Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

FlatLiving Magazine

Information, advice & guidance for RMCs and Property Managers

March 2024

ACE AWARD TICKETS ON SALE AND ENTRIES NOW OPEN!

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Welcome

Welcome to our March issue of Flat Living Magazine!

Property management comes with its never-ending list of things to do, so in this edition our contributors have covered everything from communal areas to EV chargers. This month, Jodie Fraser shares more about the Hollie Gazzard Trust Active Bystander Conference.

Be sure to visit page 6 where you can find The Property Institutes latest summary of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill: Report Stage and Third Reading.

In news - Read more on freeholder permissions to make alterations and find links to this years ACE Award ticket and nomination pages.

As always, we have included training opportunities from ARMA and job vacancies from Block Recruit to help you upskill or move on to new pastures.

If you have any questions you would like us to organise an article on, or if you have any interesting articles to add – please send them directly to the team via info@flat-living.co.uk.

Happy reading!

Belinda Bagnall and The Flat Living Team

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News

ACE Awards 2024 Tickets on Sale and Entries Now Open!

Date & Time: Friday 21st June, 6.00pm - 12:30am

Venue: Old Billingsgate, London

Theme: The Great Gatsby/Roaring Twenties

Join us for an evening celebrating the outstanding accomplishments of the property sector's managing agents and the impactful work of their people in improving the welfare of millions of leaseholders across the country.

Ticket sales are now open - make sure you reserve your spot or table for this summer's event.

Nominations are open across all 20 award categories – all those shortlisted will receive a complimentary ticket to the evening, and we've made our entry process quick and easy.

For 2024, attendees can also look forward to six new award categories and a return to the unique London venue of Old Billingsgate on the bank of the Thames. And, after a big turnout last year, expect strong competition for every trophy up for grabs!

Nominations Are Open for 20 Award Categories

The ACE Awards are free to enter and are open to all TPI Members.

Among the six new award categories featuring for 2024 will be trophies recognising those leading the way in resident engagement, the health & safety partner of the year, and four new awards for the managing agent of the year. Check out the list of categories below.

To make an entry **click here**.

Entries Close Thursday 18th March 2024

Addressing Recent Events in Valencia

As 2024 leads up to the seventh anniversary of the Grenfell tragedy, it is with a heavy heart that I share news of a haunting echo in Spain. On Thursday, 22nd February, a devastating fire engulfed a residential block in the Campanar neighbourhood of Valencia, serving as a painful reminder of the past.

The inferno, beginning around 5:30 pm local time, has claimed ten lives, with fears that more will be discovered when firefighters enter the block containing 138 flats, once home to over 400 residents.

Seeing this tragedy unfold on the news is truly heart-breaking, and that behind every life lost, countless others are now grappling with shattered realities.

As we know, back in the UK thousands are still living in buildings deemed unsafe, urgently awaiting cladding remedial work and shows how vital regulatory changes from the Building Safety Act 2002 are to preserving human life and safety.

We will await the final report, but it seems clear that the quick spread of the fire has been attributed to the building's highly flammable polyurethane-filled cladding, allied to the ventilation gap behind the screening, reminiscent of the 'chimney effect' mirroring Grenfell.

The details surrounding resident evacuation remain uncertain. We will report any findings of relevance from the tragedy to you. Your professional body continues to work with Government and Stakeholders on the journey to residents having peace of mind about safety.

A reminder, our Building Safety Hub remains a live resource for official fire safety guidance in England and is available to members and the wider public.

In these challenging times, my thoughts and heartfelt condolences extend to all those affected in Valencia.

- Andrew V Bulmer, FIRPM FRICS Chartered Surveyor, CEO.

Leaseholders Must Seek Freeholder Permission Before Making Alterations

Principle Estate Management has warned leaseholders that they must obtain what's known as a Licence for Alter (LTA) before making any changes to their homes.

Richard Coles, an associate director at Principle who oversees the managing agent's building surveying, explained that without permission from the freeholder, leaseholders could be in breach of their lease.

Mr Coles said: "All leaseholders should submit documents for the freeholder's approval prior to any works and we will then process for approval and sign off on behalf of the freeholder.

"The first steps is that any leaseholder should approach the property's managing agent with details of the work that they wish to undertake for review by the building surveying department.

"If an LTA is required, full details of the proposed works, including a full specification and any detailed drawings, must be prepared and submitted for review by the managing agent's surveyor.

"At this point, a solicitor may be needed to draft the licence.

"Once all the documentation is submitted, a site visit will be arranged so that the surveyor can consider the proposals on site and prepare a schedule for any adjoining properties that might be affected by the works.

"The managing agent can review the works planned, discussing them with the freeholder, and at this stage they may request for additional information from the leaseholder.

"During the works, the managing agent's surveyor will visit from time to time depending upon the complexity of the works and will make a final inspection upon completion.

"But the important thing for leaseholders to bear in mind is that they may find themselves in breach of their lease if they make alterations to the property without getting freeholder consent."

Mr Coles added: "The golden rule is to always consult with the managing agent to ascertain if an LTA is required."

Launched in 2018, Principle now has more than 65 staff looking after a portfolio of more than 12,000 units at around 375 developments across the UK.



Photo: Richard Coles

Update on ALEP's Intervention in the Supreme Court

On Thursday 8 February, ALEP intervened in a Supreme Court case for the first time in its history.

The Association's purpose in doing so was significant: to seek clarification of – and potentially changes to – the law in relation to service of notices. Bishop & Sewell LLP acted on behalf of ALEP; Counsel were Philip Rainey KC and Mark Loveday of Tanfield Chambers, who also appeared pro bono and led the argument in this important case.

The case of A1 Properties (Sunderland) Limited v Tudor Studios RTM Limited (Tudor) raises the question of whether an intermediate landlord with no management functions needs to be served with a copy of the RTM claim notice.

From the point of view of the public at large and those seeking to exercise their rights, the Right To Manage legislation is a particularly complicated area of landlord and tenant law. ALEP members are familiar with navigating it, but there are many traps for the unwary, as the huge body of case law around RTM notices shows – there are as many landlord notices as tenant notices.

At the heart of Tudor is a question that the courts have grappled with over the years in various fields of law; namely, when there is a failure to comply with a statutory obligation, what the practical consequences of that will be. In Tudor, the issue was the failure to service a notice claiming the Right To Manage on an intermediate landlord who actually had no management function.

The current case law is set out in the case of Elim Court RTM Co Ltd v Avon Freeholds Ltd (2017) [2017] EWCA Civ 89 (Elim Court). This decision of the Court of Appeal deals with a failure to serve a single intermediate landlord with no management functions. Here there were 237 intermediate landlords – investors in student accommodation holding individual head leases over each unit. In addition, arguably, the failure to serve was deliberate, the choice not to serve having been made on the basis of the position in case law set down in Elim Court. The discussion point in Tudor is therefore how the courts should approach the question of non-compliance with statutory procedure.

To date the courts have veered towards a distinction between public law and private law rights, generally tending to the view, following another Court of Appeal case, Natt v Osman [2014] EWCA Civ 1520 (Natt v Osman), that where the obligations arise out of a property law notice (such as an RTM claim) that parliament would have intended the consequences of non-compliance to be interpreted more strictly, i.e. that the risk of failure on procedural grounds would be much higher.

In Tudor, there is scope to move the argument forward and one option that ALEP was seeking to suggest to the Supreme Court is that the test for determining what parliament would have intended should happen in the event of a failure to comply, should perhaps mirror that in the public law space, where the test is one of subjective prejudice. The leading case on this is R v Soneji and another [2005] UKHL 49.

Part of ALEP's submission to the court as intervener is that mirroring this test is likely to be easier for the courts to apply in practice, and so, if adopted, will give greater certainty in the future. In a case like this, the application of a test based on the 'outcome' of the non-compliance is likely to produce a 'fairer' and more transparent result.

In seeking to intervene, ALEP was not a party to the case, but rather appeared as an 'amicus curiae' (a friend of the court). Inherent, therefore in its submissions, was its neutrality, and the desire for greater clarity in relation to the law here not only in relation to RTM notices, but also potentially more widely given the natural symmetry between the RTM and the Enfranchisement legislation. It is possible that as a result of this intervention, the Supreme Court may well look to overrule all or part of the previous decisions of the Court of Appeal in Elim Court and Natt v Osman, and if it does so, will herald a new approach to the law as it relates to the validity of property notices.

Lord Justice Briggs credited the "scholarly and helpful intervention" of ALEP and the counsel's "carefully prepared and very helpful submissions on this difficult piece of legislation" made on ALEP's behalf.

Mark Loveday, Barrister at Tanfield Chambers commented:

"It's one of the big questions in property law. If Natt v Osman is right, procedural defects, no matter how trivial, are presumed fatal to the exercise of statutory property rights. If Natt v Osman is wrong, the law is more forgiving. A step is still valid if the relevant party has substantially complied with the legislation (or no prejudice was caused). ALEP's intervention has allowed this big issue to be finally resolved by the highest court in the land – as their Lordships recognised."

Mark Chick commented:

"I would like to thank Philip Rainey KC and Mark Loveday of Tanfield Chambers for their excellent pro bono work on the part of ALEP, and the Bishop & Sewell team, particularly Matthew Davies. As experts in this area, we look forward to the further development of the law and its wider application.

"The outcome is unlikely to be known before mid March, but regardless of the ruling, we hope that our arguments were of assistance to the Court and that the wider authority and argument put forward may be of use to the Lord Justices when making their decision."

A longer description of the case to date is available on the Bishop & Sewell website.

Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill: Report Stage and Third Reading

On Tuesday 27 February 2024, the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill passed through its Report Stage and its Third Reading in the House of Commons. The Bill will now move to the House of Lords for scrutiny from Peers.

As at Second Reading, there was rigorous debate about the Bill at Report Stage, in particular in terms of what was not included, for example the ban on leasehold houses not extending to flats. Additionally, several MPs took the opportunity in the debate to cite examples of managing agents and landlords exploiting leaseholders in their respective constituencies. Some MPs, but not all, balanced their commentary with an acknowledgement that there are many good managing agents and landlords.

Next Steps

Once the Bill has passed through the House of Lords – where further amendments can be proposed and debated by Peers – it will be sent back to the House of Commons for the Lords amendments to be voted on and considered in what is colloquially known as 'Ping Pong'.

The Property Institute will continue to identify opportunities to influence and shape the Bill as it is debated in the House of Lords, most notably seeking to introduce regulation of the sector, including mandatory qualifications for property managers, and to promote greater transparency of information to leaseholders. We will continue to keep our members informed of developments.

To read the Report Stage debate in full, please click here

Or to watch on Parliament TV, click here (debate starts at 14:56 hours)

Key Amendments voted into the Bill at Report Stage

The Government (Lee Rowley, Minister for Housing) tabled several amendments, which clarified the protections afforded to leaseholders by the Building Safety Act 2022. This Act makes sure that those responsible for building defects are held to account:

- The 'relevant steps' taken before and during the process of remediation were defined as steps which prevent or mitigate defects that could cause residents harm, rather than merely remedy them
- It was made clear that remediation orders have the power to require landlords to make relevant steps, and that the First-tier Tribunal is permitted to order the production of an expert report
- It was placed beyond doubt that Leaseholders will be able to recover the costs of temporary accommodation and professional expert services by way of remediation contribution orders
- And, it was placed beyond doubt that resident management companies dealing with non-compliant landlords will be permitted to recover legal costs etc relating to liability for building defects via the service charge (where a remediation contribution order has been obtained)

These amendments were voted into the Bill at Report Stage.

Additionally, **Lee Rowley** made the government's position on leasehold houses clear: "We know that there is little justification for selling houses on a leasehold basis. For years, developers have exploited the sale of houses on a leasehold basis for the sole purpose of generating an income stream from ground rents and fees. This has been done at the expense of consumers, who receive little or no benefit in return. We promised to shut down this abusive practice by banning the sale of houses on a leasehold basis, and today we are doing so. Other than in narrow circumstances where a lease can still be justified, all new houses will need to be sold on a freehold basis."

The new clause (Clause 42) will introduce a ban on the sale of new leasehold houses (i.e., newly built houses and existing freehold houses) in cases where owners aim to grant new long leases. This is unless the lease qualifies as a 'permitted lease' as defined in the bill. For example, land where properties cannot be sold on a freehold basis, such as inalienable National Trust land, or where the product relies on a lease connected to an active third party, such as shared ownership houses or community land trusts. Lee Rowley indicated in the debate that the Government is "… able to—and we will, if need be—revisit these definitions and exemptions if innovation in the housing market requires it, or if we see evidence of poor behaviour."

Key Amendments voted down by the House of Commons at Report Stage

The Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning, Matthew Pennycook, proposed three amendments that were struck down by the House:

1. to abolish forfeiture for residential long leases when leaseholders are in breach of covenant
2. to make the acquisition of freehold for leaseholders more attractive by altering the deferment rate
3. to ensure that all leaseholders (rather than only those with residential leases of 150 years or over) have the right to pay a premium to have their rent replaced with peppercorn rent.

These amendments were motivated by Labour's desire to encourage leaseholders to acquire their freehold at the lowest possible cost, and to get rid of forfeiture which Pennycook called a 'wholly disproportionate and horrifically draconian mechanism for ensuring compliance with a lease agreement'.

Further, the amendment to make peppercorn rent a possibility for all leaseholders comes from Pennycook's position that the current clause would only benefit the minority, as most common forms of lease are those of 90, 99 and 125 years.

Chair of the Levelling up Committee, Clive Betts, proposed the following amendments on mandatory qualifications, supportive of the professionalisation of the estate management industry and designed to protect residents from rogue developers and estate management companies.

1. to make it so that anyone who performs a management function with respect to a residential property is required to hold a relevant qualification in property management
2. to make mandatory the codes of practice outlined in section 87 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and to require that the Secretary of State ensures these codes of practice are in place.

These two amendments were struck down by the House.

