

Book Review

The Pyramus and Thisbe Club Green Book, The Party Wall Act Explained

A commentary on the Party Wall etc Act 1996

Author: Pyramus and Thisbe Club,
also known as the P&T
Publishers: Pyramus and Thisbe Club

If you would like to talk to a chartered surveyor about party walls, schedules of conditions, structural surveys or building surveys on the property or any disputes that you may have with the builders, boundary disputes, etc, then please do not hesitate to contact us on 0800 298 5424 for a friendly chat.

Overview

This book is also referred to as “the green book” and is generally considered to be “the book” on the Party Wall Act.

For those that are not aware the Pyramus and Thisbe Club (P&T) is named after two lovers in the Shakespeare play A Midsummer’s Nights Dream, who are separated by a wall. It was founded in 1974 as a general club for all those involved in the Party Wall Act from surveyors, solicitors, barristers, judges, engineers and architects.



We would term this the friendly book on party walls. It looks at the Acts section by section and then gives an interpretation in a very friendly format and then comments on it in most cases.

Format

The format throughout the book is the section in question from The Party Wall etc Act 1996 and interpretation, we assume, as taken from many of the Pyramus and Thisbe Club's meetings, where these things are discussed. This is normally a few paragraphs and then a comment section, which goes on to explain the interpretation further, which is normally a single paragraph or two.

Readability

You could argue the Green Book is really very unreadable in one go, as you really would have to concentrate to read it from the front to the back cover. However, the very way it is set out means you very much get an understanding of the point in question.

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Sample

Section 8(2).

Here it states the Party Wall Act clause “if the premises are closed the building owner, his agents and workmen may, if accompanied by a constable or other police officer, break open any fences or doors in order to enter the premises.



INTERPRETATION

(We put this in upper case as this is how it is presented in the green book).

If the premises are closed the policeman can be asked to accommodate those with a right of entry and the door or fence may be broken open.

COM MENT

The Epilogue.

This is added by your book reviewer.

This right is very rarely needed and should only be exercised in the case of absolute necessity and as a last resort. All actions taken should be carefully recorded.

At a recent meeting of the P&T surveyors, which we are part of, none of us had ever used this particular section of the Act. However, one surveyor had tried and was met with blank stares from the police station. It was suggested that we always use the same police station whenever we wanted to enforce this part of the Act and they would soon get to know the relevant legislation.



We could quite easily add another few examples from the book, as there are approximately 130 pages following this format. This is why it isn't readable per se, but it is very useful as a reference document, which is why most party wall surveyors have a copy.

Review Upon Reflection

Every party wall surveyor needs to own a copy, and it was of course edited by John Anstey.

If you need help and advise with regard to party wall matters, schedules of condition, structural surveys, building surveys, engineers reports, specific defects report, structural surveys, home buyers reports or any other property matters please call 0800 298 5424 for a friendly chat. Please note we are independent chartered surveyors.

If you have a commercial property, be it leasehold or freehold, then you may wish to look at our Dilapidations Website at www.DilapsHelp.com and for Disputes and anything else relating to party wall matters please go to our Disputes Help website www.DisputesHelp.com.

We hope you found the article of use and if you have any experiences that you feel should be added to this article that would benefit others, or you feel that some of the information that we have put is wrong then please do not hesitate to contact us (we are only human).

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