to have a strong and active residents association. It is much easier to share the work load between a full board contingency of 10, than just the current seven directors. If you would like to find out what is involved before fully committing to volunteering please do come forward so we can meet with you and discuss any questions you may have.

A special thank-you, from the board of directors, to all the residents who help out during the year

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all the residents who gallantly distribute the newsletter every two or three months. The current newsletter distribution team consists of Bill Petrie, Vanessa Bennett, Fiona Champion, Peter Duffield, Roger Wickham, Jan Wingfield, Frederick Young, Caroline Frake, Karen Sellar, Linda Amos, Nick & Teresa Croston, Brian Daley & Nadia Birch, Gerry & Theresa Price, and Jackie & Geoff Broadhurst. To all of these people we say a huge thank you!

Without their delivery efforts, the newsletter would not be possible.

Thank you to all our guard-signing volunteers, who, between them, sign on the guards each evening and act as the point of contact. So thank you to Jonathan & Amanda Adams, Graham & Linda Amos, David & Sarah Leighton, Steve Robinson, Nick & Teresa Croston and Gerry & Theresa Price.

Thank you to Mike Chambers for continuing to help and support the planning committee with a lot of behind the scenes work, and to Arthur Simpson who has been assisting with various maintenance tasks and for providing another pair of eyes when proof reading the newsletter.

Finally, a big thank you to all those residents who help out on an ad hoc basis during the year.

A big thank you to Rita Tasker, Michael Cornwell and all the team at Hobdens for all their support and hard work towards the smooth running of the Willowhayne Residents' Association. Whilst Hobdens are paid for the services they provide the estate, the amount of day to day contact they have with individual residents and the board of directors is probably a lot more than most people would imagine.

A special thank you must be made to Graham Butt Estate Agents, East Preston for all the support they continue to show the Willowhayne Residents' Association in donating the printing and paper costs to us. Without their generous donation we would not be able to provide these newsletters.

Graham BUTT ESTATE AGENTS

Useful Numbers

Police Non Emergency Number : 101 or 0845 60 70 999

Assured Control Room (Guards): 01903 277345

Hobdens: 01903 724040

Contact us by either writing c/o Hobdens, 41a Beach Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5JA

Or send a message using the website

willowhayne.org

(If you have forgotten the password please just give Hobdens a call and they will advise you; for security reasons we don't want to publish this information in the newsletter. There is a section of the website that is for residents' use only)

One of our residents has set up a Willowhayne Forum (www.willowhayneforum.co.uk) in order to enable residents to discuss various topics and ideas or to help each other out or arrange trips etc. The username and password are the same as for the WRA website. Please note that this forum is not intended to be used as a platform to address any issues relating directly to the WRA Board or as a method of communicating with the Board.

Directors : Amanda Adams (Chairman) Malcolm Barnett (Vice Chairman) Adrian Gotts Jeffrey Edwards Richard Kirch Kerrie Peskett Ray Churcher (Co-opted)

What do you want from your newsletter and Board Of Directors?

The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you informed as to what is happening on the Estate. It would be helpful if you could let us know what you wish us to include in the newsletter and what you want us to leave out. We welcome articles to be submitted for inclusion in the newsletter, but please bear in mind that they may need to be edited for content and suitability (depending on content and space available). Please submit your articles via the website or by post to Hobdens. All the Directors are volunteers and work many hours (often without any recognition and in addition to their day job) trying to improve the Estate and ensuring we all benefit from living on such a lovely estate. Our sole objective is to serve the Estate to the best of our ability so if there is anything you want us to consider or think we could do better then please just let us know.

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Graham BUTT ESTATE AGENTS

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