Background

The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill was introduced to the House of Commons on 27th November 2023, and implements a commitment made in both the 2017 Housing White Paper and the Conservatives 2019 Party Manifesto to improve fairness and redress in leasehold. The Bill also incorporates many of the leasehold reform recommendations included in the Law Commission's reports from 2020.

The Government's motivation for improving homeownership stems from the Law Commission's review of leasehold law in 2017, which, in part, inspired the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022. While the Act abolished ground rent for most new residential leasehold properties in England and Wales, the Reform Bill aims to go further by introducing further changes to the residential leasehold and freehold property sectors in England and Wales.

Proposals in the Bill

The main features of the Bill, as originally introduced, were as follows:

Extending leases: Regarding leasehold enfranchisement, the Bill allows leaseholders of flats to extend their lease, and leaseholders of houses to extend their lease or buy their freehold, immediately upon taking ownership of a lease. Furthermore, when extending, this Bill introduces the right for a lease extension for a term of 990 years for both houses and flats, as well as allowing leaseholders who already have very long leases (over 150 years remaining), to buy out their ground rent without extending the term of their lease or buying the freehold.

Ground Rent: The Bill proposes that ground rent be reduced to peppercorn (zero financial value) upon payment of a premium. The Bill also seeks to introduce a right in which leaseholders who have had very long leases, can buy out their ground rent without the extension of their lease or the need to purchase their freehold.

Mandatory Qualifications: The Bill does not currently propose any form of Mandatory Qualifications for managing agents, however, this is an area that amendments could add depth to the Bill.

Service Charges: The Bill seeks to drive up transparency of financial and non-financial information that leaseholders and tenants receive – including how service charge costs are presented, provision of key information (i.e. insurance costs) and the power to compel landlords to provide information necessary to tenants in whose buildings a service charge in payable. This Bill will also drive up transparency of administration charges that leaseholders and tenants may face.

Legal Challenges: One of the likely points of contention through the Bill's passage will be how it applies to flats, rather than houses. At present, the Bill will abolish leaseholds for new houses but not for new flats.

Right to Manage and Right to a collective enfranchisement: This Bill increases the 'non-residential limit' to 50% for collective enfranchisement and the right to manage.



Empowering Change: The Active Bystander Conference by the Hollie Gazzard Trust

Fraser Allen
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Did you know that an investigation by UN Women UK (2022) found that 97% of women ages 18-24 had been sexually harassed, with a further 96% not reporting those situations because of the belief it would not change anything.

22% of girls aged 7-12 have experienced jokes of a sexual nature from boys.

Therefore, in the pursuit of creating a safer and more supportive community, the Hollie Gazzard Trust is gearing up to host the Active Bystander Conference at Hartpury University in Gloucester on 10th July 2024.

This incredible event aims to bring together a group of up to 100 individuals from various walks of life to understand how to safely intervene in potentially harmful situations.

The conference promises a dynamic day of discussions led by prominent industry and academic experts, focusing on the empowerment that an Active Bystander programme can bring.

The goal is to inspire a culture of intervention and support, equipping attendees with the tools needed to stand up against harassment, abuse, and violence.

The event's significance is underscored by its venue, the esteemed Hartpury University, known for its commitment to education and creating a sense of responsibility within its community. The Active Bystander Conference aligns seamlessly with the University's values, making it an ideal host for this impactful gathering.

To facilitate meaningful discussions, the conference is limited to 100 attendees, ensuring an intimate setting where participants can engage actively with the speakers and fellow attendees.

The registration fee is set at a reasonable £50 per attendee, which includes lunch and refreshments, making it an opportunity for anyone passionate about creating positive change.

The day kicks off with registration at 9 am, creating a welcoming atmosphere for participants to network and connect before the conference officially commences at 10 am.

The timing of this allows attendees to settle in, enabling a sense of community and shared purpose right from the start.

For those ready to embark on this journey towards empowerment, registering for the conference is a straightforward process.

You can click the link here and if you have any specific dietary requirements, you can e mail info@holliegazzard.org to advise of this.

The Active Bystander Conference wouldn't be possible without the generous support of its sponsors. Hartpury University takes pride in being the headline sponsor, further emphasising its dedication to creating a safer environment.

Additionally, the conference is sponsored by Fraser Allen Estate Management and Elmrep, demonstrating the collective effort to champion this cause.

As we anticipate the discussions, networking opportunities, and shared insights at the Active Bystander Conference, it is evident that this event has the potential to spark positive change.

By equipping individuals with the knowledge and tools to intervene and support, we are collectively taking a step towards creating a society where everyone feels empowered to stand up against harassment and violence.

Together, we can be the change we wish to see in the world.



For more from Fraser Allen, click here.

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Addressing Concerns and Challenges with Inherited EV Chargers for Property Managers

EV///CONNECTED

Author: Jamie Willsdon, Director of Future Group

www.future-group.uk

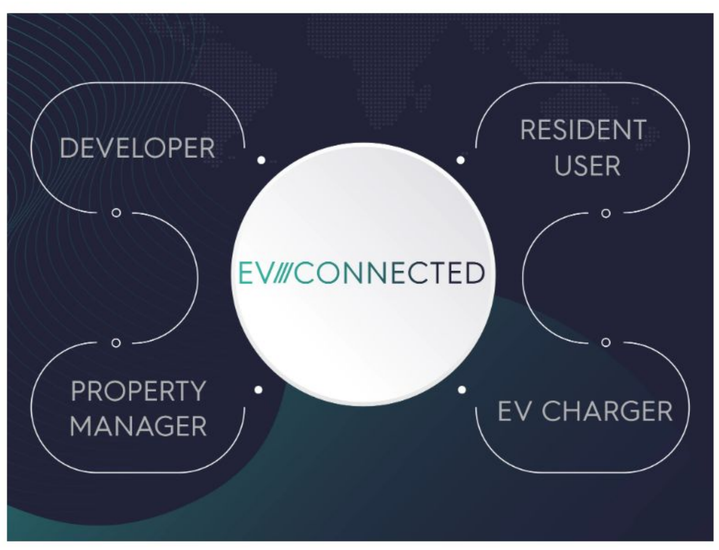
The shift to sustainable energy, especially electric vehicles (EVs), is undeniably beneficial for the environment and our communities' well-being. It also signifies a positive step forward in our commitment to a greener future for the well-being of our communities.

However, a pressing issue has come to light: the gap between new build developers' obligations to install EV chargers and the challenges faced by property managers and residents who inherit these systems. In this educational article, we will delve into the concerns surrounding this issue and explore potential solutions to ensure the safe and efficient operation of inherited EV chargers.



Developers' Obligations and the Information Gap

Firstly, let's understand the context. Developers are now mandated to install EV chargers in residential car parks, a move that aligns with the growing emphasis on eco-friendly practices. This is undoubtedly a commendable initiative that can significantly contribute to a more sustainable future. However, the issue arises when developers do not adequately communicate essential information about these installations to property managers who take over the sites.



The Consequences of Inadequate Information

When property managers are left in the dark about these inherited EV chargers, a series of concerns come to the forefront. Uncertainty about the chargers' manufacturers, operational status (active or passive), commissioning status, and safety can lead to a range of problems. Property managers may unknowingly face unsafe installations, un-commissioned chargers, and in turn, unexpectedly high electricity bills if residents utilise these chargers without individual billing mechanisms. This lack of information can also hinder property managers' ability to maintain the chargers in compliance with safety standards.

Risks Associated with Unsafe and Un-Commissioned Chargers

The potential risks associated with inadequate communication and oversight of inherited EV chargers cannot be ignored. While precise figures regarding safety issues at residential charging points are not readily available, a 2019 survey conducted by Electrical Safety First highlighted a significant concern. Out of 1,500 electric or hybrid vehicle drivers surveyed, a staggering 74% were found to be at a substantial risk of electric shock while charging their vehicles at home. While the circumstances may differ slightly for dedicated charge points in residential blocks, damaged units, cables, and wiring could significantly increase the risk of electric shock for users.

Furthermore, the lack of proper commissioning and billing platforms can lead to scenarios where residents using the chargers are not billed individually. Instead, the electricity consumption is charged to the entire block. This can create tension among non-drivers and those with non-electric vehicles, potentially leading to disputes over service charges. Property managers, who already have a multitude of responsibilities, may find themselves entangled in such disputes.

Introducing Solutions for a Smooth Transition

To address these concerning issues, solutions need to be put in place to ensure the safety, compliance, and efficient use of inherited EV chargers. One such solution is offered by EV industry specialists, who can provide services to resolve these problems comprehensively.

Specialists in this field offer a range of services that encompass fact-finding surveys, safety inspections coupled with compliance certification and reporting, commissioning, ongoing maintenance, and support. Their expertise extends to collaborating with various third-party billing and management platforms, allowing them to recommend the most suitable option for property managers across different contexts. Additionally, they offer training as needed, relieving property managers of the responsibility of handling billing inquiries.

Through a Planned Preventative Maintenance agreement, such specialists can guarantee regular maintenance and 24/7 support for any charger-related concerns or emergencies. This comprehensive approach is crafted to equip property managers with the essential resources and assistance needed to effectively oversee inherited EV chargers.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges related to inherited EV chargers is of paramount importance and necessitates proactive actions. Property managers are pivotal in guaranteeing the optimal safety and performance of these systems. Implementing solutions can help bridge information disparities, reduce risks, and ensure residents access a secure and economically efficient charging experience. Through knowledge dissemination, cooperation, and specialised support, the issues linked to inherited EV chargers can be turned into prospects for improved sustainability and community welfare. For further information on these services, individuals are encouraged to reach out to relevant experts or organisations.

Why Choose Future Fuel's EV Connected?

Future Fuel stands out as a multi-manufacturer-approved EV specialist and a leading authority in the leasehold block management space. With extensive experience in the leasehold block management sector since 2014, and a strong presence in the EV charge points and billing industry since 2019, Future Fuel is uniquely positioned to address the challenges arising from inherited EV chargers.

As accredited installers with awards, OZEV approval, and partnerships with multiple manufacturers, Future Fuel is well-equipped to offer stand-alone solutions or complementary services for property managers seeking to optimise their EV charging infrastructure.

Please see our Arma Partners dedicated service offering: https://future-group.uk/services/ev-charging/future-connect

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

JB Leitch talk about EV Charging

www.jbleitch.co.uk

In this article, Nia Blackwell, Associate Solicitor at JB Leitch Real Estate, provides an update on her previous article from late 2022 covering the subject of EV charging – and the practical implications for landlords and managing agents to consider.

Since our previous article the energy landscape has begun to settle – we are finally seeing stabilisation and the start of wholesale prices falling for electricity and gas supply, with the government recently announcing a lower energy price cap that will benefit millions of households from April this year and hopefully mark only the beginning of a sustained rebalancing.

Alongside this, the drive to move away from dependency on fossil fuels continues.

The government recently set out its world-leading path to reaching zero emission vehicles by 2035, which will require 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans sold in Great Britain to be zero emission by 2030.

In October 2023, new laws were passed to make charging an electric vehicle in public easier and quicker with access to transparent, easy-to-compare pricing information, simpler payment methods and more reliable charge points. The government also continues to support the rollout of charging infrastructure in local areas. Applications are currently open to local authorities in the first round of the £381 million Local EV Infrastructure Fund, which intends to deliver tens of thousands more charge points and transform the availability of charging for drivers without off-street parking.



With the trajectory of change moving at pace, it is worthwhile to revisit the impacts for landlords and managing agents, where there will be greater expectation on making EV charging facilities part of the core facilities available to residents.

From June 2022, all new build homes with associated parking (including those undergoing major renovation) required installation of EV charging infrastructure during construction.

The move tied in with the government's goal to transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles, but the regulation did not apply to new developments, provided the work started on site before 16 June 2023. With a greater onus on transparency and data management introduced on the recent regulations, new electric car charging points must be pre-configured with smart behaviour and be able to measure, record and transmit usage, both in minutes and as units or energy. The law affects anyone charging an electric vehicle at home or work in England, Scotland and Wales.

With regard to leaseholders and leasehold developments or blocks, it remains likely that the majority of existing and older leases will not make provision for this relatively new technology and that each residential site will present individual logistical challenges that require bespoke solutions for both individuals and wider groups of residents.

The question of cost also remains salient – who pays for licences to alter, installation and maintenance, and manages the proportionate use of electricity.

Key points of consideration that are worth revisiting – and reiterating – include that if a parking space is included within the demise of the property it may be possible install a charging unit in that parking space subject to the appropriate consent being granted by the freeholder. However, parking spaces often form part of the freeholder's title or leases may restrict the construction of additional structures necessitating a licence for alteration before any charging unit can be built. In some situations, a lease may require variation to mitigate any potential breach of lease terms and to factor any new covenants or easements in relation to the installation.

An additional point to revisit and raise is whether leases contain an obligation on leaseholders to pay the building owner's fees in relation to any consents or licences, variations to the lease or the potential cost of works. If the installation of EV chargers either by individual leaseholders or freeholders as a communal facility breaches "absolute" covenants, then it is possible that any landlord granting a licence to alter could be subject to legal challenge.

Consideration should also be given to whether communal parking facilities would require engagement – it may be advisable to initiate a section 20 notice and consultation process to outline the intention to install, the cost (service charge) implications and to garner resident feedback.

A point we have raised previously is whether the works involved amount to an improvement. If they do, the lease will need careful perusal to ensure that improvements are recoverable via the service charge mechanism. If they are not, the costs attributable to the improvement stand as irrecoverable from lessees. In summary, landlords and managing agents should note that any necessary third-party permissions (such as from a freeholder or managing agent of a block of flats) must be obtained before an installation occurs. This will be needed for rented or leasehold properties where it's the renter or the leaseholder applying. Where an installation requires cabling or other parts of the installation to be placed in or on another person's property, or public land, access rights and permissions must be agreed by all parties using legally binding arrangements, such as legal covenants, before an installation begins.

