

**FIELDEND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION LTD
DIRECTORS' REPORT
OCTOBER 2011 – SEPTEMBER 2012**

1.0. Chairman's Introduction

It was always the intention of Span that residents take an active role in the management of the estates, both socially and in looking after the buildings and grounds. From its inception, Fieldend has always had an active Board of Directors run by *its* residents and this is still true today.

During 2012 The Board has continued to work to ensure that Fieldend is maintained to a high standard and is financially secure. The Board continued to meet at regular 6 weekly intervals, published 5 newsletters and facilitated the sale of 3 properties by the transfer of shares.

Since the AGM on 8th February 2012 a few changes have taken place: Steve Abbs (Secretary) and Emma Lynch (Gardens Director) have left Fieldend and therefore the Board. Sally Stones (No 27) has been appointed by the Board as Gardens Director, Sally has held the position before and has a wealth of experience, we are very grateful to her for coming to the rescue. Joanna O'Sullivan has taken on the roles of Acting Secretary.

The Board was therefore constituted as follows:

Chairman: Sarah Dietz (No 8)

Secretary & Newsletter Secretary: Joanna O'Sullivan (No 31)

Treasurer: Colin Hatton-Smith (No 6)

Gardens: Sally Stones (No 27)

Maintenance: Theo Williams (No 44)

Board Member & Minutes Secretary: Isabelle Epps (No 28)

We always welcome new members. if you are interested in joining please talk to a member of the current Board.

The Board has been slowly improving the **Fieldend website** at www.fieldend.com. We have included new planning pages to give residents information about the restrictions on Fieldend imposed by the Scheme of Management, Fieldends conservation areas status and Article 4(2) directions. The site has been kept up-to-date with photos from the Fieldend social events and has a new page called "Span on Film" which provides links to clips on You-Tube about Span and Fieldend.

Those using Fieldend as a free car park have again kept us all busy and once again we thank Joyce Jacques (No 1) for her vigilant ticketing of the 'offenders'. We are also grateful to other residents for discouraging non-visiting motorists from parking in the Red Square. The board has again been in contact with Newland House School, St Mary's college, the council and the parking enforcement agency urging them to support us in our attempts to advise motorists. We have tried various combinations of warning signs and residents parking signs throughout the year – none of which have much effect on persistent offenders.

There were a few cases of fly-tipping on the perimeter road during 2012 and a couple of cases of minor vandalism: the meter box by the East garage block was broken and the play house in the play area was uprooted and pushed over. We thank residents for being vigilant and drawing these issues to our attention. The council has been extremely efficient in removing dumped rubbish and we thank Andy Whateley (No 8) for repairing the Play House. The fly-tipping seems to have abated now that the perimeter has been cleared and tidied.

At the 2011 AGM, residents were asked to vote on whether **satellite dishes** should be permitted at Fieldend, subject to approval by the FRAL Board. The vote passed by a small majority, taking into account votes cast by postal ballot before the AGM. Due to the narrow margin of the vote, the Board decided to consult residents on draft guidelines that would set out the grounds on which satellite dishes would be permitted. Following comments from a number of residents, these guidelines were published on the Fieldend website and distributed to residents. We would like to thank Roger Joiner (No 5) for his help and advice in drafting the guidelines. The guidelines note that the primary objective is to preserve the visual appearance of Fieldend and that no dish would be permitted where installation would impact the visual appearance of Fieldend. Since the guidelines were published, the Board has received one application for the installation of a satellite dish. The Board approved this application and has been notified that planning permission was sought and granted by Richmond Council.

At the 2010 AGM residents approved the use of opaque laminate glass in the porch windows. At the time it was the Board's understanding that changing existing glass to the new laminate glass would *not* require planning permission. We have subsequently found out that planning permission *is* required under Article 4(2) directions which state that any change to the external appearance of the properties requires permission from LBRuT. We thank Barbara Attherton (No 38) for following this up with the conservation officer and we will soon be issuing guidance to residents about this change. Retrospective planning permission has been sought and granted for those residents who have changed their glass between 2011 and now.

