Brookland Management Limited

Woodbourne Court Sale Cheshire

Leasehold Reform – What it Means for Woodbourne Court

The Government has announced plans to replace the leasehold system for new flats with commonhold, giving flat owners greater control over the management of their buildings. Existing leasehold flats, such as those at Woodbourne Court, will remain leasehold, although the Government also intends to strengthen the rights of existing leaseholders and make it easier for buildings to convert to commonhold in the future if owners wish.

How Woodbourne Court compares

National concerns:	Woodbourne Court:
Little control over managing agents	Managed by Brookland Management Limited, whose directors are elected by the shareholders.
Lack of transparency	Annual accounts, budgets and important decisions are shared with shareholders.
Excessive management fees	Directors are unpaid volunteers. Service charges are used solely for maintaining the building.
Poor communication	Regular emails, WhatsApp updates and formal shareholder correspondence.
Unexpected major bills	Reserve funds are maintained and shareholders are consulted on significant expenditure, including the proposed roof replacement.
Poor maintenance	Planned maintenance is carried out, with professional surveys commissioned where appropriate.

Lease extensions and ground rent

One of the most significant benefits already achieved at Woodbourne Court is that the majority of leaseholders have extended their leases from the original 125 years to 999 years. As part of these lease extensions, ground rent has been reduced to a peppercorn (effectively nil), meaning ground rent is no longer collected. This saves each participating leaseholder approximately £120 per year while providing long-term security of tenure.

Resident Management

Unlike many leasehold developments, Woodbourne Court is managed by a Resident Management Company (RMC). This means the leaseholders themselves make decisions regarding maintenance, insurance, service charges, reserve funds, major repairs and long-term planning. The directors receive no remuneration and act on behalf of all shareholders.

Transparency

Brookland Management Limited aims to operate openly by providing annual financial statements, management fee updates, insurance arrangements, major works consultations, fire safety information, maintenance updates and guidance for buyers, sellers and tenants.

Looking ahead

Although the Government intends commonhold to become the standard form of ownership for new developments, existing leasehold buildings are expected to continue operating under their current arrangements unless leaseholders collectively decide to convert. For Woodbourne Court, day-to-day management is unlikely to change significantly because the building is already controlled by its leaseholders through Brookland Management Limited.

Summary

The recent Government proposals are primarily aimed at addressing problems experienced in developments where leaseholders have little influence over management or costs. Woodbourne Court already benefits from many of the principles that the reforms seek to encourage, including resident control, financial transparency, consultation on major expenditure, responsible long-term management and, for most leaseholders, 999-year leases with no ongoing ground rent. While the legal framework may continue to evolve, Brookland Management Limited is well placed to adapt and will continue to keep shareholders informed of any developments.

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