In a wider context, with significant changes being proposed in the Leasehold & Freehold Reform Bill, and via ongoing introduction of building safety regulations, the case for EV charging needs to be carefully considered, costed and communicated to all parties – particularly given the need for permission, potential disruption and the proportion of costs to be distributed.

Should you wish to discuss this article further, please contact me:
n.blackwell@jbleitch.co.uk

For more from JB Leitch, click here.



JB Leitch are specialist solicitors for freehold investor and property management companies.
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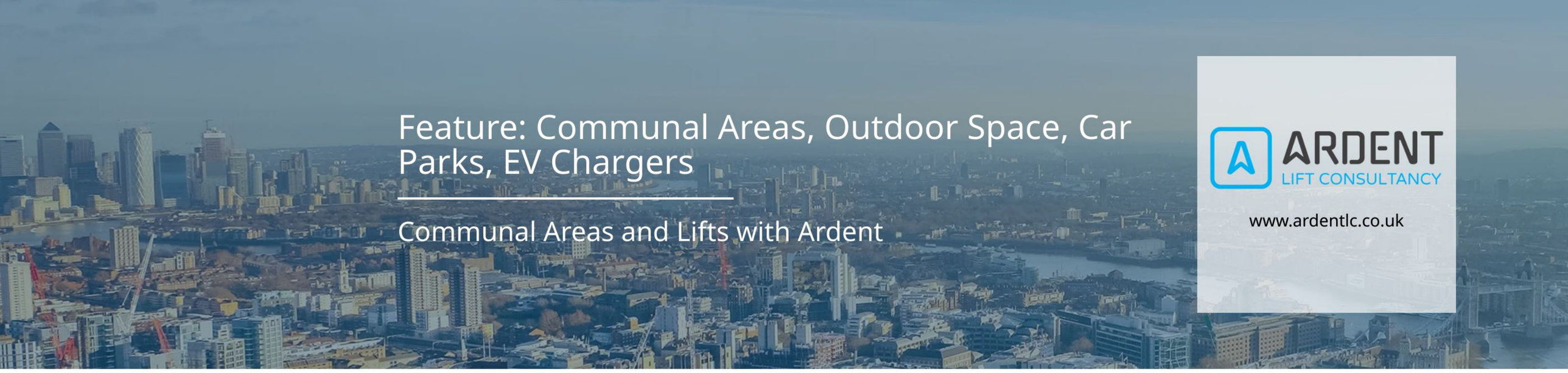

Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Communal Areas and Lifts with Ardent

ARDENT LIFT CONSULTANCY

www.ardentlc.co.uk

This month's Flat Living article looks at communal areas, whether this is within a residential building, or an office space, lifts often serve as crucial access points to the shared areas, allowing residents/workers to move easily between different levels where these shared spaces are located, therefore ensuring the efficient operation and maintenance of both lifts and communal areas is essential for the comfort, convenience, and safety of those occupying the building.

Maintenance of lifts is crucial to ensure their safe and efficient operation, below are our recommendations for ensuring that your lift service doesn't let you down.



- Regular Inspections: Scheduled inspections by qualified technicians are essential to identify any potential issues before they become serious problems.
- Routine Maintenance Checks: Lifts should undergo routine maintenance checks according to manufacturer recommendations. This includes lubrication of moving parts, checking electrical connections, and verifying the functionality of safety features.
- Cleaning and Lubrication: Regular cleaning of lift components and lubrication of moving parts helps prevent wear and tear, reducing the likelihood of breakdowns.
- Testing Safety Features: Periodic testing of safety features such as emergency brakes, door sensors, and overload detection systems ensures they are functioning properly.
- Upgrading: Lift technology evolves, and older lifts may need upgrades to meet current safety standards or improve energy efficiency. Upgrading can also enhance performance and extend the lifespan of the lift.
- Emergency Response Planning: Maintenance should include provisions for emergency response, such as ensuring emergency communication systems are operational and that technicians are available for prompt repairs in case of breakdowns.
- Compliance with Regulations: Lift maintenance should comply with local regulations and standards set by authorities to ensure the safety of passengers and adherence to legal requirements.
- Documentation: Keeping detailed records of maintenance activities, inspections, and repairs is essential for tracking the lift's performance and ensuring compliance with regulations.
- Monitoring Performance: Utilizing modern technology, such as remote monitoring systems, can help track the performance of lifts in real-time, allowing for proactive maintenance and early detection of issues.

All office blocks and residential buildings should already have a maintenance contract in place to make sure all of the above is covered, however, this is usually based on a fixed term/fixed fee basis, and it may be worthwhile 'shopping around' if the agreement is coming to an end, to ensure that you are receiving the best possible service and pricing. Ardent can help with this, we can undertake a site survey to ascertain the current condition of the lift, confirm if the maintenance levels have been appropriately carried out, and make suggestions should refurbishment/replacement be required.

All of the team at Ardent also like to chat, so we are very happy to run through any concerns you may have before committing to the cost of a site survey, so please give us a call or send us an email and we will do our best to help you.

ardentlc.co.uk

info@ardentlc.co.uk

07792 395 259

As independent lift consultants, ARDENT Lift Consultancy recognise the importance of offering unbiased and accurate advice to our clients. This has developed mutual respect between our team of lift consultants and those we work with. Whether working with architects looking to build practicality into their vision, or a property manager with time constraints seeking immediate solutions, we totally understand individual client requirements and provide timely, well considered and accurate advice.

ardentlc.co.uk | info@ardentlc.co.uk | 01394 200328

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Feature: Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness

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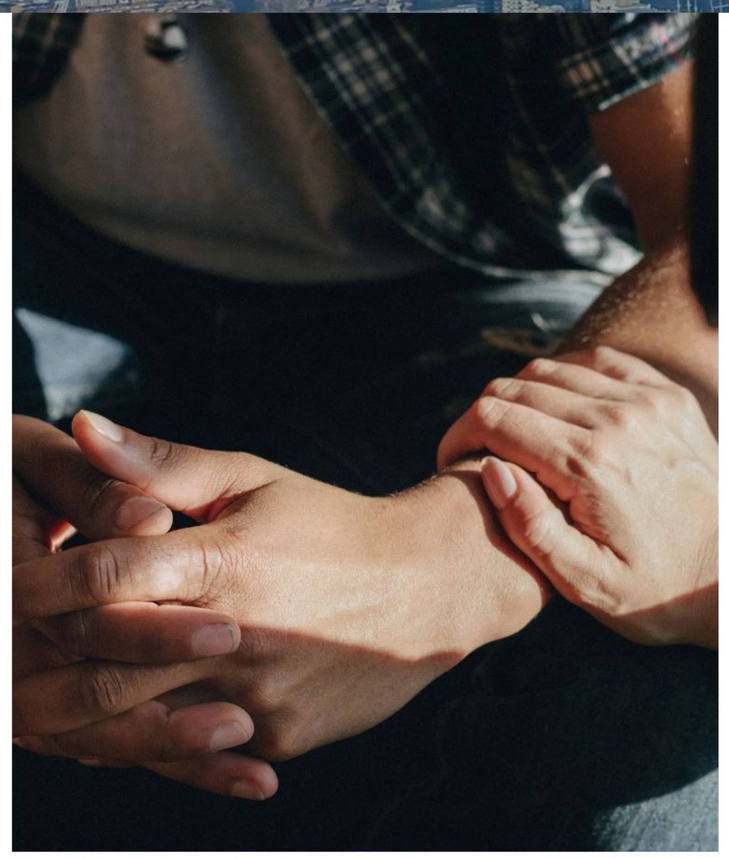

At Earl Kendrick Group, we understand the importance of setting the standard for workplace wellbeing, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to the Mental Health and happiness of our employees.

Coaching

In celebration of Mental Health Awareness week, we have partnered with a coaching provider to host a movement session aimed at stimulating and re-focusing the minds of employees.

The sessions are delivered alongside a themed music playlist to boost mood, energy and build coping mechanisms to reduce the risk of stress, helping to break away from the traditional desk-bound routine.

Unwind, destress and recharge

Through a series of dynamic and interactive activities, our employees will have the opportunity to unwind, destress, recharge and enjoy a rejuvenating break from the demands of the workday. These movement session promise to be both inclusive and engaging with a focus on inclusivity.

This Spring Earl Kendrick introduced a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) named Health Assured. This program provides colleagues with round-the-clock access to confidential support services by trained counsellors through a phone helpline, app, and online portal. Alongside advice on health and wellbeing, our employees can also seek guidance on financial and legal matters.

Employee Challenges

Recognising the unique challenges that some employees may face, Earl Kendrick has also taken steps to support individuals affected by the menopause. Understanding the potential impact on work performance, the company is committed to offering necessary adjustments to accommodate their needs.

Flexibility lies at the heart of Earl Kendrick’s approach to employee wellbeing. Embracing the benefits of remote working and family-friendly practices, the company promotes a healthy work-life balance. Furthermore, initiatives such as eyecare vouchers and a Cycle to Work scheme underscore the company’s commitment to holistic wellbeing.

Unlimited Leave policy

A standout feature of our ethos is our Unlimited Leave policy. This pioneering initiative empowers employees to take ownership of their time off, acknowledging the value of rest and relaxation in maintaining mental and emotional health.

Speaking on these initiatives, our Managing Director, Chris Stansell MRICS, MAPM, expressed enthusiasm about prioritising employee wellbeing. “At EK, our employees are our most valuable asset. By investing in their mental health and overall wellbeing, we not only enhance productivity but foster a culture where employees feel valued and supported”.

By implementing these innovative strategies, Earl Kendrick Group consistently raises the bar for workplace wellness, showcasing unwavering dedication to the mental wellbeing and satisfaction of our employees.

If you have any questions, contact Earl Kendrick:

Email us: enquiries@ekmcquade.com

Call us: +44 (0) 203 488 0516

We are a multi-disciplinary firm of chartered surveyors, providing national surveying services from our offices in London, Manchester, Brighton, Bristol, Birmingham and Cotswolds.

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Electric Charge Points in Residential Car Parks – Risks to Consider

www.4siteconsulting.co.uk

The increasing adoption of electric cars, driven by the demand for more environmentally friendly transportation options, has necessitated the expansion of charging infrastructure in both public and residential car parks. This surge in electric vehicle (EV) usage brings to the forefront the question of the risks associated with electric car charging points, particularly in the confined spaces of underground car parks in residential complexes.



Charging points for electric vehicles are an essential component of the modern urban landscape, facilitating the transition from traditional fossil fuels to cleaner energy sources. However, the integration of such technology is not without its challenges and potential hazards.

One significant concern is the risk of physical damage to the charging infrastructure. Accidents, such as vehicle collisions with charging stations or the inadvertent disconnection of cables, can render charging points inoperative. This not only inconveniences EV owners but can also lead to costly repairs and maintenance issues.

Moreover, the theft of charging cables and plugs presents a security risk. Given their value and utility, these components can attract criminal activity, necessitating enhanced security measures around charging stations to deter theft.

Another critical safety issue is the risk of electric shock. Charging cables and plugs handle high-voltage electricity, and any damage or misuse could expose users to serious injury. Regular inspections and maintenance are vital to ensure the safety of all users and to mitigate the risk of electric shock.

Additionally, the potential for fire hazards cannot be overlooked. The lithium-ion batteries used in electric vehicles are known for their volatility under certain conditions, such as damage or overheating. A fire involving an electric vehicle can be exacerbated by the charging infrastructure, posing a significant risk to property and personal safety. It is imperative that charging points are installed with careful consideration to location and equipped with adequate fire suppression systems to manage this risk effectively.

To address these concerns, it is essential for car park operators to adopt comprehensive risk management strategies. This includes routine inspection and maintenance of charging infrastructure, strategic installation to enhance safety, and the implementation of robust security measures.

In summary, while electric car charging points offer a vital service to support the growing number of EVs on our roads, they also introduce several risks that need careful management. By taking proactive steps to ensure the integrity and safety of the charging infrastructure, car park operators can create a secure environment for EV users.

For professional advice on managing health, safety, and fire risks within your properties, please reach out to 4site at 01376 572936 or via email at office@4siteconsulting.co.uk.

4site Consulting provide independent residential and commercial assessments and surveys for owners and managers of property.

A family run company at its core, 4site Consulting completes in excess of 9,000 property visits each year for property professionals across the UK. They employ all advisors directly, never sub-contracting, to control and maintain consistency and quality of reporting, providing the best service and keeping prices realistic and stable.

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B-hive Block Management Partners

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Are you an experienced property manager who dreams of taking control of your career path? Do you aspire to run your own estate and block management business, but feel daunted by the complexities of doing it alone? Look no further than B-hive Block Management Partners – your trusted ally in unlocking new levels of success and independence.

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At B-hive, we believe in empowering our partners to work freely and independently. With us by your side, you can enjoy the autonomy and flexible working arrangements you've always craved. Say goodbye to rigid schedules and hello to a work-life balance that suits your needs. Whether you prefer to work from home, set your own hours, or take control of your schedule, B-hive provides you with the flexibility to tailor your work life to your preferences.

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Managing a block management business comes with its fair share of complexities. At B-hive, we take care of the intricacies so that you can focus on what you do best – nurturing client relationships and seeking new opportunities. From compliance matters to administrative tasks, we've got you covered. Our team of experts is dedicated to ensuring that your business operates profitably and compliantly, providing you with peace of mind and allowing you to focus on growth and expansion.

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Partnering with B-hive means gaining access to a wealth of resources and support services designed to help you thrive. From complete client finance management to a bespoke client portal, we provide you with the tools and support you need to operate profitably and compliantly. Our comprehensive training program ensures that you have the knowledge and skills to succeed in the competitive world of block management. With industry experts by your side, you can confidently navigate the complexities of property management and position yourself for long-term success.

Why Choose B-hive Block Management Partners?

