



town&city
management limited

Taking care of your property



Peter Bigge, MD of Town & City Management.

There is much to be done if you want to keep your property in good repair and for it to appreciate in value. Communal areas and services need to be maintained, insurance needs to be put in place and renewed on time, bills have to be paid and local authority and legal requirements must be met.

Regardless of who manages the building, there are a number of tasks that need to be carried out whether your property is a house converted into a few flats or a

substantial purpose-built block or estate.

Careful planning is necessary for these Tasks, both in the specification and pricing of the work and perhaps more importantly the financial provision for them.

If you own a flat, an apartment or live on an estate you will probably have signed a lease containing a provision for the collection the necessary service charges to cater for these costs.

The person responsible for the management of your building, be it your actual landlord, the leaseholders in the form of a resident management company or a Right to Manage company has significant duties and responsibilities under the terms of the lease and under legislation.

It is essential that leaseholder managers fully understand and appreciate these responsibilities if the residents are to receive the services due to them and the value of their asset is to be maintained or improved.

Peter Bigge, Managing Director of Town and City Management said, "We have

over 22 years experience of managing leasehold developments and take every effort to remain at the forefront of our industry.

"We are committed to providing the highest possible standard of service to our clients and offer a transparent approach, our door is always open."

Operating from offices in Darlington, Newcastle and Sheffield, Town and City Management is registered with the Association of Residential Managing Agents (ARMA), the Association of Retirement Housing Managers (ARHM) and provides a growing portfolio of leaseholder services across the north of England.

**Town and City Management
would like to wish you a
very happy Christmas
and a prosperous New Year
With best wishes**

Peter and the team

Fire Safety Advice

It is essential that you have a smoke alarm in your home. Statistics show that you are more than twice as likely to die in a fire if an alarm isn't fitted. A smoke alarm is the easiest way to alert you of the danger of fire, giving you precious time to escape, they are cheap, easy to get hold of and easy to fit.

All modern homes and extensions must have alarms fitted under building regulations but a lot of older flats may not have them. Worse than this, many homes have them but they don't work.

**** TEST YOUR ALARM NOW!! ****

Further details can be obtained from
www.direct.gov.uk

Town and City plans ahead

Town and City Management reports continued growth and as a result we have made a number of significant improvements.

Earlier this year we developed a strategic plan for our company for the next 5 years.

As part of our strategy it has been necessary to change the legal status of the company so with effect from 1st May 2009 we became a company limited by guarantee and now trade under the name Town and City Management Limited.

This change to our trading title does not affect any contracts or agreements that we have in place, and does not affect anything from a customer's perspective.

We have also asked clients what we can do to improve the service that we offer and a number of suggestions have been put forward.

We have reviewed our processes and procedures and are part way through an improvement programme to further streamline our operations.

We have secured the support of Jeremy Wright to help us with our strategic development. Jeremy, formerly a Programme Director at Durham University's Business School has significant experience of helping companies grow and we are delighted that he is part of the Town and City Management team.

21 ways to be a great leaseholder

Source: ARMA (August 2009)

Much is said about, and comments made on, the way landlords and managing agents should conduct themselves in delivering management services to blocks of leasehold flats, services that enable lessees to enjoy their home and the community in which they live. But it is not just a one way street; leaseholders have to do their bit to achieve this enjoyment.

In any form of community there needs to be mutual cooperation and this becomes even more important where people are living in close proximity to each other as in long leasehold blocks of flats.

“Quite apart from understanding their legal rights and responsibilities of owning a leasehold flat in terms of their landlord, lessees also need to think of their social rights and responsibilities relating to their neighbours” comments Brett Williams, chairman of the Association of Residential Managing Agents (ARMA).

“Research within our membership has highlighted at least 21 areas where friction can be caused between lessees or where action by lessees can make things run more smoothly for everyone.”

As a result of this research ARMA has produced a Lessee Advisory Note on ‘21 Ways to be a Great Leaseholder’ which is downloadable from the publications page on www.arma.org.uk or available by phoning 020 7978 2607.

The areas covered by the advisory note range from safety to subletting but it puts water leaks at the top of the list. These are the most common cause of damage and insurance claims in blocks of flats. If a lessee is going away for more than 48 hours then he/she should turn off the water at the stopcock in the flat. Many managing agents will ask for the contact details of an emergency keyholder just in case there is a leak whilst the lessee is away, lessees should cooperate and make sure a

neighbour knows how to contact them. Most buildings insurance policies require regular inspections of empty properties and failure to do this can prejudice a claim.

Noise is the number one cause of neighbour disputes. Lessees should be sensitive and let their neighbours know if there will be unusual noise from, say, DIY or workmen in the flat.

Wooden floors are another of the biggest gripes of leaseholders because they can transmit sound so easily. Carpets and/or rugs are the neighbourly floor covering choice in any flat and are likely to be required by the lease.

“Living in a leasehold flat can be just as pleasant as in a house if neighbours respect the need to consider each other when living side by side or on top of each other and sharing communal facilities” concludes Williams.

Our people are our greatest asset



Tim Clarkson – Client Accounts Manager.

With the continued growth of our portfolio we feel it important that we communicate with directors, leaseholders and residents, especially with regard to who you should speak to if you have a query, issue or just want to find out the status of works.

Our maintenance team has been strengthened and we have improved our systems so that planned and responsive tasks are delivered efficiently.

The team is managed by David Leach, supported by Assistant Manager Shaun Kernon and administrative support is provided by Susan Williamson and Carole Brightey (formerly Carole Raines).

Joan Leicester is heavily involved with running the company. Joan manages HR, our operational matters and the Town & City finances.

Tim Clarkson has joined us to manage client accounts. Tim brings with him considerable experience of working in our industry and his in-depth accounting skills and knowledge will be a great asset to us.

Glynn Flowers is our insurance co-ordinator. Glynn has 25 years experience in the insurance industry including four years in brokerage dealing with insurance companies and quality management issues.

It is our policy to encourage all members of staff to take their personal and professional development seriously. Everyone at Town and City Management is given the opportunity to take formal qualifications and become members of the Institute of

Residential Property Managers (IRPM).

By taking this attitude to training we strongly believe that the levels of service that we are able to provide will improve which will be of benefit to our clients, the individual member of staff and the company.

Our team members are always willing to speak to you, to offer help or advice or simply give you the benefit of their experience. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

Tel: 01325 389 689

Fax 01325 389 789

Email: mail@townandcity.com

Congratulations

Sue Crosier and Tim Clarkson who have been awarded Affiliate status of the Institute of Residential Property Managers.