

The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held this year 10.00 am on Sunday 3rd December at the Village Leisure Hotel, Dolomite Business Park, Coventry.

Accompanying this newsletter you will receive the Annual General Meeting papers, the agenda, the administrator's report and the accounts. You can download the minutes of the 2016 AGM from the members area at lascasitas.wimpen.net. Login with your password and go the documents link on the menu.

If you want to attend and book a room, book by phone: 02477 710860 or online www.village-hotels.co.uk/hotels/coventry. Quote 'PRO10A' to receive a 10% discount.

Proxy Votes

Even if you cannot attend, it is very important you all have your say. Preferably you should direct your chosen proxy to vote for, against or abstain each resolution. If you really can't make up your mind, you can also leave voting to your proxy's discretion. Last year, a large number of you failed to use your voting rights, so were effectively disenfranchised. If you don't use your vote, then please do not complain about the outcome of resolutions if you don't agree with them.

I do hope you will try to attend, or at least use your votes. I look forward to seeing you all.

Who to contact

For rentals or letting, contact Judith:
reservas@wimpen.com

For sales, holding company, or escritura issues contact Michele: sales@wimpen.com

For lost passwords and billing enquiries contact Nichola: nichola@wimpen.com

UK sales agent, Jackie Fuchshuber:
jfuchshuber@wimpen.com

On-site sales agent, Maureen Muir:
maureenmuir46@hotmail.co.uk

You can also contact Wimpen by phone at :
(0034) 922 741 415

For Las Casitas reception, email Denice or Suzy: casitas@wimpen.com.
Phone (0034) 928 517 564

Rentals and Letting

I don't arrange rentals, but you can now rent extra weeks, or put your own weeks into the letting program online in the members' area at <http://lascasitas.wimpen.net>.

Keeping in touch

I now have the facility to message all owners with a registered email address through the private members area of the Wimpen website: lascasitas.wimpen.net.

If I send a message, you will receive a prompt in your normal email address informing you new message is waiting for you. You must login to the members area to read it, so you will need your login and password. Let me know if you have lost it.

You can also keep in touch with me by email, or telephone.

I visit Las Casitas in weeks 10,11,12, and weeks 45,46,47 in addition to a week sometime in June or July. If you are there please come for a chat. I am always pleased to hear from you.

Roger Barrow

President,
Las Casitas Community of Owners
email: roger@lascasitas.eu
Phone: 01243 601100

PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

and annual report



My first year as President

My first year has been quite busy, but with little in the way of controversy and lots of positive feedback from owners. In fact, my role as independent President has proved to be little different from my previous role as your Owner's representative, although instead of entering discussion and negotiation with Ivan Pengelly, my meetings have been directly with the WimPen management team.

As before, I continue to produce your newsletter, manage the independent owners' website and Facebook. I have made one official visit to Las Casitas, and island-hopped to the WimPen offices in Tenerife on three occasions during my regular trips to Playa Blanca to meet with WimPen management. I am also regularly on the phone to WimPen and the resort.

WimPen

My relationship with Wimpen continues to work well. We have the occasional robust debate on some issues, but always reach an amicable and mutually agreeable conclusion.

In particular, I thank Ana Martin who is proving to be a very proactive and supportive area coordinator for WimPen. I continue to be satisfied with the service WimPen provide us.

Your Topics

Many owners have made contact with me by phone or email and amongst the topics you have raised are facilities for older children and the use of the pool during school holidays, the gardens, the pool temperature, the new furniture, bathrooms, lost passwords, renting and letting, selling, the holding company, inheritance escrituras, television reception, TV sports and bad smells from the Las Brisas drains.

The Annual General meeting

The 2017 Annual General Meeting will soon be upon us, and I have produced this newsletter independently of WimPen to accompany the AGM papers. I have included some additional information and my own thoughts on items that will be discussed at the AGM.

Facebook

Our Facebook page has proved to be a very useful facility for many of you, and you have used to it to make contact with me and with other owners.

However, it is not private, and I have realised there are many non-owners following the page, so posts there are in the public domain.

I have therefore created a new private Facebook group specifically for owners and their families which you will need to join if you want to keep in touch. You will find a link to the new group on the old Community of Owners' Facebook page and on my website www.lascasitas.eu.

The Annual General Meeting

Election of President.

I offer myself for re-election this year. I understand there have been no other nominations, however, unlike my predecessor, I don't plan to do this job for the next 25 years. so I hope others will come forward in the future so that owners have a choice.

