

# Hebble Wharf Residents' and Owners' Association

## Chair person's report 2018-19

### 1. **Welcome**

I am delighted to welcome you to the second 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 2 years. Our audience this evening consists of the Association's Committee, Association members, honorary members and interested parties.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Mark Christie MD of Plymouth Block Management and Jim Kelly, Accounts Manager for PBM, who have travelled from Plymouth to be with us this evening.

### 2. **Committee members 18-19**

My sincere thanks go to the Committee members for the time they have given to the Association during the past year.

Imran Chouglay, the vice-chair has been our inspiration in all presentation matters and is the creative talent behind the posters and the recent newsletter.

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

John Hodgkins, the Secretary has managed the internal and external communications of the committee.

Has led our electronic communications, through the development of the website and fault reporting system.

The committee co-opted Yvonne Berns and Howard Dodgson, as honorary members, to represent the views of owner residents, particularly with regard to on-going repair issues.

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**

For those of you who are new to the Association, I will now provide a little background.

The Association was instigated by a Special General Meeting of lease-holders on 7<sup>th</sup> 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

The membership now totals 32, this represents 60%, which has enabled us to achieve ARMA recognition. The eligible membership will continue to be revised, as new owners from recent sales of apartments are identified.

**4. Updates from the past 12 months**

In April 2018, formal notice was sent to Lease-holders regarding disposal of the Head Lease, as a first option to purchase. This was not taken up and subsequently the purchase was made by G&O Investments Ltd, a property investment company based in New Maiden Surrey. This is part of the G&O Group, formed in 1989. The group consists of seventeen companies, including Urban Point Management Ltd, which will be responsible for the future collection of our ground rents.

In October 2017, following a meeting of the Association's Committee, representation was made to LIV, informing them that the invoice sent to lease-holders for the Section 20 works was incorrect. In fact, we had been overcharged

for the works and in a follow-up letter we requested a detailed financial review from LIV.

This review was not forthcoming and was further delayed due to the negotiations by the new Long leaseholder with regard to their managing agent. We understand that at that time LIV were awaiting further instruction from U&I the Freeholder.

In December we established through LIV that the G&O Group had appointed Plymouth Block Management, as Managing Agent for Hebble Wharf. They are responsible for the maintenance of the block and the collection of service charges. They subsequently appointed LIV, as their local delivery agent.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> January the Committee members met with PBM and LIV as part of a hand-over meeting. During this meeting we raised a number of outstanding repair issues, as reported on-line and queried the Section 20 repairs which had not been successful. Yvonne Berns kindly agreed access to her apartment, so that the continued water ingress issues could be assessed.

At that time PBM were still in negotiation with Waterfront Wakefield regarding the Section 20 works.

It was agreed that the Association would carry out a further walk-around to identify any further on-going issues and report these back to Claire Radley, Property Manager for PBM.

In February, the Association's committee sought further clarification regarding the Section 20 notification from The First Tier Property Tribunal. Their response was that they did not make any direction regarding the reasonableness for the charge under Section 20 but that we could appeal r utilising their application system, this would incur a £100 fee.

An approach was made to the Leaseholder Advisory Service, regarding the best way forward and they advised

that they can be consulted further, should we decide to progress an application, regarding the Section 20 charges.

We have agreed with PBM for updates on the Section 20 issues to be provided later in the agenda.

#### 5. **Hebble Wharf Block Updates**

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.

PBM have suggested a CCTV system for the garage area, which may also act as further security for the cars.

Car parking has proved to be problematic during the past year, with the degrading line markings and greasy surface, as well as disputes over allocated parking bays. Recently the Committee developed an audit of current parking arrangements, which John Hodgkins has taken forward in partnership with Claire Radley. We should see the outcome of the audit very soon.

The intercom system has been upgraded recently, however we still have problems with the security in the building. This can be caused by people disabling the security lock on the front door.

Last week the internal entrance to the garage was kicked in, cracking the glass.

The cleaning staff also noticed the rear fire door from the garage was left opened and the locking system to the meter room had been disabled. These security issues have been reported by a number of owners and residents and could possibly be resolved with the aid of an upgraded CCTV system.

As with many residential blocks, we continue to have a problem with resident/landlord disposing of large items of furniture and/or large amounts of packaging in the bin store. We would ask for Landlords to be vigilant in advising their tenants about the Council's bulky items collections and the local recycling facility on Denby Dale Road.

I am pleased to report that the new Council carpark on the Barnsley Road has been completed and opened last week. This provides an improved view for residents to the south elevation of the block and enhance security for the local area. The car park is free from 6pm until 8am so this will help with any visitors to Hebble Wharf. We are concerned about the lack of litter bins and continue to appraise the Council on our environmental concerns. However, it is hoped that parking on the pavements around Navigation Walk will now be phased out. However there remain on-going issues with regards to the footbridge across the canal, these issues are between the Council and the site developers, CTP St James. The CRT have made it clear that they do not own the bridge or indeed have any need for the structure.

We understand that no solution has been identified for the flood barriers and they have been bolted in place until funding is secured for an automated control system with a key-operated control box to raise and lower the barrier.

The Hepworth Galley have commenced the development of their garden facility, which will bring new visitors to the site and improved the environment for local residents.

The Rutland Mills development has been delayed until the Autumn and it is proposed by the Council that the development will be able to access the carpark.

The Committee continue to liaise with local developers, including the Council; to ensure that we are consulted as residents in the Conservation Area.

Hebble Wharf continues to be a very desirable place to live and with the recent improvements mentioned above this can only get better.

It is vital now that we address the maintenance of the block itself. Its 10 years are showing; particularly on the external façade, which has never been painted. The wooden balcony rails are splitting and the cladding needs attention. This was seen as a 'flag-ship' development in the regeneration on Wakefield's Waterfront in 2008.

We need work closely with PBM, as an ARMA recognised Managing Agent to support the necessary upgrades to ensure Hebble Wharf is attractive and sustainable into the future.

**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.

I will not be standing as Chair in the forthcoming year, however, I am still willing to serve on the Committee.

We will take the nominations and election of committee members later in the agenda.

Thank-you for your attention.