- **Empowerment:** We empower individuals like you to set up their own block management businesses, operating under their personal brand and in their own locality. With B-hive, you have the freedom to take charge of your career path and build a business that reflects your values and aspirations.
- **Trust and Credibility:** We are the trusted, credible, and capable partner behind the scenes, managing complexities on your behalf while you focus on growth. Our track record of success and commitment to excellence ensure that you can trust us to support you every step of the way.
- **Comprehensive Support:** From joint managing agents to white-labelled client portals, we provide the necessary tools and support to help you succeed. Our goal is to equip you with everything you need to operate efficiently, profitably, and compliantly, so that you can focus on what you do best – growing your business and serving your clients.

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Don't let the fear of complexity hold you back from achieving your dreams. Partner with B-hive Block Management Partners and embark on a journey of independence, growth, and success. Together, we'll redefine the future of block management – one partnership at a time. Join us today and take the first step towards a brighter tomorrow.

Contact us today to find out more:

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B-hive Block Management Partners is a specialist division that offers solutions for existing property professionals and is a trading name of HML PM Ltd. HML's extensive experience is derived from being specialists in the estate and block management sector for more than 50 years and managing circa 100,000+ units.

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Communal and Emergency Lighting Responsibilities

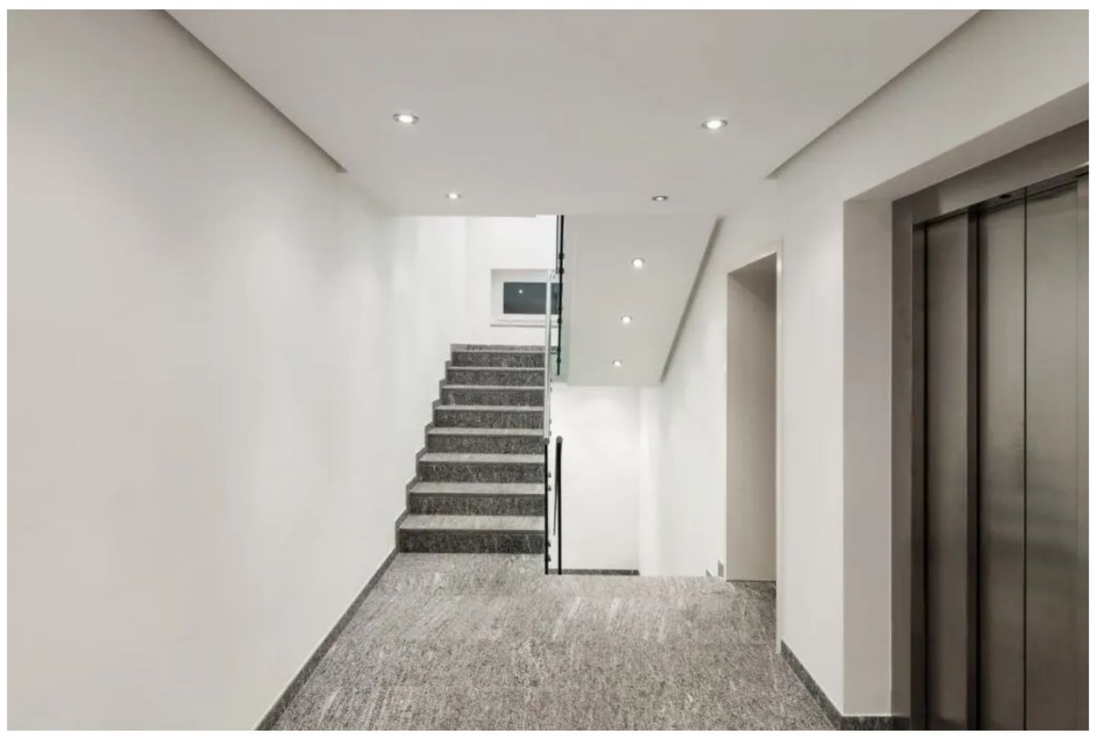
Residentsline Flats Insurance

www.residentsline.co.uk

Thoughtful lighting schemes make a huge difference to the lives of leaseholders, as well as the market value of residential blocks. Intelligent, responsive, and eco-centred systems can reduce bills and increase resident satisfaction while boosting security. Emergency lighting is imperative, saving lives year after year.

While nuances within varying leases may affect whether a landlord is legally required to provide lighting in certain areas, most would rather suitably light their properties to avoid conflict and injuries, as well as to ensure security. While not all will have the budget (or the inclination) to invest in modern technology, all but very few will do their best to ensure their building is well lit when and where needed.

Here we'll be discussing what landlords and property managers can do to meet their moral and legal responsibilities to leaseholders when it comes to communal and emergency lighting.



Communal Areas

For maximum security, safety, and a welcoming ambience, all areas of the property should be lit in one way or another. Sensor lights can be used, as well as those on timers, to reduce bills. LED lights are a great modern alternative to standard bulbs and strip lights; they are far more flexible in terms of creating a ambience as well as pulling much less power and lasting much longer. Externally, you should be including:

Externally, you should be including:

- Entrances
- Porches
- Pathways
- Car parks
- Bin stores
- Grounds
- Gateways
- Recreation areas

Internally, you should be including:

- Foyers
- Hallways
- Landings
- Stairwells
- Communal lounges
- Internal amenities

Accessibility

When choosing your lighting, accessibility should be kept in mind. Current residents and those to come may have diverse needs and/or disabilities which will need careful consideration to avoid complaints and for the sake of inclusion.

Illumination levels, the placement of lighting fixtures, and signage should be designed with accessibility in mind. Property managers should regularly assess the lighting needs of residents, adjusting as necessary to ensure that all areas are adequately lit.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting consists of battery-backed lighting schemes that power up when the usual power supply to the building is lost. These systems will kick in to ensure that emergency exit signs remain lit, along with other lighting that will guide occupants out of the building in an emergency.

Again, this applies to communal areas only, with particular attention being paid to escape routes. Purpose-built blocks of more than two storeys must have emergency lighting in place to guide residents through escape routes. Blocks of two storeys or less will need the same coverage if street lighting isn't enough to ensure safe escape. For obvious reasons, no matter the size of the block, its recommended that all blocks install emergency lighting.

The needs of your block will be heavily guided by the advice of a Fire Safety Assessor whose recommendations should be followed to the letter following each inspection. Regular drills and training sessions can help ensure that everyone is familiar with emergency procedures including how to navigate safely in low-light conditions.

Maintenance

Property managers are responsible for ensuring that emergency lighting systems are fully functional and prepared to activate in case of power failures or during emergencies. This includes regular testing to verify that it activates as intended during a simulated power outage as well as planned maintenance checks. Repairs and replacements should be attended to as soon as possible once the need is identified.

Effective communication is key in managing communal and emergency lighting systems. Property managers should keep residents informed about any planned maintenance or testing of emergency lighting systems. Clear communication channels should be established so that residents can promptly report any issues or concerns related to lighting.

Conclusion

Property managers shoulder considerable responsibilities in the course of their work, but health and safety should be a top priority. Effective communal lighting schemes and dependable emergency lighting play a huge role in keeping leaseholders safe. Compliance is obviously a top concern for most block managers, but beyond that there is a moral obligation to do what is necessary.

New systems should be well researched, installed by consummate professionals, tested regularly and kept in tip top condition. Energy and money-saving considerations will also be key if you're upgrading an archaic system.

By prioritising these responsibilities, property managers contribute significantly to the overall well-being and satisfaction of those living within the properties they manage.

Head to the Residentsline website for information on all of our products and services or, if you'd like to speak to one of our fantastic, specialist team, give us a call on 0800 281 235.

Residentsline's sole focus has always been insurance for blocks of flats. Today, 25 years on, Residentsline is still the best choice for flats insurance.
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Residentsline Flats Insurance

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

A Guide to Maintaining Outdoor Spaces in Blocks of Flats and Apartments

ManageYourBlock™

www.manageyourblock.co.uk

tel: 0333 577 9070

Living in a block of flats or apartments often means shared spaces and communal areas. One aspect that is commonly overlooked but plays a significant role in enhancing the overall living experience is the outdoor space. Whether it's a small courtyard, garden, or terrace, appropriate maintenance can transform these areas into wonderful spaces for residents.

In this guide, we aim to explore the importance of outdoor space, planning annual maintenance, and making the most of these communal areas.

The Importance of Outdoor Spaces

Outdoor spaces in blocks of flats and apartments offer residents a valuable extension of their homes. These areas provide a space for relaxation, socialising, and enjoying nature which all contribute to an improved quality of life.

Well-kept outdoor areas also contribute to the aesthetic of the property, leaving a positive initial impression on both residents and visitors alike.

Planning Annual Maintenance

Regular maintenance is crucial to keeping outdoor spaces in excellent condition. Here's a step-by-step guide to planning annual maintenance for your block's outdoor areas:

- **Assessment and Planning**

It's important to assess the current state of the outdoor space. By doing this, you can identify areas that require attention, such as damaged furniture, overgrown plants or uneven surfaces. When completing this step, it might be useful to collaborate with residents to gather input on their needs and preferences for the outdoor space.

- **Budgeting**

You should also create a comprehensive budget that includes expenses for regular maintenance, repairs and potential upgrades. Additionally, it is advisable to consider allocating funds for professional landscaping services that you might use throughout the year. This ensures a well maintained and appealing outdoor environment.

- **Scheduling**

It's a good idea to schedule routine tasks such as lawn mowing, pruning, and cleaning, as well as more extensive activities such as repainting or repairing structures. Additionally, maintenance jobs should be planned by taking into account weather conditions and different seasons. Winter maintenance will always be different to summer maintenance. For example, in colder months you might need to schedule car parks to be cleared of snow and fallen leaves.

On top of the never-ending list property management tasks, keeping track of maintenance plans for the whole year can be stressful. Manage Your Block not only helps you to keep your documents in one place, but you can also make note of upcoming maintenance tasks or major works with our calendar feature. In addition, you can send out notifications to residents to ensure that they are aware of any scheduled maintenance.

- **Professional Services**

Engaging with qualified professionals is often needed when Managing Your Block. You might need them for tasks such as tree removal, pest control, or structural repairs. Key contractors for your block can be recorded on the Manage Your Block portal (FREE for Residentsline customers).

We understand that finding reliable services to assist you with the general maintenance for your block can be difficult. Visit the Flat Living Directory to find block management services in your area or click here to read more from Block in a Box on how to find a contractor for your block.

Making the Most of Outside Space

Once the maintenance is underway, it's essential to maximise the potential of outdoor spaces for the benefit of all residents. Consider the following tips:

- **Community Engagement**

Foster a sense of community by encouraging residents to actively participate in communal activities. This might be through organising outdoor events, gardening clubs or by motivating the community to work together on maintenance projects to enhance outdoor space.

- **Furniture and Amenities**

If you have a lot of outdoor space, it might be nice to spruce it up with some outdoor furniture. But you might want to bear in mind to invest in pieces that can withstand various weather conditions. To encourage community engagement, you could always incorporate amenities such as barbecue areas, seating arrangements, and play spaces to cater to different resident preferences.

- **Greenery and Landscaping**

In addition to outdoor furniture and amenities, integrating a variety of plants and greenery into outdoor spaces can also create a vibrant and inviting area. However, if you do choose to buy a bunch of plants for your outdoor area, it is wise to make sure that maintenance of these additions can be supported by residents or alternative maintenance services.

- **Well-Lit Spaces**

Installing adequate lighting can increase the usage of outdoor spaces whilst also making the space feel safer which is vital to creating an inviting environment for all residents.

While on the topic of well-lit spaces, it might be useful to consider energy-efficient lighting options to support financial costs throughout the year. Read more on your obligations to provide communal lighting with JB Leitch here.

Conclusion

Maintaining outdoor spaces in blocks of flats and apartments is a collective responsibility that contributes to the overall well-being of residents. By planning annual maintenance, engaging the community, and making strategic enhancements, these shared areas can become vibrant hubs of social activity and relaxation, adding significant value to the living experience. Regular attention to outdoor spaces ensures that residents can truly make the most of the environment they call home.

As you can see, Manage Your Block has been expertly designed for Resident Management Companies, Directors and Owners of apartment blocks. The cloud-based, easy to use software provides accessibility 24/7 and ensures your documentation and information is safe and secure- allowing you to focus your energy where it's needed.

For more from Manage Your Block, click here.

Manage your Block has been created to assist Residents' Management Companies, Right to Manage Companies and Residents Associations to self-manage their block.

It's a secure, easy-to-use portal that offers access to your block's details at the touch of a button. Designed to make your life easier, it saves you time and offers a fast and efficient interface to connect you, your residents, and your block.

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Who is Manage Your Block For?

Manage Your Block is a nifty online portal specifically designed for anybody managing a block of flats, including:

- Residents' Management Companies
- Right to Manage Companies
- Residents Associations

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OUR FEATURES

Diary

Set diary reminders to ensure you don't forget anything.

Documents

Securely hold all your block's documents in one place. Examples of what you may want to store include: copy leases, financial records, fire evacuation procedures, along with other day-to-day procedural documents.

Notes

Make sure you have an audit trail by adding notes for anything important.

Quotes

Request quotes from your preferred contractors or use one of our recommended specialists. You can also issue work orders to accept quotes.

Save

Our trustworthy online space lets you keep your most important documents safe, and you will have access day and night, wherever you are.

Contractors

Keep a list of your key contractors, for example, plumbers, decorators, gardeners, window cleaners in one place.

Contacts

All the owners and residents in your block can be added to your contact list, so you can keep track and update it. You'll always have all of this contact info at your fingertips.

Calendar

Record key dates and reminders, for example insurance renewal date, health & safety risk assessment due date, date to send out service charges.

Alerts

Broken down lift? Power shortage? Local crime issues? Provide instant alerts out to all residents with one simple alert.



Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Optimising Car Parks for Convenience and Safety in Residential Buildings

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Residential block car parks can be either a selling point, a drawback, or an outright safety concern for prospective leaseholders. They can either add convenience and comfort or be the root of neighbourly disputes- even injuries and thefts.

