

NEWSLETTER No 57, May 2013

Dear Members

1 General Meeting Sat 4 May

Thanks to all our members able to attend our General Meeting on 4 May. It was a full house with standing room only making a successful meeting. The draft minutes will be placed on the website in due course. We have some interesting topics in Newsletter no. 57. We would welcome further ideas. Doesn't seem possible that we have had 56 Newsletters so far! All have been very informative and with correct advice to you all.

We hope the weather improves somewhat soon so that we can enjoy our holiday homes in peace and some warm sunshine.

Let's get onto the business now.

2 Licence

We are very pleased to say we are finally coming to an agreement and a conclusion to the Licence.

As mentioned at General Meeting, the new licence is better than the old licence and is probably the best holiday home licence in the UK. NACO, the Owners Association and Darwin share this view.

Those planning to sign the new licence may like to attach a letter to the licence in which they can refer to instalments continuing even though not mentioned in the licence itself. The letters from Anne Foulkes dated 28 Nov 2012 and 26 February 2013 could be attached, or referred to, as this confirms that we can continue to pay by instalments.

There are two typos remaining in the licence, which you can also correct. These are - page 3 Insurance should read 3.(d) and page 10 section 6. (c) (iii) should have "those" and not "this" in the beginning of the last line.

3 Rates

Those of you who have been at SBV for some years will know that since 2008 rates and fees have been paid by two instalments in March and September. Initially this was paid direct to Swanage Town Council who owned the park. The only major thing missing from the revised licence was the inclusion of instalments within the wording. Two letters, dated 28 Nov 2012 and 26 Feb 2013, from the Park Manager has confirmed that we can continue to pay rates and pitch fees by instalments. Do not worry about any invoice asking for payment in full that is not the case.

Some of you will be aware that new nationwide rules mean that council taxpayers can now choose to pay their council tax over 12 months rather than 10. However, the Association is happy with the agreed arrangement that we can pay SBV by just two instalments. We know that SBV pay their business rates by instalments and as such, this arrangement for us to pay in 2 instalments seems both fair and equitable. SBV have notified owners of the rates later in the year than Swanage Town Council used to and have asked for payment in full in

May. In accordance with the payment via two instalments, it would seem fair to respond with half in May with the balance paid together with fees in September.

4 Rules

The committee agreed a revised set of rules that would be more suitable for SBV. Rosemary B met with Anne F a couple of times and gave her a copy of the revised rules. As a result a new set of rules have been produced that are much better and it is encouraging to note that our concerns with the old rules have been noted and important changes have been made. Anne has sent out the new rules to all owners now and this should enable us to be happy about signing the licence.

However, we need to be aware that Darwin following discussion with caravan owners can change these rules, but not unilaterally. Please remember to replace the rules which were attached to your licence for signature by the Sales Office, with the new rules just issued by Anne. We suggest that you date and sign these to avoid confusion over 2 sets of Rules being around.

5 Landslip and Site Maintenance

Many of you will have noticed the maintenance work being undertaken at SBV. This includes exterior painting and other changes within the Vista facility, landslip works, and the general landscaping of the grounds. It is pleasing to see tasks that are covered by our fee money being executed to maintain the site.

We know how we would feel if we discovered our holiday home affected by land slip and so our thoughts go out to those owners recently impacted by this occurrence. The OA will keep in contact with Anne Foulkes over this concern and we are sure that she will be communicating further to owners once she has the feedback from the site survey. We think that recent repair work shows how seriously SBV is taking this risk, and this is reassuring for the future.

6 Lime scale

Ever since we started staying in SBV we have noticed the hardness of the water. Your kettle is no doubt rapidly furring-up just like ours did. Initially we tried using wire meshes that you can buy and place in the kettle to collect the lime scale, but this was no solution. Within the first year we had a lime scale filter installed outside just before the water enters the holiday home. This just looks like a car oil filter attached to the pipe. Suddenly the furring stopped. Having forgotten about the problem, we also forgot to change the filter at the intervals recommended. The results showed themselves this year. The water flow reduced and we had to run around in the shower in order to get wet! Rescue came in the form of Andy. He has arranged for the replacement of our filter and for our whole system to be flushed through to remove lime scale within pipes and combi-boiler. Now we are pinned to the shower wall by the power of the rejuvenated shower! An added bonus is that the taps run off without dripping continually as the gritty lime scale no longer clogs the washers. If you have noticed the same problems as us, may we suggest a word with Andy to arrange similar work? Restoring our water system to "as new" status has improved our enjoyment of our beautiful holiday home and must also be having a beneficial effect on the future maintenance and performance of the combi-boiler.

