

**Bay View Caravan Owners' Association**  
<http://bayviewowners.co.uk/wp/>  
[bayviewcaravanownersassociation@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bayviewcaravanownersassociation@yahoo.co.uk)

**Text of email about Rates sent to members on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

From: **Phil Davey** <[phildavey74@gmail.com](mailto:phildavey74@gmail.com)>  
Date: 11 July 2013 20:10  
Subject: Note to members re Rates 2013  
To:

Many owners will have received a letter from Jen Davies, Office Manager at Swanage Bay View, about Rates.

We have been paying our rates by two instalments together with our fees since this was agreed with Swanage Town Council in 2008. There does seem to be some confusion in the minds of Darwin over this. They think that STC only agreed that the fees could be paid by instalments and not the rates. This confusion seems to come from the fact that Darwin do not get to learn about the rates until later in the year from the point at which the fees are invoiced, and are therefore invoiced separately. STC used to bill owners for fees and rates at the same time (they set the rates and therefore they knew what the rates would be).

Darwin think that only the fees were agreed could be paid via instalments whereas we know that when STC agreed instalments that it was for the combined annual bill of fees and rates.

In addition caravan owners will be aware that a park owner is not allowed to make money on charges like electricity, gas and rates which it passes on to owners. Requiring owners to pay the rates in one amount at the start of the season, and then Darwin paying the rates by instalments over the course of the year to the council would amount to profiting from a passed on charge. The total annual rates bill being paid to Darwin at the start of the financial year would allow the monies to be invested. The payment of rates by Darwin in either 10 or 12 instalments during the course of the year would mean that interest would be gained by Darwin on the bulk rates paid by owners. The net result would be that Darwin would gain on the interest by the time all the instalments to STC had been made. This would amount to profiting from a passed-on charge.

Of course the Owners Association can not tell members what to do with regard to rates. We have been paying our rates by instalments since 2008 and so it is quite clear that this has been accepted practice by STC when they owned the park and has been accepted up until now by Darwin who took over the park; we are therefore entitled to continue to pay by two instalments.

As owners will have paid the first half of the rates to Darwin, they are not in breach of their licence (new or old) but may be in dispute as to how the rates should be paid. Members may wish to respond to the Darwin letter in these terms.

We sincerely hope that this matter will be quickly resolved as it creates poor customer relations and harps back to the "bad-old-days" when Darwin had just taken over the park. We believe that things have moved on now and are hopeful that this is more a misunderstanding that will be seen to be a small matter that is of no financial harm to Darwin. It would be a shame if the start of the new licence (which does not mention instalments at all) was seen by Darwin as the opportunity to pressure owners in a way which was a concern to the Owners' Association while the wording of the new licence was being developed.

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