

Welcome to the June edition of the BMML/BFL Residents Newsletter providing an update on matters relevant to residents and leaseholders at Bickenhall Mansions.

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### **Building Manager**

Our Building Manager, Rachael King, is available at the management office located at 24a Bickenhall Mansions. You can also contact her by phone at 0207 935 3227 or via email at [bickenhall.manager@encoregroup.co.uk](mailto:bickenhall.manager@encoregroup.co.uk)

As outlined in the email sent on 11th June, Rachael will be conducting regular walkarounds in designated blocks at scheduled times. If you would like to meet her during one of these walkarounds, please contact her directly to arrange.

### **Phase 2 of the Major Works**

We are pleased to inform you that the tender process for the Phase 2 Project is now concluding, and you will shortly receive the Statement of Estimates and further information on the major works.

To recap, Phase 2 includes external repair, and maintenance works to the façades on Bickenhall Street and Gloucester Place, as well as the two end flanks facing Baker Street. It also covers the roof slopes of the North Block (Blocks 2–8), and both the pitched slopes and flat roof crowns of the South Blocks (Blocks 3 and 5). Please note that Block 7 was completed in an earlier phase.

In due course, we will engage in more detailed discussions with the selected contractor regarding project sequencing and commencement, which is currently expected to begin later this year. The main phase of work is scheduled for 2026. The start and finish date are also currently being reviewed against the BMML cashflow model.

Further updates, including other key project details, will be shared as they become available.

For lessees who have already expressed interest in replacing aged windows while the scaffolding is in place, you will be contacted in due course to arrange a detailed survey and receive an estimate. If you have not yet registered your interest, there is still time to do so by contacting the Building Manager.

Looking ahead, once Phase 2 is complete, attention will shift to the specification and tender of Phase 3 the Marylebone Road elevation, along with the remaining roofs and lightwells. These works are expected to align with Phase 4 of the renewal of the boiler house, heating, and hot water systems (see below) . The exact programming of these Phases and whether they run separately or concurrently will be subject to consultant advice, leaseholder liaison and feedback and available funding.

We have also appointed an engineering consultant to review the long-term energy supply and systems for Bickenhall. This is essential as we will need to follow government requirements to move towards a lower carbon operational model. It is also worth noting that Government requirements are dynamic as are the engineering systems that address them! So, this initial study will explore the potential range of systems and choices of energy source that we can consider. When we have agreed what is best for Bickenhall this work may well be undertaken alongside the external repairs in the lightwells as this is where many of the flats take in their services.

### **Service Charge Update**

Over the past three years, we have consistently reported that operating costs have come under significant pressure. This has been driven primarily by inflation, rising utility costs, and increased insurance premiums.

As outlined in the recent service charge letter issued by Encore on 23rd June, we have made the difficult but necessary decision to increase the service charge by 9.7%.

As Board members but also residents ourselves, we fully understand the impact of this increase. This decision was not taken

lightly, but it is essential to ensure the continued management and smooth day-to-day operation of Bickenhall Mansions.

### Reception Area North Block 4

Since January, security personnel have been stationed in the reception area during designated times in the mornings and afternoons. However, there has been minimal interaction between residents and the security team during these periods. As a result, it has been decided that security will revert to operating from the Building Manager's office—where security camera footage is monitored—and continuing their regular, pre-scheduled walkarounds.

### Residents Surgery

Both Racheal and BMML Director Tony Gaskell will be available for scheduled appointments on 3rd July. If you would like to take advantage of this opportunity, please refer to the email sent on 11th June 2025 for full details on how to book a slot.

### Communications and Community Spirit

The Bickenhall 'Drinks and Nibbles' evening proved very popular back in March. Thank you to those who attended. New faces are always welcome...and encouraged!

### Resident Discount – Holmes/The Kitchen/106 Basker Street

The BMML Board has successfully negotiated a discount of 20% off your final bill for all Bickenhall Mansions residents at *The Kitchen*, Holmes Hotel and at *106 Baker Street*, the bakery and cafe owned by Holmes Hotel. Simply speak to a member of the Holmes Hotel team on arrival to claim this benefit.

Additionally, Holmes Hotel is happy to extend to Bickenhall Mansions residents a link which should offer an 11-20% discount off the standard rate for bedrooms. This could be especially useful for family and friends who might be visiting.

<https://www.radissonhotels.com/en-us/hotel-deals/parkplaza-artotel-dynamic-rates>

### Bickenhall Neighbourhood Update

Long-time residents of Bickenhall Mansions will remember when Baker Street had a quite different character — not dominated by fast-food outlets, large groups of delivery drivers, and clusters of bikes. The landscape is continuing to shift, with more fast-food establishments applying for late-night licenses, aiming to operate as late as 4 a.m.

We are actively engaging with neighbouring mansion blocks to coordinate our responses and objections to such proposals, which we believe may negatively affect the quality of life for local residents.

Encouragingly, a recent application for a late-night license by a Shawarma outlet was refused by Westminster Council. However, a decision is still pending on Taco Bell's application. If approved, it could set an unwelcome precedent for further fast-food late-night expansion in the northern stretch of Baker Street. We will continue to monitor these developments.

### Away over the Summer?

If you are planning to leave your flat unattended for an extended period, please take a few simple precautions to help protect your property and your neighbours.

Turn off your water supply and stopcock if possible and ensure that all taps are fully turned off. It is also important to leave a spare key with Security who should hold one for emergency access if needed while you're away.

If you have a housekeeper, cleaner or guests attending the property during your absence, please ensure they check the flat and know to report any stain on ceiling or flooring and the management can then investigate in real time. They should also flush toilets and run taps regularly to prevent stagnant water and unpleasant smells from open traps.