I thank you all for your support this year and for the positive feedback many of you have sent me. Hopefully I have been able to meet your expectations. My aim is to ensure our resort is efficiently run, that our finances are prudently managed, that you have a resort that you can enjoy and that you are all kept informed.

I am always happy to hear from you, whether by email or phone, to answer your questions, to advise you, to hear any ideas or complaints and I will always try to reply within 24 hours. If I can't help I will pass you on to someone who can.

Accounts

As you will hear, it has been a successful year for us financially, with some excellent returns coming from rentals and a good number of new owners making a purchase, providing more income from maintenance fees. In fact it has not been uncommon for our resort to be at almost full capacity some weeks this year. The rental programme has been our saviour and this is really helping our bad debt situation. Our accounts will show a very significant reduction in the amount being set aside as a bad debt provision this year. Nevertheless, our cumulative bad debt provision still stands at a very high level of over €300,000.

Maintenance Fees

Expenses are higher than last year, Spanish catering labour rates have increased beyond inflation, we have recruited another receptionist, and cleaners have now been taken on as employees, as required by the Spanish authorities. WimPen have not increased their management fee since 2012 and there has been no increase in our maintenance fees since 2014. We are also proposing to accelerate the refurbishment.

WimPen are recommending an inflationary increase of 3% in maintenance fees. I realise no one will want to pay more, especially with the reduced value of the pound, but if we want WimPen to continue to invest in the resort and meet increased costs, I would suggest this proposed increase is entirely reasonable in the circumstances.

Owners' representative

There has been no owner's representative this year. The role was not an official one and is not in our statutes. As explained in the agenda booklet, it existed while our president was also a director of our appointed administrator, WimPen. The role was certainly essential in negotiations with OnaGrup when they first took over and I was unwilling to accept some of the unannounced changes they wanted.

I know a number of you felt at the last AGM that you wanted the position of owners' representative reinstated and asked for it to be included in this year's agenda.

We have received one nomination for owners' representative from Mrs Pam Ames, so you will be asked to decide if you wish to establish the owners' representative as a permanent official position in our Community structure or not.

If the vote is positive, Mrs Ames will be elected unopposed, if your vote is negative we will continue as we have this year.

Lounge/Dining Room refurbishment

Ten villas and the studios have been upgraded so far and the current plan is to complete the upgrade over the next three years. I believe that is far too long to wait, and I have asked WimPen to advise the costs and whether we can afford to accelerate the upgrade to complete it in one year.

We can afford part of the cost from the budget, and it would also mean withdrawing some money from the sinking fund, which given the current state of our finances, I believe we can afford. So subject to hearing from WimPen, I would recommend you approve this proposal.

Bar Franchise

The AGM will once again be asked to approve a new 3-year contract for Ronnie and Maureen. Like the WimPen contract, this will be put to the AGM every year so that they always have a 3 year contract ahead.

Bathrooms

Plans for the second bathroom, which we have previously discussed, were submitted to the Town Hall for planning permission, but have been rejected due to the increased use of land, so I am afraid that idea will not get off the ground.

Walk-in Shower

This year I have received an AGM proposal from an owner for the existing bath to be replaced by a walk-in shower, as part of an upgrade of the existing bathrooms.



Many owners have requested this, although I know some owners prefer a bath. It may however help to reduce your water bills!

This is something for you to decide at the AGM and I make no specific recommendation. I have asked WimPen to provide costings and a possible programme of installation, which would be subject to available funds. The use of any funds from the sinking fund would require AGM agreement.

Basketball Net

I have also received a proposal to install basket ball net into the tennis court to provide a facility for older children and more flexibility in the use of the space.

The cost is relatively low, so does not justify a full AGM proposal. I will look at this with Denice on my next visit and agree with her how the booking arrangements would work. Please feel free to send me feedback.

WiFi Fibre Optic Internet

We now have a fully functioning WiFi network at the resort, linked to a fibre optic feed from Telefonica. It is operating at a much faster speed that we have been able to achieve before, and is proving to be quite robust. Occasional breaks in service in the Telefonica feed are relatively rare, and local faults have been quickly fixed by our provider.

Free WiFi is an important part of our marketing offer to rental clients just as for many owners it is becoming an indispensable service. The WiFi connection is not free however, one way or another we have to pay, whether from our budget and maintenance fees, or by users. The proposal at the AGM is to provide one connection for any one device free of charge to all villas and then to make a charge for additional connections. You would be able to use more than one device, but not at the same time.

As well as helping towards the cost, this would also discourage excessive use. A large family downloading games and films on several devices would quickly degrade the available bandwidth, making the connections very slow for everyone else.