

Chelsea Bridge Wharf Resident's Association (CBWRA) Minutes – September 2021

Attendees

Chairperson: Stephen Thompson
Treasurer: Charlie Garton-Jones
Company Secretary: Catherine Thomé

Jean Dornhofer	Community liaison
Louis Kendall	Building representative for Warwick
Mike O'Driscoll	Building representative for Warwick and researcher
Natalia Nyudyurbegova	Technology
Patrick Savage	Building representative for Centurion & scrutiny
Toby Spoerer	Building representative for Lanson, technology & scrutiny
Vasundhara Talwar	Building representative for Warwick
Qin Xie	Building representative Burnelli

Apologies

Kirt Bains, Alexander Minakov, Aarya Mishra, Dorota Szelagowska, Hasher Marouf, Jovdat Guliyev, Rui Ramalho, Susan de Laszlo.

This meeting was the first one conducted in person and on zoom and a few technical issues were experienced but the meeting went ahead successfully.

Updates on maintenance items / R&R

Toby said he had been following up with R&R regarding ponds and intercom systems and reminded all that it was a long process with consultants and the Section 20 consultation. He would provide an update at the next meeting.

Stephen added that Toby, Louis and he had had a very constructive call R&R's Brian Klue and John, the new Estate Manager, to discuss updates and general maintenance issues. He said there was now a good system in place whereby once a month all maintenance requests are reviewed. He said there was constructive cooperation that the relationship with R&R was much improved with this new team who were getting things done.

Jean enquired whether R&R were still intending to send out a monthly email to all residents and Stephen confirmed that the plan was for them to send a progress update monthly on the 1st of the month. [the first such update was subsequently circulated on October 1st]

Insurance

Paddy said his understanding was that Fairhold would not supply any information until the RA could evidence that it had sufficient resident backing and membership. Stephen said that the RA had been working on this and that Charlie had collated a list of residents paying a subscription amount which would also help to have clarity on the RA's income in the next calendar year. Fairhold required at least 50% of the residents to be members of the RA to give the requested information. [All leaseholders are RA members unless they expressly opt out]

RTM process and timeline

Charlie referred to the timescale he had circulated to the RA on 4th August, which set out that on 5th January 2021 the Minister in charge of leasehold reform had said on the record that primary legislation was first required. Charlie said he has spoken with Professor Hopkins who is in charge of the Law Commission work that prepares primary legislation and said it would take approximately one year. Charlie added that the third session would begin in September 2022 and shared his feeling that due to cross party support the process, once started, should be fairly straightforward. He expected that the RA would be able to submit a Right to Manage application at some stage in 2023 and that the RA could start preparing documents in 12 months' time as soon as the process in the House of Commons began.

Mike said he had spoken to the Leasehold Advisory Service and Leasehold Knowledge Partnership, to Sebastian O'Kelly and others who thought the process was more likely to take three to five years. Charlie said that these panels were no longer involved and that the Law Commission was tasked with drawing up legislation. Charlie and Mike agreed to disagree on this point. Stephen added that on the back of all the cladding discussions, politicians were unlikely to get in the way of any legislation that was intended to strengthen the position of leaseholders. Mike suggested that it would not be a high priority of the Government, however Charlie said that with Michael Gove as Housing Minister, he felt confident this would move forward. Stephen summarised that for the next 12 months the RA intended to work closely and collaboratively with R&R.

Charlie suggested that the RA write to the local MP who had been very cooperative with the RA and ask her to write to Professor Hopkins, for an update on his statement of 5th January 2021 to see whether the timeline was still valid.

Initial findings of the residents survey

Catherine informed the RA that all three survey draw winners had received their Peter Jones vouchers and handed over to Mike.

Mike said there had been 370 usable responses from the survey entries which he felt was a very good response rate.

- The large majority feel happy living at CBW overall and plan to still live here in three years' time, however there was not much feeling about sense of community yet
- Regarding making CBW a more sustainable development, a large majority supported suggestions for solar panels, an environmental audit and better recycling facilities. Louis and Mike agreed that specific actions and strategies would be need to be discussed for RA to focus on areas of improvement that could be measured and report on. Stephen thanked Mike for the excellent work on the survey overall and said that from an environmental and sustainable aspect, CBW was starting from scratch. He added that any proposals to R&R or BH would carry legitimacy as the RA could show residents' support. As a starting point, Stephen agreed to follow up with R&R on what measures were currently in place.
- Proposals to restrict traffic access on Sopwith Way received strong support, especially from blocks exposed to it.

