

Hebble Wharf Residents' and Owners' Association

Chair person's report 2017-18

1. **Welcome**

I am delighted to welcome you to the first AGM of the Hebble Wharfe Residents' and Owners' Association. My name is Norah Keany-Corr and I have represented the Association in the role of Chairperson for the past 14 months

Our audience this evening consists of Association members, including the rest of the Committee, interested parties and Gavin Mearns our Property Manager from LIV.

I would like to start my report with a vote of thanks for the work of Peter Geary, the previous site manager, who sadly passed away at the end of 2017.

2. **Committee members 17-18**

My second heartfelt thanks go to the Committee members for the time they have given to the Association during these past 14 months.

Imran Chouglay, the vice-chair has been our inspiration in all presentation matters and is the creative talent behind the posters and invitations, which we have all seen.

Andrew Wright, the Treasurer has co-ordinated our membership subscriptions and steered a careful course with our limited finances.

Yvonne Berns, the Secretary has managed the internal communications of the committee and lead the reporting of progress and updates from LIV.

John Corr developed our initial constitution and this has been supported by the rest of the committee to ensure it would meet ARMA standards.

John Hodgkins has led our electronic communications, through the development of the website and fault reporting system. More recently John has led on the consultation with members on the Section 5 offer.

The committee co-opted Andy Imrie as an honorary member, to represent residents.
Without the commitment, hard work and good will of the serving members, I would not be able to report on the progress of the Association this evening.

3. **Establishment of Association and current membership**

The Association was instigated by a Special General Meeting of residents on 7th March 2017. The major drivers for the establishment of the association at that time were two-fold:

- To establish a collective voice to engage with LIV on matters of concern regarding the block.
- To respond to the initial offer of the Long Leasehold

During the initial meeting, Committee members were volunteered and a process of reporting back to potential Association members was agreed.

The initial offer of the Long Leasehold was not progressed mainly due to financial considerations.

However, the Constitution was developed and agreed and new members were invited to join the Association in April 2017, with a subscription of £10 for residents and owners and a free subscription for tenants.

The membership now totals 29 out of a total eligible membership of 51, this represents 56.86% and we require 60%, for ARMA recognition, which equates to 31 members. The eligible membership figure of 51 will need to be revised, as new owners from the recent sales of apartments are identified.

4. **Achievements**

We have achieved a considerable number of new members from a standing start in March last year.

Our communications with members and non-members has been enhanced by the development of a web-site, which includes fault reporting for any building issues as well as regular updates.

For the benefit of all residents, Liv agreed to the Association having a notice board in the entrance, this has proved to be a useful point of reminder regarding current issues. As an Association, we are grateful to LIV for their co-operative approach to our role.

We have established a regular communication process with LIV through our 'walk-round' and update process. You may have seen some of us with our clip boards! This process has ensured that the lighting in the block has been refreshed and replaced where appropriate. We are very happy to report the upgrade of the lift floor as well as the frequent responses to the security issues regarding the front and garage doors. However, we continue to be concerned regarding the lack of supervision of contractors on site and will work with LIV to ensure that we get value for money for any works carried out.

A direct approach was taken by the Committee to HH Global, as they were using the domestic waste facilities in Hebble Wharf for commercial waste. This has now ceased and you may have seen their new fenced in refuse area.

In November 2017, the Association co-ordinated the response to the Section 20A Emergency Works Notice and made representations to the First Tier Property Tribunal, to highlight the number of water ingress issues which the building has suffered from in the recent past. The outcome of the Tribunal was to agree to the Emergency works but they provided no instruction as to the party responsible for financing the works. We understand that 'temporary works' have been carried out and that further works will be linked to the recent Section 5 offer of the long leasehold.

At Christmas we hosted a 'meet and greet', get to know your neighbours event on the landing of floor one. The event proved to be useful in gathering information about how some residents have been affected by anti-social behaviour in the block. As a Committee, we do not consider it our role to 'police' the block but we do encourage residents to report excessive noise or other nuisance to their Landlord or the police, as appropriate. We ask for Landlords' support in ensuring that their tenants understand their responsibilities in being good neighbours.

The Committee were able to support the major change of key fobs, following the change of estate management.

The new arrangements for site management, thorough Grant Fieldhouse caused us some concern for a time, as the site was becoming increasingly untidy, with bins remaining full to overflowing and litter on the grass and the road. Following a direct approach to Grant Fieldhouse, prior to the Easter Bank Holiday, by the Committee we are pleased to report that the situation has vastly improved. Parking on the site continues to cause pressure and we are looking at ways to engage Grant Fieldhouse in finding mutually agreeable solutions.

5. New challenges

During the past months we have suffered from increasing debris and 'fly tipping' in the bin store. It also appears that someone is going through the refuse bins. An interim solution of putting a digi-lock on the door has not proved successful. LIV have now changed the lock code and we would ask residents to be vigilant in maintaining the security of this new number.

In April this year leaseholders were served with a Section 5 notice of an offer for sale of the Long Lease.

John Hodgkins has led on the consultation with members and non-members and will provide updates, following this AGM.

Achieving ARMA recognition

The Association of Residential Managing Agents

If recognition is granted, residents' associations can exercise a number of legal rights under the Landlord and Tenants Acts

The secretary of an association can:

- Ask for a summary of the service charge costs
- Inspect accounts and receipts in respect of service charges
- Ask to be consulted about the appointment or reappointment of a managing agent
- Ask for a summary of the insurance cover for the block
- Appoint a surveyor to advise on any matter relating to service charges. The surveyor will have the right to see a copy of the relevant documents held by the Landlord. They will be able to inspect the communal areas and appoint assistants.

Landlords or managing agents should also serve copies of any notices required under Section 20 consultations upon the secretary of a recognised association. Resident Residents' associations also have the right to nominate contractors and inspect any estimates and specifications. We are very close now to achieving the required 60% for ARMA recognition. This should be a priority for the coming year, given the proposed change in Landlord.

6. New Committee 18-19

Our Constitution requires that all members of the Committee resign at the AGM but shall be deemed to be re-elected if they are willing to stand, in the absence of any other nominees.