Block designs should be based in logistics, with architects and planners working towards and aesthetically pleasing but functional outcomes. Block managers can do little to alter the design of their sites, but there are options for improving less than ideal layouts and systems.

Here we'll be discussing what should go into the planning of a block car park, as well as what managers can do to optimise the car parks they and their residents are working with.



Why Are Car Parks an Issue?

Urban living often means building up, rather than sprawling out. This means that hundreds of residents can live in a building with a relatively small footprint. This also means that parking spaces can be hard to come by.

In September 2023, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) estimated that "there are around 4.98 million leasehold homes in England, of which 70% are flats". If those figures are to be believed, it means we have around 3,486,000 people living in leasehold flats in England alone.

Some of those flats may be converted houses, some will be huge high-rise blocks, but with a record number of car owners in the UK (33,488,200 as of June 2023), the issue is plain to see. We have millions of people living in flats, the majority of whom will be car owners, and yet car parks often don't provide the spaces needed to accommodate the numbers.

Where there are ample spaces, car parks can still be dangerous, frustrating and inconvenient for residents. Well-planned, secure car parks play a pivotal role in enhancing resident safety, and overall satisfaction.

The Importance of Well-Planned Car Parks

Obviously a well thought through car park design, executed brilliantly during the block build, is the ideal. As an essential component for resident satisfaction during their time at the address, the overall design should be carefully considered.

A great design comes down to effective organisation, intelligent use of space, and modern solutions such as electric vehicle charge points, space monitoring sensors, entry systems, and suitable lighting.

An intelligently planned car park ensures that residents can easily access and use their designated parking spaces without the hassles of navigating through congested or poorly laid out parking areas. This reduces time spent circling the building in search of an available space and therefore reduces emissions and frustration.

Adequate parking spaces, well-marked lanes, and clear signage all contribute to a seamless parking experience. To go the extra mile, modern technologies such as sensors and apps that enable residents to check the availability of parking spaces in real-time can be an added convenience.

Safety Considerations

Safety is paramount in any residential building, and car parks are no exception. Poorly lit, cramped, or disorganised parking areas can create the perfect environment for accidents.

Well-lit pathways, clearly marked pedestrian zones, and strategically placed security cameras contribute to a safer parking environment for both vehicles and residents. Well-planned car parks reduce the likelihood of traffic jams, which not only prevents accidents but also ensures that emergency vehicles can navigate the area quickly and efficiently when needed.

Addressing Overcrowding Issues

Overcrowded parking spaces are a common issue for residential buildings, leading to frustration and inconvenience for residents. Optimising car parks involves not only ensuring an adequate number of parking spaces but also implementing strategies to prevent overcrowding.

This may include introducing a system of permits, assigning specific parking spaces to residents, and regulating visitor parking. Implementing a fair and transparent allocation system for parking spaces can help alleviate tensions between residents and help to avoid any major disputes.

Clear communication about the parking rules (and consequences for violations) is essential in fostering a sense of community responsibility and cooperation.

Security Concerns

Security is a top priority for residents, and a well organised car park can contribute significantly to the overall security of the premises.

Installing surveillance cameras, access control systems and proper lighting in parking areas can deter criminal activities such as theft or vandalism. Additionally, restricted access to the parking facility through secure entry points ensures that only authorised individuals can enter the premises, enhancing the overall security of the building.

Conclusion

Optimising car parks for convenience and safety in residential buildings is a multifaceted task that involves careful planning, technology integration, and community engagement.

A well-designed parking system not only enhances convenience but also plays a pivotal role in ensuring resident safety and satisfaction. By addressing common issues such as overcrowding and security concerns, block managers can create a positive experience and boost the value of the properties they oversee.

For more from London Flats Insurance, click here.

To visit London Flats Insurances website, click here.

At London Flats Insurance, we only provide policies for blocks of flats and apartments, which means that we are specialists in this field. We know that each block of flats is different, which is why every flats insurance policy we offer is tailor-made to suit you, your block and its residents. Plus, we always work with A-rated insurance companies, so you can be sure that our insurance policies are a great solution when insuring your block of flats.

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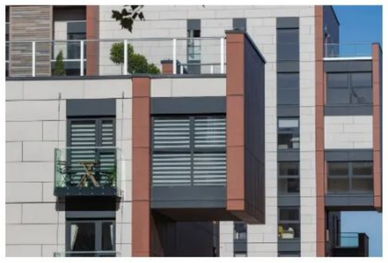

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Directors and Officers Insurance

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Terrorism Insurance

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Registered in England & Wales CRN: 11784970.
Registered Office: 29 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, England, WV1 4DJ

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Creating Harmonious Spaces in High-Density Living Environments

FlatLiving Insurance

www.flatlivinginsurance.co.uk

For leaseholders, block living can feel like close quarters. Sharing communal areas within the building, grounds, and parking areas, as well as any other shared amenities can be challenging. Small disagreements over etiquette and lease compliance can very quickly grow into full blown disputes.

For building managers, the time and energy that goes into handling issues between residents could be better spent elsewhere. Creating as harmonious a living environment as possible can help to avoid any conflict. Great decisions made by property managers ensure that all residents can enjoy the amenities they pay for and smooth the way for a sense of community within the block.

Here we'll be discussing what property managers can do to improve communal areas and outdoor spaces to promote a harmonious living experience for their residents.

The Challenges of High Density Living

It's important for block managers to be able to see things from the perspective of their leaseholders. Viewing the block through their eyes will build empathy and allow you to see where improvements could be made.



High on the list of challenges is the lack of personal space. Leaseholders are often residing in small flats- obviously this is not within a property manager's control, but it's important to recognise this as a factor in leaseholder behaviour. Much of their time at home may well feel less than spacious, leading to a sense of frustration if communal areas don't feel suitable and accessible.

Next is the likelihood of noise and privacy issues. Flat living often means accepting that you will hear your neighbours. For some, this may be the odd door slam or short spells of irritating music. For others, the interruptions can be constant and detrimental to quality of life. It can also be difficult to maintain a sense of privacy if you know that conversations can be heard through thin adjoining walls...

Add to the above any tensions over the use of parking areas and you can expect some serious issues to erupt between neighbours. Limited spaces are common for urban areas, and if rules are being flouted by the few, the many will soon let you know about it.

What Can Property Managers Do with Indoor Spaces?

So, now we've painted a worst-case picture of what it can feel like to live in a leasehold flat, let's go over some simple suggestions for improvement. The communal areas in your block should be seen as an opportunity to redress the balance.

Functional and aesthetically pleasing spaces are a must. Both attributes need to be kept in mind when designing or maintaining a space- whether that be a shared seating area, a garden, a gym or a car park. Leaseholders won't feel comfortable using any amenities that don't fulfil that brief.

If you can improve your spaces to be welcoming and to have a clear purpose, leaseholders will begin to use them, alleviating any sense of isolation or claustrophobia. Once people are utilising common areas, an inevitable sense of community will follow as conversations start and common ground is found.

If you're lucky enough to have larger communal lounges or community areas, use them. Creating regular events and gatherings for residents is a great way to foster a sense of community and turn neighbours into friends that will look out for and be more understanding towards each other.

If you have limited space, consider using what you have for multiple functions. Ensure that the furnishings work for various setups and create a rota for use of the space by different groups for events or activities. This means that multiple demographics can use the space, and all will feel welcome.

What Can Property Managers Do with Outdoor Spaces?

Most blocks will have a car park to manage. Simple changes can make a huge difference in this area that's rife with tension. Signage should be clear as day, policies (and the consequences for not following rules) should be clearly communicated to all residents, and modern technology should be used wherever possible:

- Intelligent lighting schemes can keep any security risks to a minimum alongside fully functioning CCTV.
- Modern solutions such as parking sensors can inform residents of free spaces or if the car park is full, saving them the frustration of circling car park themselves.
- Electric vehicle charge points allow residents the opportunity to do their bit for the planet without sacrificing convenience.
- A simple space allocation system along with visitor monitoring can save everyone the headache of arguing over spaces.

If you have grounds or gardens, encourage their use all year round. You can install a BBQ, create seating areas, or provide a children's playground. If you don't have much outside space, consider your options for bringing greenery indoors in the form of pot plants or 'green walls'. You could even create a roof-top garden, creating a brand-new communal area for residents to enjoy.

Eco-minded residents would love to see their property managers embracing sustainable practices in outdoor spaces. Community gardens, rainwater harvesting, and energy-efficient lighting not only reduce environmental impact, but also foster a sense of responsibility and community among residents.

Maintaining Harmony Via Regular Maintenance

All of the effort put into creating great communal spaces will go to waste if they're not properly maintained. No one wants to use a dirty gym with broken equipment, or unkempt garden in need of some TLC.

A regular cleaning schedule should be maintained, and regular inspections of each space should be a priority. Any maintenance needs reported by residents should be acted on as soon as possible, and any plans for large-scale overhauls should be clearly communicated.

If spaces are maintained beautifully, it's likely that leaseholders will take pride in the building and do their part in keeping things clean and tidy. Resident satisfaction is also likely to be improved, along with the market value of the property.

Conclusion

Creating harmonious spaces in high-density living environments requires a thoughtful approach to design, maintenance, and community engagement. Communal areas, outdoor spaces, and parking facilities come together in shaping residents' experiences.

By addressing challenges and seizing opportunities for development, property managers and residents can enjoy vibrant and sustainable high-density communities.

Flat Living Insurance arranges insurance for self-managed customers only, call us on 0333 577 2044 to get a quote for your block today.

Flat Living Insurance only provides insurance for blocks of flats and apartments. Our flats insurance policies are designed to concentrate on understanding what protection your block of flats needs and delivering it.

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Feature: Communal Areas, Outdoor Space, Car Parks, EV Chargers

Future Proofing Blocks of Flats with Electric Vehicle Chargers

www.blockinabox.co.uk

We're on the road to net zero, and residential block managers will play an important role in reaching that goal. Residents are becoming more and more eco-minded, and property value can be swayed by eco-friendly choices.

Here we'll be focussing on electric vehicle charging and the various benefits of installing charge points at residential blocks; boosting market value, creating a sense of block community, and doing what you can to enable leaseholders to opt for eco-friendly choices.



Making charge points as accessible as possible may be a huge tick in a box that leads to many more making the choice to go electric. You could have a personal effect on the number of petrol and diesel vehicles on the road.

Increasing Property Value

For those less focussed on sustainability, this point is probably very high on the list of reasons to invest. Landlords will be keeping their eye on their property's value, and adding charge points can prove to be a huge boost.

The Property Buying Company's research into individual homes suggests that adding a charge point to the average family house can increase value by around 30%. For landlords looking to maintain or increase their market value, charge points can only send figures in the right direction.

Meeting Growing Demand

As a property manager, you may already be hearing from residents who are keen to charge their vehicles at home, or who want to buy an electric vehicle but want to be sure that plans for charge points are in the pipeline before taking the plunge.

It's part of your role to identify and meet the needs of your residents, and you're likely to find that charge points become an increasingly common request. It makes sense to get ahead of the game and boost resident satisfaction.

Net Zero

The UK Government laid out their roadmap to Net Zero in November 2022 as part of the Net Zero Government Initiative, led by the United States of America. The roadmap details the Government's plans for bringing government emissions to net zero by the year 2050.

Part of that plan includes tackling the issue of vehicle emissions. Current aims are to ensure that 80% of new cars (and 70% of new vans) sold in Great Britain must be zero-emission vehicles by 2030. That target increases to 100% for both cars and vans by 2035.

For the plan to work, easy access to charge points is essential. The Government is running a grant scheme to help with the cost of installations by landlords until the end of March 2025. You can read about that here, but for today, we'll be focussing on why installing charge points at your site is essential for future-proofing your block.

Environmental sustainability

The first point is an obvious one. We may not all be signing up to Greenpeace, but it would be a hard-headed individual who didn't understand the difficulties the planet and future generations are facing.

Installing charge points in your carpark is just one way that you can help towards improving sustainability, while also affording your residents the same opportunity. Many may be on the fence about opting for an electric vehicle, and convenience may be a huge factor in that decision.

Attracting and Retaining Residents – Staying Competitive

Staying competitive within your area is an essential element of great property management. Electric vehicle-owning residents will have more choices as blocks add charge points to their listed amenities. It will only become more common- so don't be left behind. Your block will be compared against other options by any buyers in the area. Not having charge points may mean you drop off the shortlist for many.

Community Engagement

Fostering a sense of 'family' within a block is one of the best ways to avoid issues; between neighbours, between resident and landlord, and between resident and property manager.

Installing charge points will give a sense of community from an eco-awareness perspective. Like-minded residents will share in their sense of living more sustainably, and the block may attract more leaseholders of the same ilk.

Corporate Social Responsibility

If you're a block manager working for a management company, you're likely to have corporate social responsibility goals in mind. Installing charge points shows a commitment to your responsibilities and can contribute towards a positive public image.

Eco-centric companies are favoured by the majority, according to RecyclingLives.com: *"An independent study commissioned by SmartestEnergy reveals that consumers are increasingly favouring brands with a commitment to environmental sustainability. The study revealed that 4 out of 5 people describe themselves as likely to choose a brand with a positive approach to environmental sustainability."*

In summary, installing EV chargers at your block is a strategic move that not only addresses the immediate needs of residents, but also positions the property for long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

At Block in a Box, we have partnered with EV Specialists, EV Connected by Future Group for all of your EV Charger needs. Visit our website to request a quote or more information today! Or call our team on 0333 0154 145 or email info@blockinabox.co.uk and we will be in touch.

Block in a Box has been created to assist self-managed Residents' Management Companies, Right to Manage Companies and Residents' Associations, their blocks of flats and the leaseholders that live in them by providing a mix-and-match toolbox supplying all the services you need.

We designed it with a steering committee of directors and association members to provide something that would truly help.

