

Bampton Residents

**c/o Block Representative
37 Standlake Point
Windrush Lane
SE23 2XB**

Old Town Hall
Catford Road
SE6 4RU
0800 028 2 028

jon.kanareck@lewishamhomes.org.uk

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Dear Bampton Residents,

General Enquiry – Charges for caretaking services on the Bampton Estate

Thank you for your letter, which I received on Friday 9 June. I'm grateful you've taken the time to tell me about your concerns.

I understand them to be:

- The calculation of the caretaking service charge for the three Bampton Estate high rise blocks – Radcot, Standlake and Newbridge Points
- The standard of the caretaking service (internal cleaning) in these blocks

How we calculate the caretaking service charge

The cost of the caretaking service includes the caretaker's salary, but we also factor in other costs, such as employments costs, the equipment and materials required to deliver the service, management and supervisory costs, and general administrative and support costs. These are all part of the overall cost of providing a caretaking service. Among these other costs are:

- Employer National Insurance and pension contributions
- Agency and temporary staff we employ to reduce disruption when a staff member is absent
- Equipment & chemicals – such as brooms, buckets, mops, and vehicles
- Management and administrative overheads – for example the cost of managing the caretaking services and support costs such as Human Resources, Finance and other Corporate services

We identify the full cost of the service for each block and then apportion them according to the number of residents. So, on Bampton Estate, we provide an average of 10 hours per week caretaking for each of the blocks over the course of the year.

As you rightly point out, the estimate for 2017/18 is £53,023.86 for all three blocks – or £17,674.62 for each block. We based the estimate on the audited actual service charges for 2015/2016.

We then divided this by the number of units in the blocks to arrive at an estimated caretaking service charge of £441.87 for each leaseholder. The hourly rate is £40.17 – taking into account all the costs

associated with providing the service. We only charge residents for 44 weeks out of the 52 weeks per year. This is to take account of staff absences during the year.

I hope I've been able to clarify leaseholders' contributions to the full cost of providing a caretaking service to the block and why it's more than the cost of the caretaker's time alone. I'm sorry if we haven't made this as clear as we could have in the past.

Caretaking standards

We try to ensure good caretaking standards, but we aim for excellence. We do this by ensuring by managing our caretakers' performance, listening to customers, and responding to their feedback.

Supervisors inspect the quality of internal cleaning regularly so we can identify problems, put them right, and try to stop them recurring. The patch supervisor, Andrea Scott, last inspected the Bampton blocks in April and May 2017. On both occasions she found the cleaning to be good – but not excellent.

We know management inspections are just snapshots, so we also rely on residents' feedback to make a visible improvement in quality. For example, you and other residents pointed out some issues on 16 June. Andrea met you on site on 20 June for an estate walkabout. I understand you agreed that the service had recently improved.

We've had similarly positive feedback from another residents. However, Andrea will monitor the area closely to ensure we build on the improvements we've made with your help and generally take care of the area. I understand she also picked up a number of communal repairs which she has reported.

The team will continue to work with you to work towards an excellent estate environment, and we look forward to further feedback. The best way to share your views with the team is to email them at environmentalservices@lewishamhomes.org.uk or to phone on 0800 028 2 028.

I hope I've addressed your concerns. I understand our Area Manager, Chidi Onyema, will be attending your TRA meeting on 29 June, and he'll be grateful for another opportunity to discuss residents' ideas and feedback.

Yours sincerely



Jon Kanareck
Director of Operations