



NOVEMBER 2022

## SERVICE CHARGE UPDATES FROM THE RCC

### Dear Residents

Most of us are still reeling from the shock of the service charge adjustment on the last of our four invoices for the financial year 21-22.

Your representatives have expressed concern and dissatisfaction with the situation and have been working hard in the background to get more details. How come the estimates for the year were so bad? How come some blocks have huge electricity bills and some don't?

It is the RCC who manage our communication with our landlord (The Corporation of the City of London/Barbican Estate Office = BEO) about service charges. A sub team on the RCC is now working with the BEO to tie down discrepancies and make sure that we don't get increases out of the blue again.

This sub-team is called the Leaseholder Service Charge Working Party (LSCWP). All the team are volunteers: Helen Hudson, Fred Rogers, Sally Spensley, Sandra Jenner, Adam Hogg, Andy Hope, Bernie Burrows and Frits van Kempen, and we have started to meet regularly with the BEO to get things sorted out.

The main unexpected costs for the last Service Charge year (covering April 2021 to March 2022) were from huge leaps in the charges for repairs and additionally the underfloor heating charges.

From  
**Helen Hudson,**  
*RCC Member*

### Repairs

A huge part of the service charge for 21-22 was from water penetration repairs mainly on the top floors. The BEO has been fixing these as they come up but not had a planned maintenance schedule for it. They are now going to introduce a maintenance schedule for these repairs which



means they will be able to purchase and contract in a more cost-efficient way.

Water penetration is not just an issue on the top floors. A growing number of flats are suffering from water ingress from the balconies above them because the waterproofing

under the paving stones has deteriorated and because the down pipes from the balconies have become blocked. These problems have been particularly acute in Andrewes over the last few months but there is no reason to suppose it will remain confined to Andrewes.

Another large chunk of the service charge was for the window and frame replacements on the top floors of the lower blocks. Again, these have been done ad-hoc as required, rather than in a scheduled rollout, and each window and frame replacement is costing about 50K including the scaffolding where needed.



The BEO know that they have many more still to do and will be looking at a planned replacement schedule instead, so that the spending can be managed more efficiently.

You might have noticed a news snip on the BEO's weekly email (23 Sep) the results of which will help the BEO work on their rollout plan:

### Window Frame Inspections

We have recently commissioned an intrusive survey of top floor window frames across all blocks and a random sample of lower floor frames. An inspector working for the Barbican Estate Office will be on site across the coming weeks.

## Underfloor Heating Charges

There has been some alarm from residents caused by surprise increases in the Underfloor Heating component of the recent service charge statement. Just as worrying is the variation across the estate in these increases. These vary from a near doubling in the charge to a small rebate. This is clearly unsatisfactory and the Barbican Estate Office together with the City's energy procurement team are investigating the causes. Once this investigation is complete, we will report to residents.

This variation is almost certainly a result of the timings of the various meter readings around the estate. There is no variation across the estate in the number of hours of underfloor heating delivered each day, nor in the timing of the heating delivered; everyone's heating is switched on and off at the same time. The timing is determined by the outside temperature.

As far as the future is concerned, there is some good news on our underfloor heating costs; the City's energy procurement team have negotiated a 15 year agreement to purchase approximately 54,347 MWh per annum from South Farm Solar Ltd. This is likely to come on stream in December 2022, resulting in heating costs of around 24p/kWh, which compares favourably with the government cap rate of 34p/kWh (more on the cap below). In the unlikely event that the South Farm Solar scheme does not come on stream, we'll be paying 34.3p/kWh, marginally more than the price cap rate.

Residents have expressed concern that because most of their energy costs arise from underfloor heating, they won't benefit from the Government's energy cap of £2,500 p.a. In reality, what is capped is not the annual bill but the charges for each unit of electricity and gas which we use. The £2,500 is just a headline figure to show the impact for a typical household. The electricity which Barbican resident use for their own domestic uses (cooking heating etc) will be subject to the cap of 34p/kWh.

When this current uncertainty is over, our heating costs will probably settle down at twice the level they were a few years ago. It's probably time to review the way in which our heating is delivered.

## What to expect this year

The BEO has implemented a new computer system which makes pulling repair reports a bit easier than a few years ago. Our team of volunteers in the LSCWP will pull the repair stats every month or two and distribute to your House Group to pick up on any anomalies which need investigating.

These stats will include estimated costs so will give us an idea of what the costs will be for your block for the current service charge period 22-23.