Blockinabox.co.uk | info@blockinabox.co.uk | 0333 015 4145

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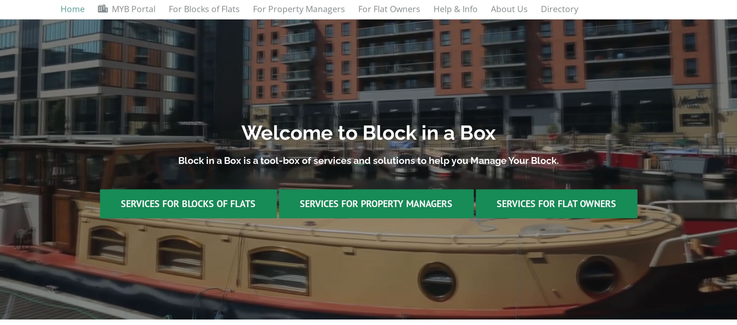

Welcome to Block in a Box

Block in a Box is a tool-box of services and solutions to help you Manage Your Block.

SERVICES FOR BLOCKS OF FLATS | SERVICES FOR PROPERTY MANAGERS | SERVICES FOR FLAT OWNERS

View Our Services and Products



3D Surveys



Aerial Surveys



Accounting Solutions



Alternative Accommodation



Asbestos Survey and Management



Broadband Services



Cladding Consultancy



Commercial Property Surveying



Contractor Accreditation



Cyber Security Training



Decarbonisation



Directors and Officers Liability



Drone Surveys



Electric Charging Points



Emergency Assistance



Enfranchisement



EV Connected



EWS1 Forms



Fire Door Inspection



Fire Risk Assessments

Flat Living



Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls



Fire Safety Information Posters

FPRA

Health and Safety



Health and Safety Awareness Training



Health and Safety Risk Assessments



Higher-Risk Building Registration



Historic Building Repair



Housing Associations



Insurance Solutions



Insurance Works Surveying



Landlord Home Emergency



Lease Extensions



Lease Variation



Legal Solutions



Legionella Risk Management



License to Alter



Lift Wrapping



Neighbourly Advice: Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing



Out of Hours Helpline



Party Walls

Planned Maintenance Program

Pre-Purchase Building Surveys

Quantity Surveying

Reinstatement Cost Assessments

Representative for Cladding Remediation Funding

Retrofit and Green Upgrades

Right to Manage

Rights of Light

RMC Director Training

Rooftop Extensions

Rope Access Surveys

Section 20 Major Works

Service Charge Arrears

Service Charge Collections

SmartLink45 Prepay Meter

Utilities

Water Leak Prevention Systems

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Directors and Officers Liability Insurance

Katrina Jones from Residentsline, investigates the importance of Directors' and Officers' Liability Insurance for your Residents' Management Company and outlines possible claim examples.

The Importance of Directors and Officers Liability Insurance

As a member of a Residents' Management Company, you bear a multitude of responsibilities aimed at ensuring the seamless operation of your block of flats.

These responsibilities encompass finance and accounting, service charges, insurance needs, maintenance, inspections, and overseeing major works and reparations. Managing such a comprehensive list demands meticulous planning and experience, making it susceptible to occasional errors.



It is crucial to acknowledge that, although mistakes are an inherent part of any management role, errors leading to incidents such as damage or personal injury can result in legal actions being taken against the Residents' Management Company. This liability falls on the directors and officers of the Residents' Management Company, who are held accountable for decisions made in their official capacity.

This may seem unfair. After all, being a director or an officer of a Residents' Management Company is a voluntary role which requires a lot of time and effort on behalf of the residents in the block. As such, it can be difficult to understand how directors and officers can be penalised so heavily. Regardless, the fact remains that directors and officers require suitable protection in case of legal action being taken against them. Nevertheless, the reality is that directors and officers necessitate adequate protection in the event of legal actions.

Claim Examples

- Tenants of a block of flats brought legal action against the Residents' Management Company for failing to appoint a building company in a timely fashion. The external brickwork of the building needed reparation, as damage had been caused following a heavy rainstorm. This had been reported to the committee, however, repair work had not been commenced several months later when a subsequent rainstorm caused further damage.
- A Residents' Management Company faced an allegation of wrongful termination after it fired an employee for gross misconduct.
- A Residents' Management Company Director faced being sued as a result of a property being devalued following their decision to paint the exterior of the building an unusual colour.
- At a party in one of the flats, an over-crowded balcony collapsed, seriously injuring several people. A claim against the Insurance Company is incepted with a potential cost of £7.25 million, however the RMC only has £5 million Property Owners Liability cover in place. The individual flat owners are distressed as this amount is well below the potential cost of the claim. The flat owners believe that the RMC was wrong to reduce the cover and they bring legal action against the responsible director to make up the shortfall.
- An officer pays a contractor to fix their roof with RMC funds before the works have started. Subsequently, the contractor absconds with the money, never to be seen again. There is an exposure to potential legal action being brought by the individual flat owners following the loss of RMC funds due to a mistake made by an RMC member.



Directors' and Officers' Liability Insurance

Directors and Officers Liability Insurance coverage extends protection to members of Residents' Management Companies, shielding them from legal liabilities. Underwritten by AVIVA Insurance, our policy protects directors and officers against the cost of potential claims for alleged wrongful acts.

These may include:

- Breach of trust
- Breach of duty
- Neglect/error/omission
- Misstatement
- Libel and slander
- Breach of warranty of authority
- Wrongful trading

Residentsline's Directors and Officers Liability Insurance provides a comprehensive solution to protect your directors.

Protect Your Directors with Residentsline and use our easy-to-use portal to get a quote and be covered today! Click here to get a quote.

At Residentsline, our flats insurance policies are tailored to your needs; created for all sizes and types of blocks of flats and apartments. Our insurance cover also includes the option to include directors and officer's liability insurance, terrorism insurance, lift cover or legal expenses protection as part of your policy or as a separate policy if desired.

residentsline.co.uk | info@residentsline.co.uk | 0800 281 235

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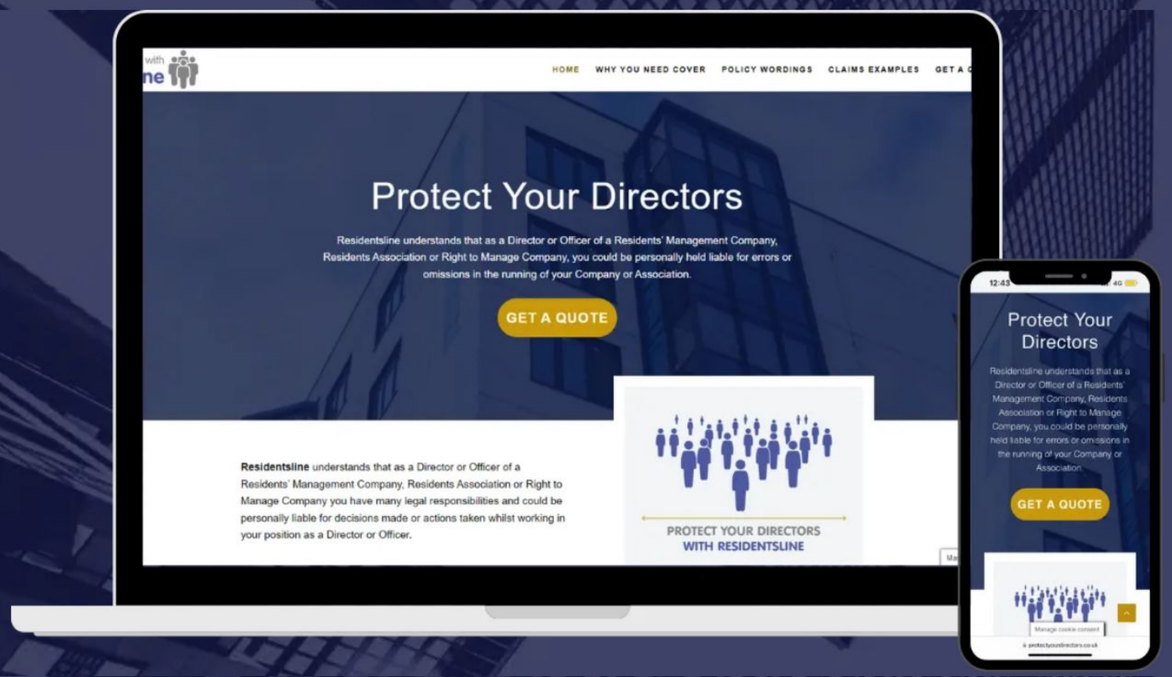
One mistake or misjudgement could end up being expensive. Get a quote for Directors & Officers Liability Insurance with us today, a specialist insurance broker you can trust.



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"Stella was great throughout the whole process. She was very easy to speak to, always answered my calls and emails promptly. Excellent service!"

- Melissa Bagot

"With Alice's help and using the information she gave me I have secured a role with an amazing company and I couldn't be more grateful. If you're looking for someone with a wealth of knowledge and a real passion for what they do I couldn't recommend Alice enough"

- Max Braun

www.blockrecruit.co.uk

Featured Job Vacancies

Are you looking for a new role, maybe a step up the career ladder? Take a look at a range vacancies in the block management sector from Block Recruit.

BLOCK RECRUIT

Assistant Block Manager

Location: Hertfordshire

Salary: £30,000

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Property Manager

Location: South West London

Salary: £40,000 - £50,000

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Block Manager

Location: West Sussex

Salary: £30,000 - £37,000 + £3,000 car allowance (£40K Max)

Tell me more

Property Manager

Location: Berkshire

Salary: £20,000 - £40,000

Tell me more

Business Development Manager

Location: Merseyside

Salary: £27,000 - £30,000

Tell me more

Development Manager On-Site

Location: Central London

Salary: £40,000 - £45,000

Tell me more

Property Administrator

Location: Hampshire

Salary: £20,000 - £23,000

Tell me more

Service Charge Accountant

Location: South West London

Salary: £35,000 - £45,000

Tell me more

Block Recruit

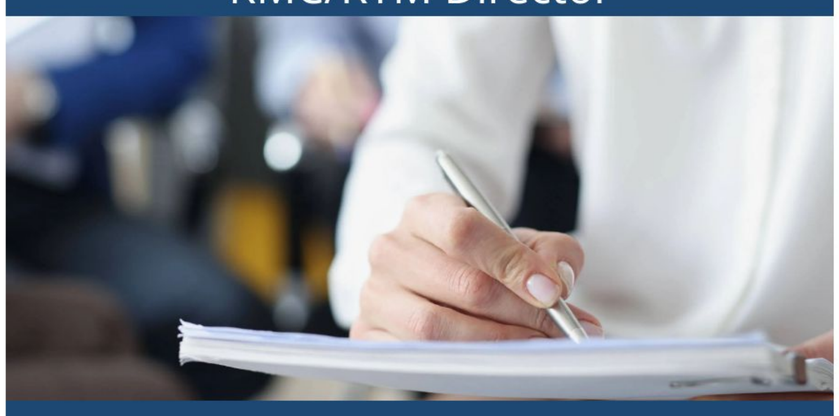
Block Recruit specialise in providing property professionals to all areas of the block management industry in the UK.

Visit the Block Recruit website to find out about other vacancies they have and how they can support you in finding the perfect new role.

BLOCK RECRUIT

Upcoming ARMA Training Courses

TC114: Introduction to Being an RMC/RTM Director



Dates: 18th - 19th March 2024 1pm to 4pm

Duration: 3 hours a day over 2 days

If you are a Director of a Residents' Management Company (RMC) or Right to Manage Company (RTM), or thinking of becoming a Director, this course is for you.

Who should attend? The course is recommended for all Directors of a Residents' Management Company or a Right To Manage Company, and for anyone considering taking up such a role.

Aim: The aim of this course is to help you understand the different elements involved in being a Director and develop how you carry out the role.

Book your place

TC1: Introduction to Residential Property Management



Dates: 10th to 11th April 2024

Duration: 3 hours a day over 2 days

A 6-hour course being run over 2 days (3-hours per day) by one of ARMA's industry experts, this course is perfect for those new to residential leasehold property management. It will provide an overview of the controls and processes required to effectively manage a leasehold block.

Who should attend?

This introductory course is ideal for those new to the sector with less than six month's experience in residential property management and those moving from letting to residential leasehold management.

Book your place

W14 – Deeds of Variations: A Practical Guide for Property Managers



Dates: 13th June 2024

Duration: 1 hour with time after for Q&A

Are you a property manager facing an increased number of requests for deeds of variation?

In this session, we'll explore the reasons behind the requests, together a discussion around the common types of requests for variation sought by both leaseholders and owners of freehold properties, including the increased demand for mortgage protection clauses.

We'll consider steps involved in varying leases (and transfers), and an overview of the process involved from the point of view of managing agents.

We'll also consider the frequent requests made to cancel, add and/or amend restrictions.

Book your place

TC11: Residential Service Charge Accountants Guidance



Dates: 17th to 18th June 2024 10am

Duration: 3 hours a day over 2 days

A 6-hour interactive discussion forum addressing best practice for service charge accounting.

Who should attend:

- Accounts staff who need to understand the requirements of lease and law in the production of accounts
- Property managers whose input is required during the service charge year from their clients
- It may also be suitable for senior managers who are responsible for the corporate strategy within their accounts department

Book your place

TC55: Introduction to General Health and Safety for Property Managers



Dates: 26th to 27th March 2024

Duration: 3 hours a day over 2 days

This course is designed to introduce new entrants to the sector to the minimum Health & Safety knowledge essential to their career path. This course is not intending to turn beginners or new on-site staff into Fire Safety Risk Assessors, CDM experts, etc. merely to furnish them with the awareness to perform the day job safely and give comfort to their employers.

