

From the Trust Manager

Trust Council members, many dedicated volunteers and the Trust staff are continuing to work to make the Trust more effective.

The purpose is of course to defend the character and amenity of the Suburb so that both current residents and future generations will be able to appreciate and enjoy the achievements of the Suburb's founders. To support this aim the Trust has taken steps to:

- Make its record and accounting systems effective and economic
- Institute a programme of repair and maintenance for the Trust estate (communal gardens, private roads and footways, allotments)
- Improve enforcement of the controls on alterations to buildings and landscape
- Rebuild the Trust's financial reserves – which underpin its work.

Effective, efficient and economic systems

The Trust's operation of the Scheme of Management for the Suburb was endorsed by the April 2007 decision of the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal which declared itself "satisfied that

the Trust is working and has worked to ensure that the owners receive a good service within the terms of the scheme of management and that the investments made in modernisation and the rationalisation of the charge will be to the benefit of all."

In terms of the management charge the Trust has implemented an inexpensive but effective process of credit control whereby freeholders who do not pay the charge receive solicitor's letters, and if non-payment continues, can be taken to court. This ensures the Trust receives all payments due under the Scheme of Management and that those who pay promptly do not subsidise late payers. The number of freeholders with management charge debts lasting over two years has been reduced from over 100 (out of 3500) to nearer 10.

The Trust estate

The Trust owns and is responsible for a number of private roads, communal gardens, allotments and tennis courts around the Suburb (the Trust has no powers over the public roads and pavements or those open spaces managed by Barnet or the Corporation of London).

The Trust has recently organised the reconstruction of Linnell Drive and the repair of Farm Walk. Residents with rights to use these private roads have contributed to the costs. Work to other roads and communal areas will follow in consultation with residents.

The Trust has put the contract for the upkeep of the open spaces which it maintains out to competitive tender. This means that costs are clearly identified for each area and residents can be assured that charges are fair and competitive. In the past some residents have contributed their share of the upkeep and others have not – sometimes simply because they have not been asked. Halting the drain placed on the Trust's reserves (which used to result from the Trust bearing



Above, Farm Walk before repair and after, below



Reinstatement of characteristic privet hedge and lawn