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## What is a Management Company and why is it required?

A Management Company called Didcot Grove Management Company Limited has been set up for your development to manage areas of the development and some parts of its buildings, where ownership of those areas is not transferred to the residents directly. You will be responsible for the maintenance of your home and any land conveyed to you, whilst the Management Company will maintain any areas which are not conveyed to any purchaser. These are communal areas for the benefit of some or all residents and therefore have to be held in a separate entity.

During the initial set up and construction of the development, Linden Homes provide the directors of the Management Company. This is common practice as it provides time for the communal areas to be completed and Linden Homes are responsible for making sure that happens. Once the communal areas are ready, Linden Homes will hand control of them over to the Management Company and when the development is complete, residents will take over as directors of the Management Company.

The Managing Agent (see below) will continue to support the residents in the running of the Management Company so that communal areas are maintained after Linden Homes have left the development.

## Which parts of the development are covered by the Management Company?

The development known as Didcot Grove is situated in Harwell, Oxfordshire comprises of 76 homes and an area of public open space which includes a Local Area of Play for residents to use.

The areas which are planned to fall to the Management Company to manage and maintain are highlighted indicatively on the plan attached at the end of this document which includes the insurance, management, and maintenance of the areas shown.

## What is the role of the Managing Agent?

The Managing Agent for Didcot Grove Management Company Limited is Trinity Estates who are an external company, appointed by the developer (Linden Homes), to maintain the communal areas of the development/buildings once they have been handed over to the Management Company.

Their role is to assist the residents of the development in building their community, by maintaining the communal areas to a good standard and ensuring that the administration of the Management Company is professionally handled. This ensures that the residents don't have to worry about getting areas insured, getting accounts and audits done for the Management Company, appointing landscapers to care for public open space and play areas or appointing cleaners to maintain stairwells and other internal communal areas.

Whilst initially appointed by the developer, before any homes are handed over, the Managing Agent is employed by the Management Company and therefore by the residents. The residents can challenge the Managing Agent on their performance and on the service charge and, if necessary, replace them with a different Managing Agent.

## What is a service charge and how is it calculated?

When you legally complete, you will become a member of the Management Company and you will agree to pay an annual service charge for the maintenance of the communal areas on the development.

The service charge is paid to the Managing Agent so that they can then pay for all the costs which they incur in managing the estate and buildings on your development. The amount you pay is your share of the total cost, based on the Managing Agents estimate of what they will spend, given their experience of other similar developments.

Below is a schedule of the items which the Managing Agent will maintain on behalf of the Management Company, together with their estimate of the likely cost for the coming year.



# Managing Agents Customer Information

Didcot Grove, Harwell  
Budget period ending 31/12/2024

No.	Item	Budget for the year	NOTES
1	Landscape Maintenance	£6,930	Landscape maintenance of public open space areas, includes cutting of grass, weeding, tending of flower beds, borders and shrubs, litter picking, sweeping of walkways etc. Frequency and duration of visits will vary throughout the year i.e. more frequent and longer during growing season, less frequent and shorter during winter months
2	Attenuation Basin/Balancing Pond	£693	Maintenance costs associated with the attenuation basin/balancing pond. This includes regular inspections and maintenance as required.
3	Drainage Maintenance	£205	Maintenance of the surface drainage system including regular inspections, clearing as required etc.
4	Electricity Charges	£721	Assuming low consumption lighting throughout. Includes estimated amounts for external street lighting etc.
5	General Repairs & Maintenance	£255	Budgetary costs to cover for day to day repairs of communal items such as lights, signage etc. Such repairs exclude any work to private units or anything within their demise.
6	Private Roadway/Carpark Maintenance	£627	Maintenance of the un-adopted roadway and its associated lighting including regular sweeping, replacement of any light bulbs etc.
7	Arboriculturalist Costs	£330	Costs relating to minor tree works that are required
8	Buildings Insurance	£321	Includes comprehensive Buildings Insurance, Public Liability, plus specific Terrorism cover.
9	Insurance Valuation	£112	Amount payable towards the cost of periodic insurance re-valuation by independent surveyors to ensure that the correct level of buildings insurance cover is maintained
10	Directors & Officers Insurance	£307	This is to provide liability cover for the Directors of the Resident Management Company
11	Public Liability Insurance	£600	Includes comprehensive Public Liability cover
12	Health and Safety Assessment	£834	** The instruction of professional surveyors to carry out and certify inspections for required Health and Safety, Fire Risk and General Risk assessments
13	Accountancy Fee	£648	Annual fee for independent certification of Service Charge Accounts
14	Management Fee	£6,985	Fixed Management Fee (not a percentage of total Service Charge).
15	Company Administration/Secretarial Fee	£336	*** Annual fee for the administration and filing of annual RMC accounts
16	Banking Charges	£63	Bank Charges relating to scheme trustee bank account
17	Redecoration Fund	£50	A fund designed to build up and pay towards the cyclical re-decoration of the external render redecoration
18	Block Sinking Fund	£70	A fund designed to build up and pay towards the long term maintenance of the maisonettes for items such as replacement windows, roofing, etc
19	Estate Sinking Fund	£114	A fund designed to build up and pay towards the future costs of the estate and any associated major works
20	Private Roadway Sinking Fund	£228	A fund designed to build up and pay towards the future costs of the private roadway and pavement re-surfacing and any associated items that may include, such as drainage, street lighting, etc.
21	Arboricultural Sinking Fund	£152	Contribution to the arboricultural fund for future tree and planting works
<b>Total</b>		<b>£20,580</b>	

Your service charge is likely to increase, year on year, because prices of labour and materials are likely to rise in line with inflation. The Managing Agent will keep you informed of any increases each year and provide an explanation of why the increase is necessary. Please see below anticipated costs for the first 10 years after handover of the site to the Management Company.