Phil and Anne Davey

7 Electricity

We have already received a number of concerns from owners that the Smart Meters may not be recording accurately (the digits seem to be rolling-over very fast), so we suggest that if you are concerned that you contact the office for further explanation. OFGEM rules on the resale of electricity to payers of invoices indicate that we have the right to ask to see the bill that resellers received from their supplier and then apportioned to us, the payer. The reseller, Darwin, should therefore make this available to any owner who asks to see it. There should be no problem at Reception with asking for a copy of the latest bill from Darwin's supplier. Anne Foulkes has assured owners that we shall only be charged the unit cost as charged to Darwin by the electricity provider.

8 Townsend Sycamores

Although the large sycamore trees in Townsend Nature Reserve continue to block the view of many owners in the north-east area of the Park, hope is in the air. Anne Foulkes is keen to continue with the proposals for Darwin to pay for the felling that were initiated by James McConnell 18 months ago. She has appointed Andy to lead the Darwin side and he has had meetings with Dorset Wildlife Trust, who manage Townsend, and Swanage Town Council, who claim ownership of the narrow strip of the Reserve along the side of the lane. No felling can begin until the autumn to avoid the bird nesting season. Darwin, DWT and STC all have different objectives in this project so the final outcome will inevitably be a compromise but let's hope that at last there may be some real action this coming winter. DWT are keen to monitor the effects of the tree felling on the bats and lichen inhabiting the Reserve so Darwin have contributed funding to support that work – surely a positive sign. In the meanwhile, the owner group will continue to cut down sycamore saplings come September/October time – why not come and join the fun!

9 Park Signage

The plot numbering system at SBV has always proved a mystery to me. A concern that I have is that it must also prove just as mystifying to the emergency services. I wonder if we can use the hundreds of brains that we have in the Owners' Association to come up with a solution. I am sure that Anne Foulkes would appreciate ideas for signage or whatever other idea that will remove this problem and reduce any risk. May I ask that you give this some thought and if you have some ideas then you can send them to Anne Foulkes. If you would prefer, then you can send them to the OA and your idea can then be forwarded. There is a good solution out there, and it just needs prising out of someone's head!

Phil Davey

10 Central information point for the sale and purchase of used caravans

We receive regular contact from people either wishing to sell their caravan or wanting to buy one at SBV. Please contact Marje at No 66, telephone number shown at the end of this Newsletter. Or there is a place on the Owners' Association website www.bayviewowners.co.uk for Sales and Wanted. This has been used by a few members with success, though there are no ads on there at the time of writing. Here is the direct link-

www.bayviewowners.co.uk/wp/index.php/sales-and-hire/caravans-for-sale/

You can send details of your caravan that you wish to sell to the Owners Association email address: bayviewcaravanownersassociation@yahoo.co.uk . Please also remember to contact the SBV Sales Office even if you wish to sell privately. The sales transaction (transfer of ownership) will still need to be processed via the Sales Office even if they are not involved in the selling process. You do not have to accept any offer they make for your van.

11 Association Website

Our website (www.bayviewowners.co.uk) includes all of the information we send out to members, so if you've lost a particular Newsletter or email you should be able to find a copy there.

The site includes a variety of other information too, and suggestions for more content are welcome. Some features, such as the Sales and Wanted section mentioned above could be used much more extensively. Please let us know if you have suggestions or ideas.

12 Subletting

You will have received an undated letter from the Park Manager about the need to undertake various tests on you van and return details to Reception by 1 June. This only applies to those who sublet their caravans commercially, it does not apply to those who do not sublet their vans commercially or if your family and friends use your caravan.

13 Date, time and venue of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 3rd August 2013..... We will advise of the venue in the meeting Agenda to be issued Watch this space.

Best wishes to you all.

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