- Only 13% were extremely or fairly satisfied with maintenance of ponds and fountains. 44% supported feasibility studies to look at options such as gardening to replace the rectangular fountains and 41% supported keeping them as they were, but making sure they were maintained and repaired.
- Only 27.6% were satisfied overall with the managing agent. Mike suggested the RA inform residents of their plans with this regard. Stephen reminded all that the committee had a simple policy objective to improve the environment that we live in at CBW and to ensure that residents only pay fair costs. He added that some very good foundations had been laid with R&R (including a change in the operations team) and that it would be beneficial to run another survey in 12 months' time to see progress. Mike agreed and said that he was only giving a few highlights and that there were areas where residents were satisfied, including parcel deliveries.
- Regarding the residents' app, Catherine confirmed that it had 736 community members with almost 500 active in the past month. Satisfaction with the app was very high in most areas including ease of use. Quality of content was less so and Mike suggested that most people used the app as a social platform rather than for more substantial content. On reporting repairs and maintenance, results were not clear as many residents had ticked 'not sure' or 'don't know' presumably when not relevant to them.

Mike said the next stage would be to prepare an update for the residents in early October and draft the full report in late October in time for the next RA meeting. Jean commented that residents' expectation would be to see the survey results and the RA's plans in response. Mike said it was very common to just present the survey findings initially and report on intended plan of action later, otherwise it would delay presenting the findings. Jean agreed and suggested mentioning to residents an approximate timeline for the action plan. Stephen added that the survey results should also be shared with R&R and BH.

Sopwith Way

Catherine reminded all that a Sopwith Way sub-group had been formed and consisted Louis, Mike, Toby, Qin and herself. Louis referred to the document which had been circulated prior to the meeting and said the key issues were the noise, traffic to the Battersea Power Station, safety and cleanliness. He said that R&R had acknowledged the access control issue and offered to look into costings. R&R also said they had started to clean Sopwith Way weekly and would do this three times a week with a specific machine.

Louis had a meeting with Berkeley Homes who were working with Google and Apple directly to update the Google maps and Apple maps to mark Sopwith Way as a private road. As this was not currently the case, food delivery drivers and other couriers were using it as their main route into the Power Station, particularly for the restaurants like Tonkotsu and Gordon Ramsay's and the ones on the Arches Lane.

Stephen suggested sending short bullet points of the main aims to BH to seek their views and gauge their willingness to work with the RA to achieve them.

Qin enquired about the changes in planning permission at BPS Mike had raised a few weeks earlier which potentially would mean many more flats and changes in the layouts and could impact CBW in terms of traffic. Louis said he had attended a meeting and would share the minutes. In summary Louis said that the further development would be on the far-eastern side of the Battersea Power Station and the access would come from Pumphouse Lane and from Nine Elms Road, therefore not affecting CBW directly.

R&R night watch credit note

Stephen referred to the draft which he had worked on with Richard Daver for the last six weeks and asked for committee members to review it and let him and Catherine know if it raised any questions. The aim of the document was to explain to residents when and how they would see the credited funds.

Any other business

Mike asked when the RA constitution would be discussed and Catherine confirmed that it would be on the next meeting's agenda and that Stephen would circulate a revised document before the next meeting.

Jean thanked the committee members for sending her videos of the traffic disturbances on Chelsea Bridge and Queenstown Road. She had sent them on to the local MP as well as the Wandsworth Safety Officer. At the next meeting she would report on what their process was.

Jean also suggested that R&R send a monthly report to all residents noting any incidents of criminal activity, such as theft of bicycles, assaults or muggings. All agreed that it was important to report such incidents however few there might be.

Louis reported an issue raised by Kirt about the poor quality of the bike shed fixtures in the car park which were not secure enough and which as a result not many residents used. He proposed to add this point to the P1 parking committee document.

Mike commented that the committee did not seem to have a joined up approach to communications with residents and requested that this be discussed at the next meeting.

Louis informed the committee that Toby, Catherine formed the P1 car park working group, that they had walked around the lower car park and noted that the upper car park was much better maintained and much cleaner. They planned to address this issue to improve standards.

Charlie thanked Toby for booking the beautiful meeting room at BPS and commented on how enjoyable it had been for a few of us to meet in person and discuss CBW matters. He said that the Residents Committee was in charge of looking after the physical buildings and suggested that it should be compulsory for all committee members to attend at least twice year in person thereby showing their strong connection to the residence.

Natalia and Mike both enquired about the general meeting with residents which had been formerly discussed. Catherine confirmed that the plan was to push R&R to have a joint meeting with all residents and the RA.

Catherine said that the next meeting would take place on Sunday 24 October. This subsequently changed to **Sunday 31 October**.

Action points

1. Mike to draft a Code of Conduct for RA committee members.
2. Charlie to draft a letter to local MP asking her to write to Professor Hopkins to find out whether the announced timeline for preparing primary legislation was still valid.
3. Stephen to follow up with R&R on what environmental measures are currently in place.
4. Mike to prepare an update for the residents on the survey's initial findings in early October and draft the full report in time for the next RA meeting.
5. Louis to draft bullet points of the main aims of the Sopwith Way group for BH.
6. Louis to circulate the minutes of the BPS meeting regarding planning permission changes.
7. All to send any questions regarding the R&R waking watch credit note draft to Stephen and Catherine.
8. Stephen to ask R&R to send a monthly report to all residents of any incidents of criminal activity, such as theft of bicycles, assaults or muggings.
9. Stephen to push R&R to organise a joint meeting with all residents and the RA.