Charge Type	2024 Annual Costs per Plot	2025 Increase at 7%	2026 Increase at 4%	2027 Increase at 3%	2028 Increase at 3%	2029 Increase at 3%	2030 Increase at 3%	2031 Increase at 3%	2032 Increase at 3%	2033 Inflation at 3%
Estate Charge	£260.33	£278.56	£289.70	£298.39	£307.34	£316.56	£326.06	£335.84	£345.92	£352.84

## Typically, what do the elements of the service charge cover

- a) **Landscape and play area maintenance** – this includes regular visits to the site to mow grass, keep down weeds, maintain trees and plants and make sure that the play equipment is safe, carrying out any maintenance as required. The visits are more frequent in the spring and summer, usually every two weeks and generally monthly in the Autumn and Winter.
- b) **Waste and dog bin emptying and maintenance** – the bins around the communal areas are emptied and disposed of every two weeks.
- c) **Benches and other street furniture** - there are a number of benches, seats, fences, etc which require maintaining to ensure that they do not get into disrepair.
- d) **Electricity and lighting to communal spaces** – some of the pathways have lighting which require power and maintenance, which will be covered in the charge.
- e) **Reserve fund** – whilst the equipment around the communal areas is carefully maintained, sometimes there is a requirement to replace items. This would be particularly relevant to play equipment which becomes unsafe. A fund is built up to pay for these items when such occasions require.
- f) **Public liability insurance** – whilst residents will take out insurance on their homes which they own, there is a need to have insurance for the communal areas and for the Management Company itself.
- g) **Accountancy, legal and company secretarial fees** – because the Management Company is a Limited Company, which provides a level of legal protection for the residents, the Company has to have proper accounts prepared and audited and has to register with Companies House. This will all be arranged by the Managing Agent.
- h) **Health & safety requirements** – this is an important element of running the communal areas with the need for periodic risk assessments, advice and action taken to ensure that everything is kept in a safe condition for everyone who wants to use those areas. This will include fire risk assessments for apartments.
- i) **Managing agent management fee** – this is the fee charged by the Managing Agent to act on behalf of the residents in managing the communal areas. All of the items above will need to be arranged and managed, with contractors appointed for maintenance and repair, insurance arranged, and accountants and solicitors appointed.

## How and when is the service charge levied?

When you legally complete on your home and sign up to your rights and obligations relating to the Management Company, an amount of Service Charge will be taken, in order to cover the time between your completion and the end of the service charge period.

The Managing Agent will then send you an annual service charge invoice. If you recently legally completed and therefore have just paid an amount on completion, this will be credited against the invoiced amount. You will only pay your share of the Service Charge for the period which you have been in ownership of your home.

The Managing Agent will provide you with details of how to pay when they send the invoice as there are options to spread the payment by Direct Debit, if you need to.

## Who maintains the communal areas from the start?

Linden Homes are responsible for creating and building any communal areas. With apartments, the communal areas form part of the building which is being constructed by Linden Homes.

For a period of time, Linden Homes will maintain everything and only when the communal areas are complete, can they be handed over to the Managing Agent for maintenance. This will vary from site to site; on some developments everything will be handed over at the end, on others there will be a phased handover over the course of the development.

When Linden Homes are maintaining the communal areas, the residents will not be charged for the maintenance of the communal areas. However, a service charge may still be levied as there are administration costs incurred by the Managing Agent in order to ensure that insurance is in place and accounts and audits are carried out. This may be covered by the service charge collected on completion (see 6. Above) but if it continues for a long period, you may be asked to pay a further service charge.

## What happens when the development is finished?

When the developer (Linden Homes) has completed all the homes and all of the environment around the homes, the communal areas will be fully handed over to the Management Company. Those areas must be properly completed and be in good condition, otherwise the Managing Agent, acting on behalf of the residents will refuse handover. Handover will only take place when the Managing Agent is happy to take those communal areas on.

Up to this point, the Directors of the developer will have been acting as Directors of the Management Company, acting on behalf of the residents. When everything is complete, the developer will look for residents who are willing to take on the role as Directors of the Management Company.

Until the resident officers are in place, the developer may ask the Managing Agent to stand in as officer of the Management Company. However, control of the Management Company remains in the hands of the residents as members. The Managing Agent will support the residents in the running of the Management Company, but the residents always have the right to do things differently if they choose.

## Who should I contact with any queries?

The details of the contacts at the Managing Agent are as follows:

Trinity Estates

Vantage Point, 23 Mark Road, Hemel Hempstead. HP2 7DN

Tel: 0345 345 1584

Email: [customersupport@trinityestates.com](mailto:customersupport@trinityestates.com)

[www.trinityestates.com](http://www.trinityestates.com)



## Estate Plan

