

HOME OWNERS' NEWS

**LEATHERMARKET
JMB**

April 2011

Reporting back to JMB home owners about what we do.

The JMB held a meeting to report to home owners on the 23rd of March 2011 about services provided and charges levied. Martin Green, who is in charge of Home Ownership and Tenant Management Organisation Services in Southwark, came along with his Accountant, Gulam Dudhia and Revenue Collections Manager, Scott Thompson, to talk to home owners.



Home owners'
Meeting

How does the Council administer annual service charges?

As a home owner you are charged for the services you receive - not a penny more or less. At the start of the financial year Home Ownership estimates how much will be spent by the Council and JMB on delivering services. After the end of the financial year the Council and JMB submit their financial records, which detail how much has actually been spent, for scrutiny by independent auditors. The audited accounts are then used to calculate the actual charge for individual home owners.

Will the charges keep going up?

The services provided to home owners are subject to inflation, so it is wise to assume an increase in line with inflation each year. Beyond this it is impossible to tell the amount of repairs a block will need during the course of the year, and what will happen to the cost of fuel for district heating systems, or electricity for estate lighting, for example.

Residents are the reason we are here

What happened with the actual charges in 2009/10?

The average bill for a JMB home owner was £1,155. Individual bills varied considerably depending on the amount of repairs carried out to each block and whether the building has a district heating and/or a lift. The average bill was 6.5% below the amount estimated. 68% of JMB home owners received lower bills than they were expecting. The bills increased by 3.3% from the previous year, which is below the retail price index of 5.6%.



The average JMB home owner pays £59 more per year than the Southwark average; which we think is justified by the higher standard of estate cleaning, repairs and gardening we provide.



What is an unitemised repair?

For any repair that will cost a home owner over £250 there will be two consultation notices. However, if the repair cost will cost home owners in the block less than £250 each, the JMB will order the repair without a consultation notice. The total charge for repairs, not individually consulted about, appears as an unitemised repair charge on home owners' actual service charge bill. Home owners can contact the Council and ask for a breakdown of these repairs.

Should I see charges for malicious damage on my bills?

Any fire damage or vandalism to communal areas can be covered by the building insurance, and not re-charged to you. For the cost of vandalism to be recovered it is necessary to have a crime reference number from the police. Alternatively if the person responsible for the damage is known they can be recharged the amount of the repair cost.

Should I see charges for other residents' window and front door repairs on my bill?

Yes. The windows and front door belong to the Council. The advantage is that home owners can contact the JMB and request repairs to their windows and front doors. The disadvantage is that home owners get charged a proportion of the cost of repairing other residents' doors and windows in their block.

Is the way that major works charges are apportioned to tenants and home owners fair?

Yes. As a home owner you are charged your proportion of the cost of communal works. About half of the rest of the money that is spent comes directly from the Housing Revenue Account, where tenants' rents are pooled. The other half is from money borrowed by the Council, for which the repayment charges are also met from the Housing Revenue Account.

Quote: Steve Lodge– home owner from Trinity Street

The meeting last night I feel was better than the previous meeting and this is a reflection on how much better the service charge management is. I appreciate the meetings but just wish more people would attend. The meeting itself went well and was chaired really well. The speakers were knowledgeable and responded when questioned. The meetings will develop so I would like them to continue.

Home Ownership Council

This is the forum where the Council consults with its home owners and freeholders. Members have a role in designing and monitoring services. A JMB home owner named Sue Wemyss is your representative. If you want Sue to raise any issues on your behalf she can be contacted via the JMB office.



Sue Wemyss, &
Anne Timeyin, JMB Deputy
Manager

If I have a query about my bill or am struggling to pay it who should I talk to?

If the query relates to your annual service charges contact Scott Thompson on 020 7525 1419, scott.thompson@southwark.gov.uk



Martin Green,
Head of Southwark's Home Ownership &
Tenant Management Organisation Services
&
Scott Thompson,
Southwark's Revenue Collections Manager

If it relates to major works contact Barbara Longley on 020 7525 1443, barbara.longley@southwark.gov.uk or Richard Pamintuan on 020 7525 1441, richard.pamintuan@southwark.gov.uk

Home owners may be able to agree major works repayments over a three year period. This scheme is not available to home owners who do not live in the property they own.

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How can I get involved?

Join our sub-groups

The detailed scrutiny of the way that the JMB operates is undertaken by sub-groups set up by the main JMB Board. We have sub-groups that oversee finance, major works and performance (repairs, estate cleaning and dealing with anti-social behaviour). Each of the three sub-groups meet every three months for an hour or two. If you want to get involved we will be delighted to hear from you.

Attend your tenants and residents association (TRA) meetings

Each area has a tenants and residents' association where estate issues are raised. Anyone living within their area is very welcome to attend, even if you are a tenant of a home owner.

TRA	Next date	Time	Venue
Bermondsey Street	28/04/2011	6.00 pm	JMB Office
Crosby, Lockyer & Hamilton	03/05/2011	6.00 pm	JMB Office
Decima Street	26/04/2011	7.00 pm	Decima Street TRA Hall
Lawson Estate	03/05/2011	7.00 pm	Roundhouse
Kipling Estate	14/05/2011	2.30 pm	Kipling Estate TRA Hall

How can I keep myself informed?

More questions and answers for home owners, and Information on JMB services, procedures and news can be found on the JMB website www.leathermarketjmb.org.uk

Guide to being a good neighbour

A quick reminder of your responsibilities as a home owner or the tenant of a home owner:

- Arrange a annual gas safety check, in line with the lease
- Insure your own possessions and take out third party insurance in case say your washing machine leaks and damages your neighbour's home
- Your music, TV or socialising should not be audible outside your home, especially after 10pm at night
- Only carry out noisy home improvement works between 8am-7pm Monday- Saturday and 11am-3pm on Sundays
- Any structural works requires prior approval by the JMB. Talk to us if you are laying laminate flooring because the noise transmission can cause problems
- Do not leave combustible material outside your door. The JMB operates a free collection service for large bulky household items.