

South Snowdon Wharf January 2020 Update

Insurance

We are very pleased to report that Bayliss and Cooke have negotiated a new three year fixed rate whilst retaining the low claims bonus at a reduced cost compared to previous years. This is particularly impressive considering the complex nature of the estate insurance being next to the sea in an area rated by insurance companies as a flood risk, we are grateful to them for their efforts on your behalf.

Site Supervisor

John Chirgwin is not employed by SSW but is a contractor paid an hourly rate for the work carried out during each month. This includes regular activities such as organising the bins, keeping the common parts clear and weekly insurance inspections. A separate list for gardening and repair work is discussed and prioritised regularly.

We reviewed the planting on the estate during this year, although plants in the round troughs survive they do not thrive. We are therefore replacing them when they die with cotoneaster which does grow well, so well in fact that it has overrun many of the raised beds crowding out more attractive plants. A lot of time has been spent during the year cutting back and removing it from the raised beds. When we are satisfied we have completely removed the cotoneaster we will replant in the gaps and renew the slate chippings where necessary.

Clearing moss is an ongoing expense so we have been investigating other ways of removing it and are currently trialling spraying the moss before clearing to try and slow down its return.

Roof and gutter repairs remains a significant activity with 28 different properties having roofs repaired and 11 with gutter work. There have been less blocked drains to deal with but those that have occurred are usually caused by wet wipes, please do not put them down the toilet.

As reported previously the floor lights around the estate are increasingly unreliable with water causing faults affecting whole areas of lights and taking a significant amount of time to keep working. We have been trialling solar lights for a few years and have now installed a run of these along the short wall looking out to sea. These are motion sensitive so we are hoping to set them up to be off all of the time only coming on as required. If this is successful it will be extended around the estate.

Roofs and Major Works

- £17,721 on three new roofs, 4 major repairs requiring scaffolding and several other roof repairs requiring a cherry picker for safe access.
- £7,764 installing new rain water drains in the parking area from 53 to 58 connected to the central rainwater gully in the road, this looks smart and is working well. The soakaways in this area had silted up and the slope of the road meant large puddles did not clear after the rain.
- £1,104 on 500 second hand roof slates to maintain a stock of slates for repair work, this is significantly cheaper than buying new slates.

Building Materials

Less properties were rendered by residents this year so less was spent on the associated lead and gutters.

Waste Collection

The cost of each bin being emptied has increased again, but this year there were no skips so the overall cost is lower.

The bin store is still used as a dumping area with little consideration given to other users. Please do not leave items on top of the bins, old furniture should be taken to a charity shop or the tip and large cardboard boxes can be cut up to fit in the recycling bin.

If you let out your property could you please make sure your guests know where the bins and recycling store are, it is becoming more common to meet people walking round looking for them.

Equipment hire and contracts

The charges this year are unrealistically low as Gwynedd council have only invoiced us for one of the monthly road sweeper visits, we would expect them to catch up next year and the figure to increase.

Electricity and light

As reported previously the aerial system is showing its age requiring several new connection boxes and new network equipment costing just over £800. If you have problems with your signal please contact John Chirgwin to arrange an engineer to visit. If the fault is with the network it will be paid for by the service charge however if it is in the property cabling the service charge will not cover it.

One more street light has been replaced with an LED light and we have purchased new solar lights to replace the floor lights as mentioned earlier.

Future Plans

- As noted in the May newsletter the contractor did not return to site in the spring as planned so we delayed the areas of slab relaying to avoid disruption over the summer period. Since then there has been a lot of roof work and the surface water work so to keep the service charge at a steady level slab work was delayed again until 2020. The two main areas planned are in front of 61-70 and on the estuary side around the 24-25 area.
- In 2018 the top layer of slate was replaced on the low wall round the dinghy park and the reclaimed slate used to repair the wall tops overlooking the estuary. Sadly some of these have been knocked off again and there is still a large area overlooking the station that needs replacing. We have been unable to find another source of slate that matches in colour but we will be investigating this further this year, perhaps with grey slate in some areas.
- It is clear that the soakaways for rainwater are silted up and although we still clear them this is more for cosmetic reasons. We will continue to review this, potentially installing more rain drains as we have done this year.

Parking

Parking on the estate is becoming an increasing problem with double parking, using the wrong spot and parking on the slabs causing damage. We will be repainting the numbers to show each properties allocated parking spot in the spring.

If you have more than one car at your property please use the visitor parking on the entrance road overlooking the harbour. Do not double park, use other peoples spaces or the SSW spots.

If you leave a boat in your parking spot please ensure it does not overhang the slabbed area obstructing the pathway and risking injury to pedestrians. We are considering installing ground fixing in some of the visitor parking spots to provide secure parking for trailers whilst boats are in the water, please let us know if this would be of interest.

Works on Property

We have a constant battle with contractors using the communal areas as a store for equipment, materials and waste. If you are having work done please ensure your builders respect the estate for the benefit of all residents.

Website

A full history of service charge updates and newsletters can be found with photos of work done at www.southsnowdonwharf.co.uk.