# Barbican Association

Representing the interests of Barbican residents

## Membership Form

Barbican Flat and Block	Primary Member Name
Postal Address (If different from above)	E-Mail Address <input type="checkbox"/> Join our mailing list Telephone Number
Additional Member Name	Additional Member Name
E-Mail Address <input type="checkbox"/> Join our mailing list Telephone Number	E-Mail Address <input type="checkbox"/> Join our mailing list Telephone Number
Additional Member Name	Additional Member Name
E-Mail Address <input type="checkbox"/> Join our mailing list Telephone Number	E-Mail Address <input type="checkbox"/> Join our mailing list Telephone Number

**Membership fee £5 if paid by standing order OR £8 if paid by cheque, made payable to 'Barbican Association'.** Fee is per flat, not per person. For addresses outside the Barbican add £3 for UK, £6 for Europe, £9 for the rest of the world. Please contact us for alternative ways to pay. Please do not complete the mandate for Monzo, Starling and similar accounts. **Please do not just transfer money into our account.**

Please return your completed form to: **Barbican Association, Box 105, 128 Aldersgate Street, Barbican, London EC1A 4AE.**

Email: [membership@barbicanassociation.co.uk](mailto:membership@barbicanassociation.co.uk).

The Barbican Association keeps a database of the names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of Association Members. Information from the database is used by our General Council and Affiliated House Groups for maintaining and increasing membership, distributing our publications, managing and reporting on our finances and accounts, and carrying out other objectives of the Association. We also disclose information about our membership to the Corporation of London, including the Barbican Estate Office, in order to maintain their recognition of the Association. By becoming a member of the Association you consent to the use of your information for these purposes.

### Standing order mandate

(please complete in block capitals)

To	Bank	Address
	Branch	

### Please credit the account

Bank	Sort code	Account number	Beneficiary's name
Lloyds Bank	30-91-79	27933660	Barbican Association

### Commencing

First payment date	Repeating	Until	Reference (office use only)	Amount	Amount in words
ASAP	Annually	Further notice		£	

Name of account to be debited	Sort code	Account number

Name	Signature
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Name	Signature
------	-----------

Address	Date
Postcode	

# Barbican Association Discount Scheme Participants

A list of organisations offering discounts or other incentives to Barbican Association members. **If you are not already a BA member, make sure you join the Barbican Association to qualify – for most of these just one visit will more than cover your annual BA membership subscription cost.**

Local businesses which wish to participate and offer a discount or other incentive to BA members should contact Helen Hudson, 07842 23 52 68 or [barblifeedit@gmail.com](mailto:barblifeedit@gmail.com) for further information.



Please visit [barbicanlife.com](http://barbicanlife.com) to see more details and contact information for our local firms or scan the QR code with your cell phone camera.



## FOOD AND DRINK

Barbican Kitchen  
Avenue  
Coq d'Argent  
German Gymnasium  
Fish Market restaurant  
New Street Grill  
Paternoster Chophouse  
Radici  
Fare  
Fish Central

The Jugged Hare  
Moshi Moshi Sushi  
Pho Vietnamese Cafe/Restaurant  
Stem and Glory  
Vecchio Parioli  
Wood Street Bar and Restaurant

## HEALTH, BEAUTY AND WELLBEING

Barbican Dental  
Barbican Physio  
Barry's Bootcamp  
City Psychotherapy  
Counselling and Coaching  
Cranio-Sacral Therapy  
Health in the City  
London Eye Optique  
No74 Hair & Beauty  
Personal Training  
Psychotherapy City

## LEARNING

Languages

## SALES AND SERVICES

Abacadabra Services  
Citi Clean  
Mail Boxes Etc  
Prince of Wales Dry Cleaners  
Urban Locker Self Storage

## CULTURE

Charterhouse  
LSO Live  
Velorose Gallery

## FURNISHING

Adams Blinds  
MILK Concept Boutique  
MyDreamKitchen

# LEASE EXTENSIONS

## Need More Information?

Barbican Life are planning a series of meetings (some in person, and some on Zoom) with solicitors in the coming months. Let us know if you are interested and we'll send you invites.  
Email: [barblifeedit@gmail.com](mailto:barblifeedit@gmail.com)

If you have questions and don't enjoy Zoom or email, please contact us and we'll share what we know to get you started. Phone: 078 42 23 52 68 or drop in a note with your contact details to 34 John Trundle and we'll call you back.

Search on the Barbican Talk website for "SHARE YOUR LEASE EXTENSION EXPERIENCE" and see what other folks have done.