Book your place

TC66: Introduction to Fire Safety for Property Managers



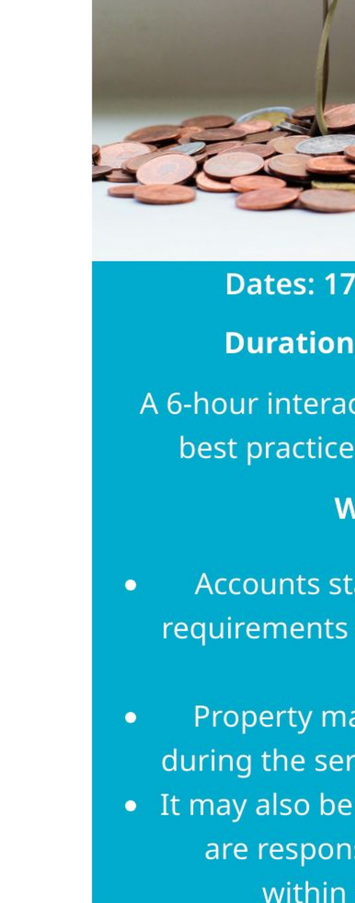
Dates: 14th to 15th March 2024

Duration: 3 hours a day over 2 days

This course is provided for block managers looking to learn the basics of fire safety for residential buildings.

At the end of this course, you will understand who is responsible for what and why in terms of fire safety and will have a basic knowledge of the changes happening in this all-important area of block management.

Book your place



ARMA Training Costs

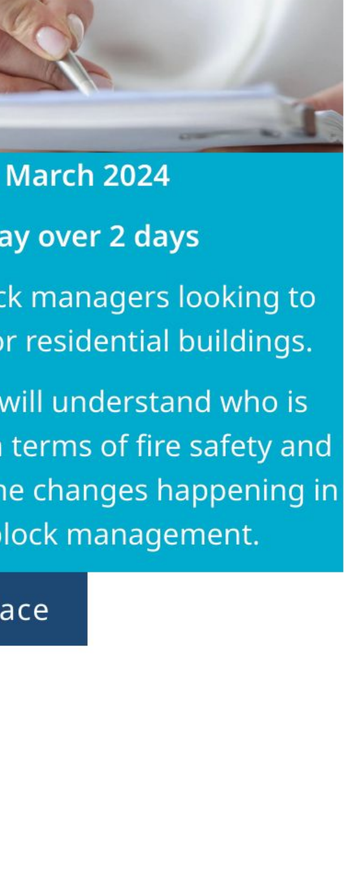
ARMA's upcoming training covers a range of topics to help keep staff prepared for the modern world of property management. Courses and webinars will focus on fire safety for property managers, accounting, insurance and more.

Online Training Course Costs

(Please note: IRPM members are eligible to receive our discounted member rate)

Full-day Course
Members: £100 + VAT
Non-Members: £175 + VAT

Half-day Course
Members: £60 + VAT
Non-Members: £100 + VAT



To view ARMA's full list of training courses, **click here**.

Get in touch

Website: www.arma.org.uk

Phone: 0207 978 2607

Twitter: @ARMAleasehold

Upcoming Events

The Property Institute Annual Seminar 2024



Dates: Thursday 16 May 2024

Venue: Queen Elizabeth II Centre

The Property Institute Annual Seminar promises to deliver important industry updates directly to members whilst also serving up unbeatable networking opportunities with peers and top industry suppliers.

Early Bird Tickets on sale from 8 December until 14 February 2024

Book your place

Oxford Weekender 2024



Friday 22nd March to Sunday 24th March.

The conference will feature a variety of keynote and break-out sessions, specifically designed to inform, equip, and support property management professionals. These sessions will cover all the areas that currently impact our sector and help delegates expand their skills and knowledge.

Over the weekend, delegates will have the chance to hear from industry-leading speakers who will deliver more than 40 keynote addresses, workshops, and updates.

Book your place

ACE Awards 2024



Date: Friday 21st June

Venue: Old Billingsgate, London EC3

ACE Awards 2024 will be heading back to the Roaring '20s with a Great Gatsby theme. Get creative and start planning your frocks & tuxedos for an evening of glitz and glamour!

The 2024 ACE Awards will recognise excellence and exceptional achievements by UK managing agents, their suppliers and the work of their people in improving the lives of millions of leaseholders. For 2024, attendees can look forward to new categories and a unique London venue on the bank of the Thames.

Stay tuned for the list of 2024 categories. And in the meantime, save the date!

View the 2023 finalists & winners by clicking the button below:

ACE awards 2023 winners

ARMA SAVE THE DATES - 2024



The Date for ARMA's Annual Conference will be Released soon!

- **Annual Seminar -** Thursday 16th May 2024
- **The Property Institute Regional -** Southampton - 5th September
- **The Property Institute Regional** - Newcastle - 12th September
- **The Property Institute Regional -** Birmingham - 7th November
- **The Property Institute Regional -** Manchester - 12th November
- **The Property Institute Regional -** Bristol - 26th November
- **The Property Institute Regional -** London - 5th December



Setting Standards in Residential Property Management

The Institute of Residential Property Management (IRPM) is the professional body for residential property management specialists and provides nationally accredited qualifications, guidance on career pathways and resources, to assist property managers within their roles. IRPM is dedicated to supporting, building, and setting the standards of the profession.

IRPM Key Objectives



Setting & Raising Standards across the residential property management sector



To be the **trusted** source of **expertise**, **knowledge**, & **qualifications**



Providing individuals with an independent **professional accreditation**



Provide **knowledge**, **leadership**, and **proficiency** in the property management sector

Join the IRPM



Directories

Find Managing Agents, Suppliers and ALEP Professionals who know and understand leasehold property.



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02
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FIND SERVICES FOR YOUR BLOCK OF FLATS

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Asbestos Surveying and Management, Fire Risk Assessments and many more

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For information on the advantages of appointing an ARMA member contact:

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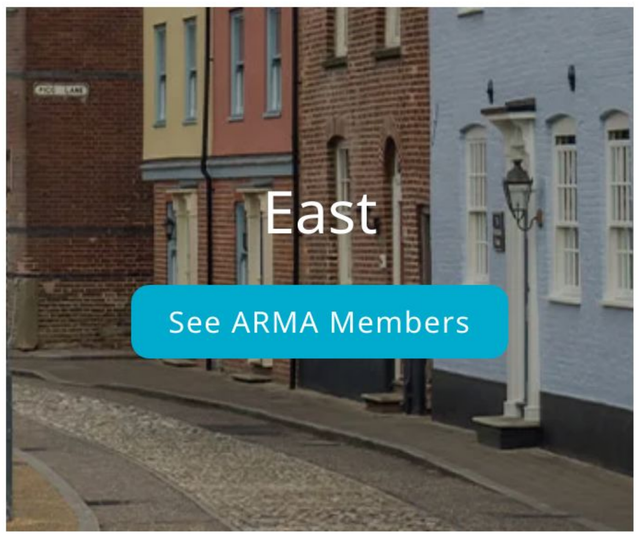
Find an ARMA Member

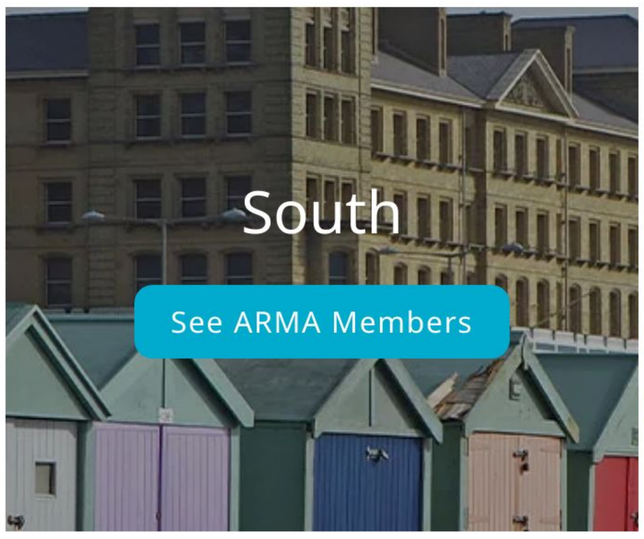


Are you considering a new managing agent?

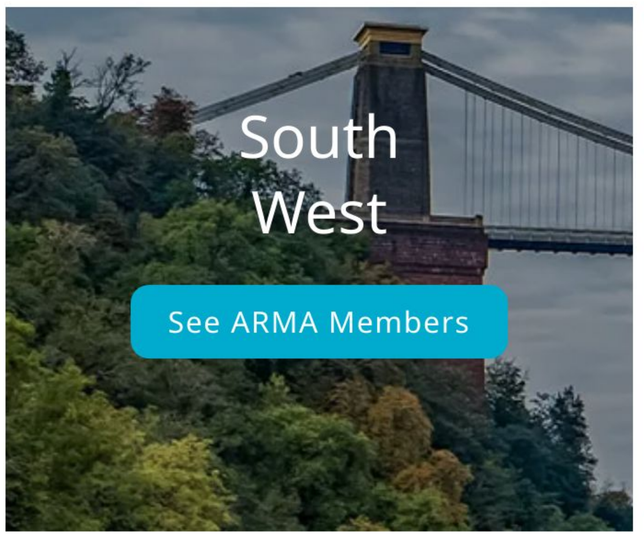
Below are a list of ARMA (Association of Residential Managing Agents) members by region.

A managing agent that is a 'member' of ARMA will have successfully achieved ARMA Accreditation and is required to comply with the ARMA Bye-Laws, RICS Code, relevant legislation and ARMA Consumer Charter & Standards.





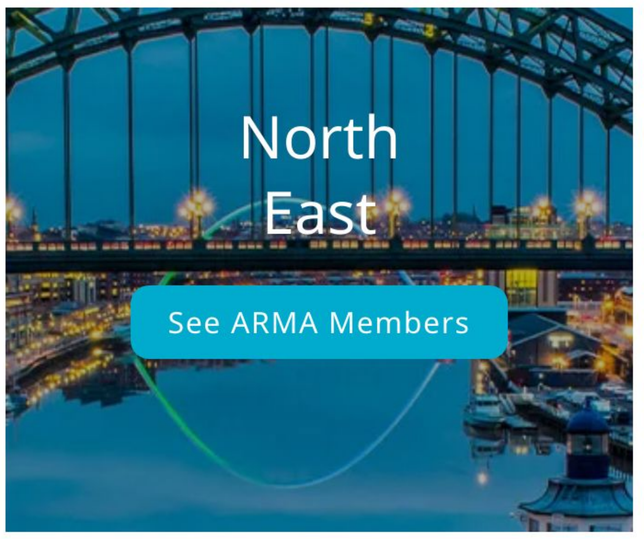


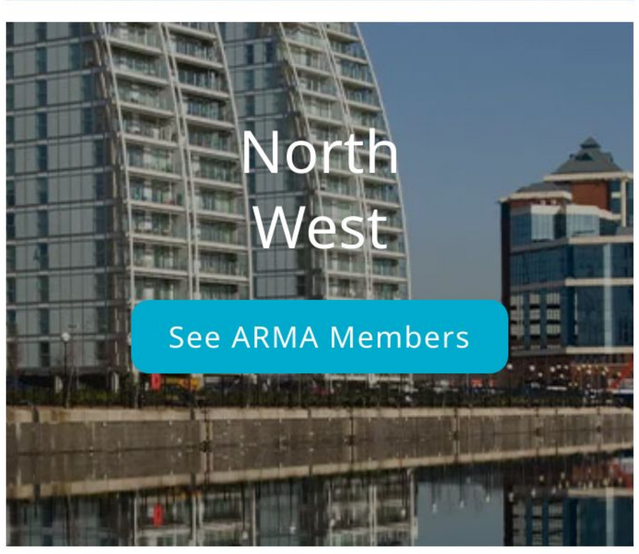


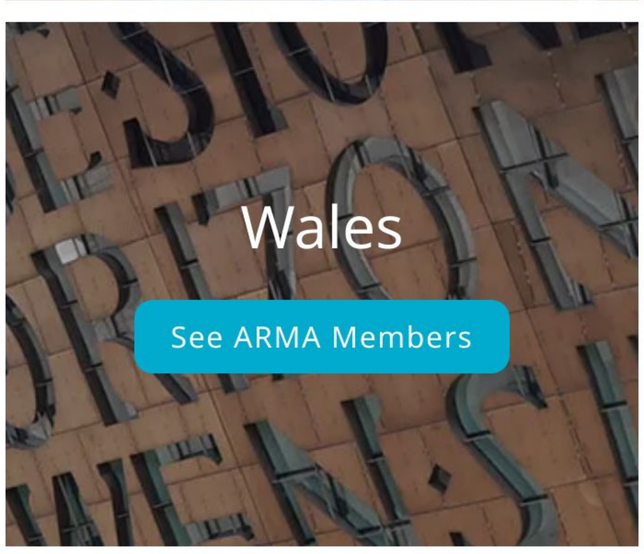


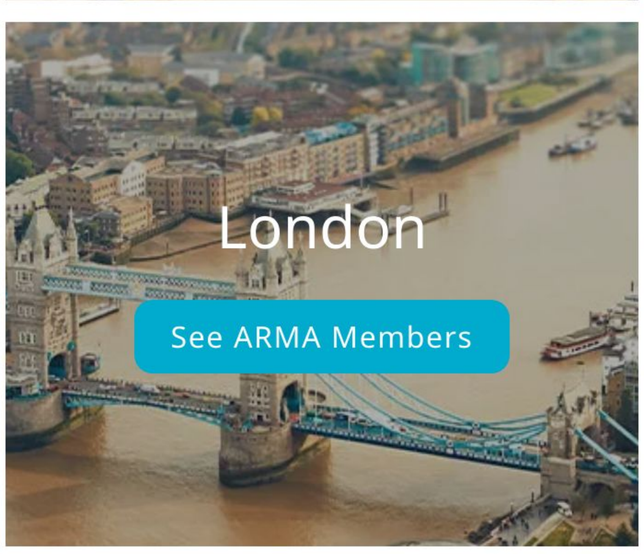




















ALEP ASSOCIATION OF LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT PRACTITIONERS

ALEP - the voice of the enfranchisement sector promoting best practice

Leasehold enfranchisement includes the processes of lease extension, freehold acquisition and correction of management problems within leasehold properties.

The Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners (ALEP) serves as the leading organisation representing professionals working in this sector.

Established in 2007, ALEP was formed to bring together firms working within leasehold enfranchisement under one, all-encompassing membership organisation. Barristers, managing agents, project managers, solicitors and valuers all form part of the ALEP community.

Our Work

One of ALEP's key aims is to work with member firms within this sector to raise and maintain standards across the board. The Association holds regular seminars and networking sessions, as well as its popular annual Conference and Lecture events, all with the objective of bringing the sector together to share ideas, discuss key issues and encourage best practice.

ALEP also acts as the 'voice of the sector' and represents its members' views to the wider industry, the media and to the general public. More recently, ALEP is proud to have been invited by the government to contribute to several consultations concerning the future of leasehold enfranchisement.

Our Members

ALEP has 260 highly respected member companies and individual barristers – this equates to just under a total of 1,000 professionals – all of whom operate within the enfranchisement sector and who regularly come together to network, compare notes and agree best practice.

ALEP accreditation acts as a badge of assurance for leaseholders and freeholders alike when looking for professionals to handle their enfranchisement transactions. All members are vetted to ensure they are experienced in dealing with the various and complicated issues surrounding leasehold enfranchisement.

Areas ALEP members can help with include:

- Extending a lease
- Leaseholder vs. freeholder disputes and resolutions
- Informal lease extension implications
- Marriage value
- Collective enfranchisement
- First-tier Tribunals
- Leasehold Valuation Tribunals
- Over-inflated ground rent, service charges and insurance

For more information and to find an ALEP member in your area please visit: www.alep.org.uk



Find an ALEP Member

ALEP (Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners) member firms are rigorously vetted so you can be confident that they have a proven track record in leasehold enfranchisement.

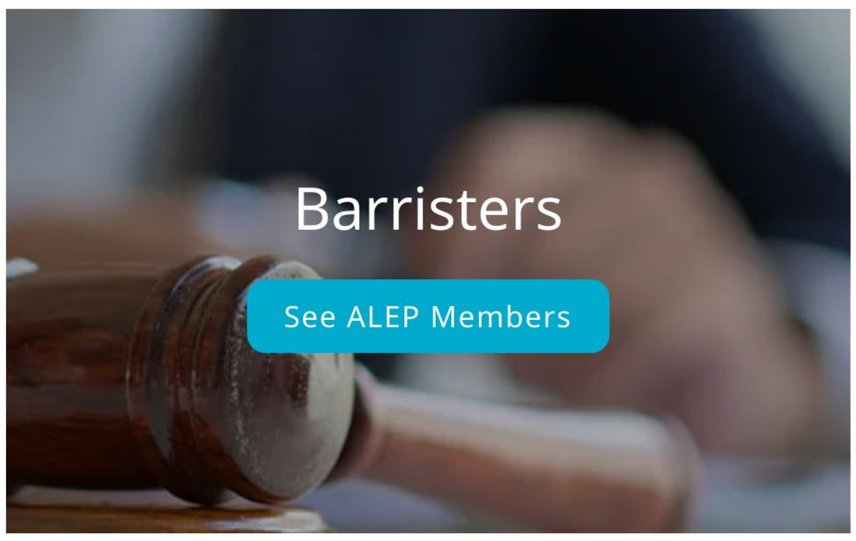


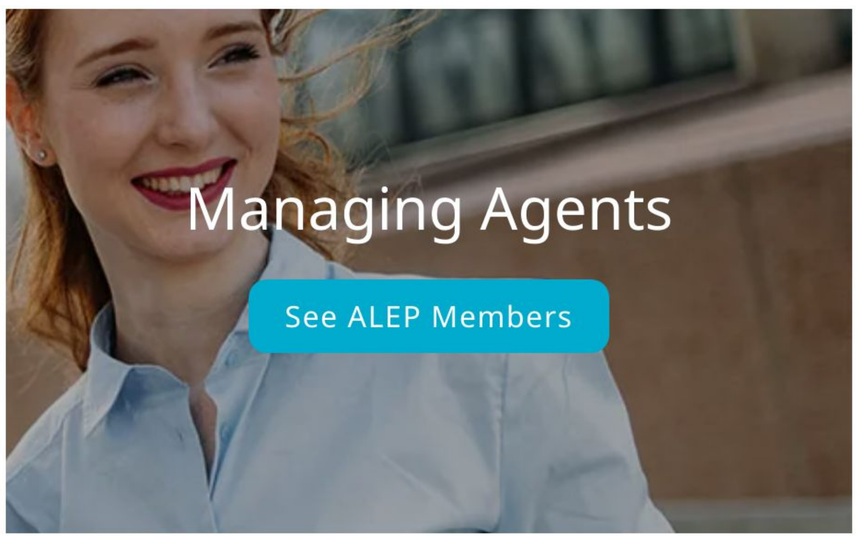
ALEP members can advise or assist with:

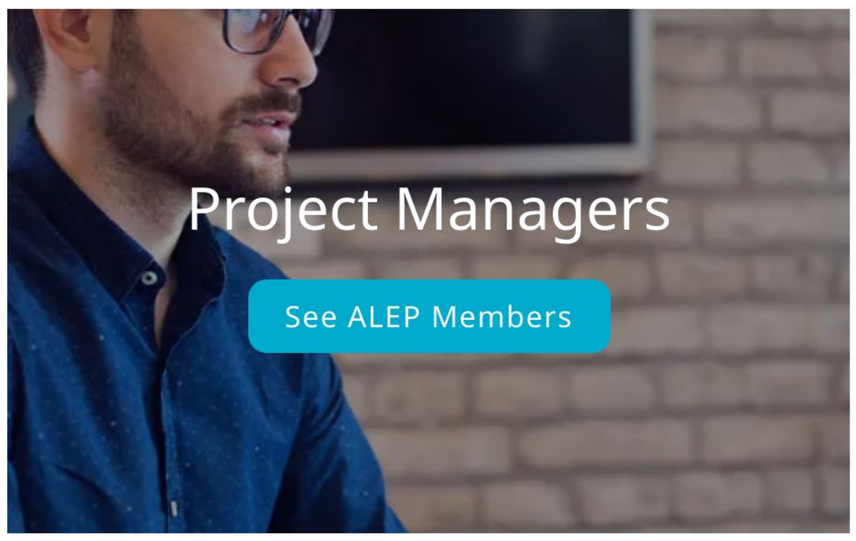
- Extending a lease;
- Buying a share or freehold of a building;
- Exercising the Right to Manage;
- Section 5 Notice;
- Dealing with freeholder or leaseholder disputes

Below are details of ALEP Professionals (alphabetically) in the following areas:

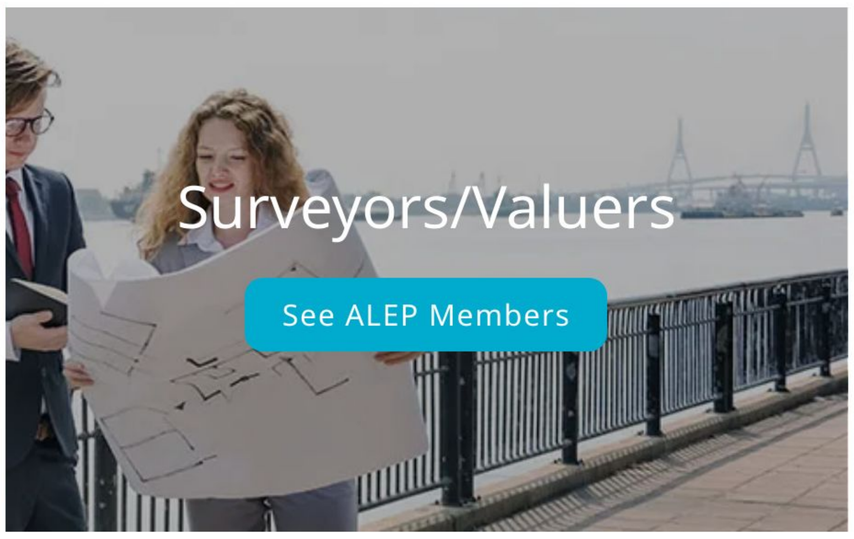
- Barristers
- Managing Agents
- Project Managers
- Solicitors/Legal
- Surveyors/Valuers











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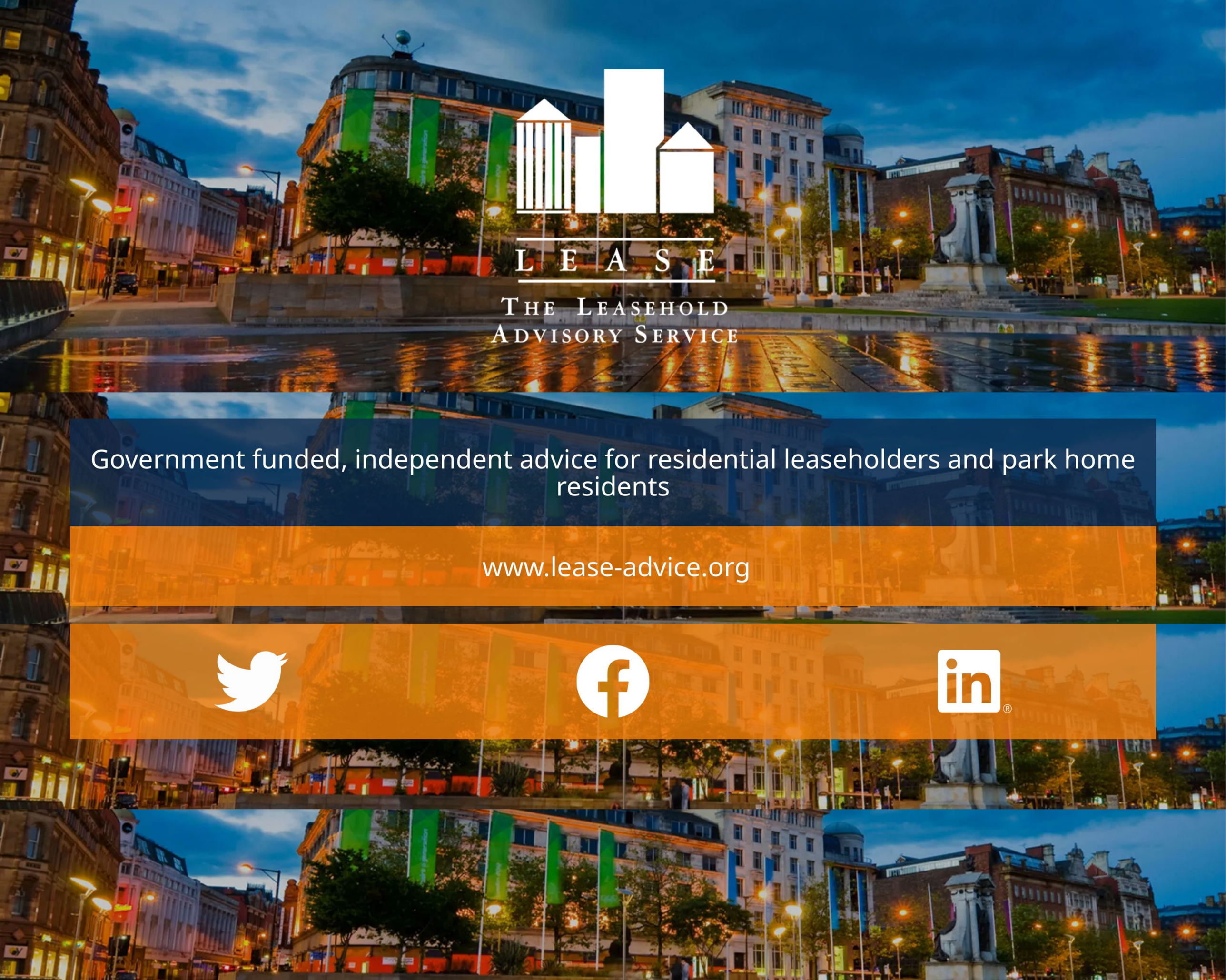
ASSOCIATION OF LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT PRACTITIONERS



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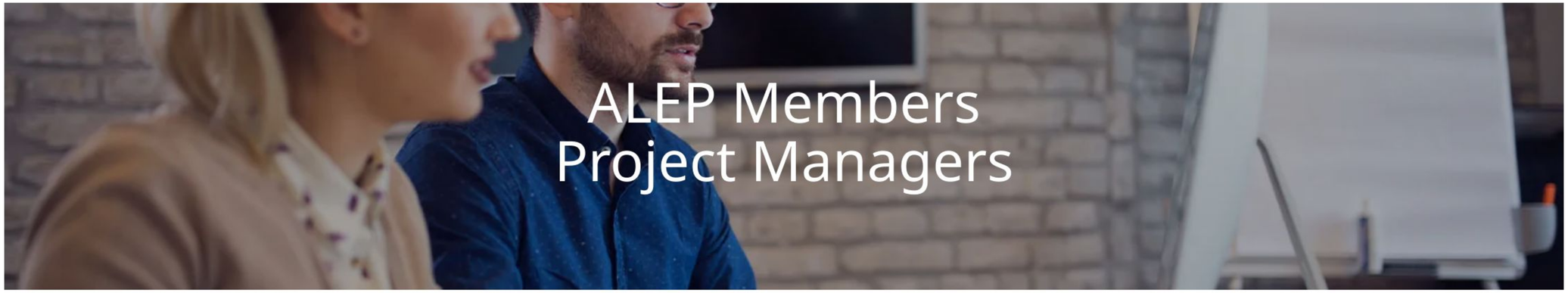

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