2.0. Gardens' Report

Another good year in the gardens. Sally Stones took over from Emma Lynch in the autumn and hopes to carry on with the good work done. 2012 saw some tree work carried out, this was difficult to schedule due to prolonged council approval processes and the painting programme. There is more to be done subject to council approval.

The tip area remains closed and access reserved. The area is no longer to be used by residents and the Board wish to thank residents for adhering to the request to refrain from dumping garden rubbish by its gate. Instead green bins have been provided and despite being one down for part of the year are working well. The annual bonfire is a great help.

Many thanks to Allen and his team who continue to care for the grounds and give excellent service.

3.0. Maintenance Report

2012 being the year of the four yearly repaint, the task of maintaining Fieldend's middle-aged infrastructure was more eventful than usual. The predictable cocktail of fly tippers, vandals, mother nature, recumbent LBRuT employees and heavy-handed decorators kept FRAL nicely busy.

Repairs Undertaken:

A dodgy Transit van of no fixed abode kicked things off by knocking over a bollard and cracking a large area of concrete in Red Square causing about £300 of damage. Hopefully the van sustained a fair bit of damage too, but the bollards themselves are becoming a problem.

The reinforcing inside the bollards gives them strength but its also their greatest weakness. Water ingress causes rusting of the steel rods and combines with frost to split open the bollards. Upon examination it was clear 4 bollards needed replacing with 6 others requiring urgent repairs. Complete replacement was proposed by FRAL but, at a cost of over £400 each to remove, dispose of and replace, this course of action was deemed uneconomic. Instead repairs to all 10 bollards were expertly undertaken by Alex Serridge (No 7). Needless to say these crude pieces of WWII engineering will need more maintenance or replacement in the near future.

The highways Department of LBRuT council were responsive, repairing potholes around the perimeter road, although clearly more are now needed, however the street lighting department - not so much. All attempts to contact them, whether it be to adjust the wattage in over bright bulbs or to discuss the possibility of creating a uniform lighting solution for the whole of Fieldend seem to go into some sort of communications dead end deep in the bowels of Twickenham town hall. We won't give up though.

Luckily we do control our own communal lighting and, with Ian McCann's (No 22) help, electrician George Hammond continues to gradually upgrade the fittings, bulbs and sensors around the development. This is helping to reduce energy costs and increasing unit lifespan.

FRAL has also arranged to fix water taps, private parking posts 1 – 4, vandalized 10 mph speed signs and repaired vandalized electricity meter boxes.

Upgrades

The stockpiles of gritting salt sit there ready for our annual fortnight of freezing weather. In an effort to get the upper hand in the perpetual war on parking we've added, and sometimes taken away RESIDENTS ONLY PARKING signs. And to help spread the love, the two communal wheel barrows have been given secure homes at both ends of Fieldend with a combination lock for use at residents pleasure. Lastly a ladder has been donated by a departing resident and resides in the old garden refuse area

The 2012 Repainting

Preparation for the painting programme began in November 2011.

Based on past experience of perfunctory project management, all round architectural Fieldend go-to guy Jim Strike (No 24) was engaged as project surveyor for FRAL. Jim communicated to the board every stage of what has become an increasingly bureaucratic process.

In April 2012 Avalon were engaged to undertake the work. This decision, taken by FRAL in consultation with Jim, was based not only on a competitive price but a notably superior willingness to engage and communicate from the word go. It was noted at the special painting meeting in April that, despite removing the doors from work plan, the project would go £5k – £6k over budget

Surveying & Repairs

From early 2012 Jim started surveying houses in 3 separate blocks, East Square, West Square and Red Square and the rest. Jim produced detailed surveys for every home owner and offered explicit advice on repairs needed. From the beginning both Jim and FRAL were keen to communicate the importance of preparation for the repaint to be effective.

It was noted by FRAL that residents responded exceptionally well to the surveys, undertaking extensive repairs to their contemporary looking but relentlessly ageing houses. As usual specially made Shiplap was made economically available for façade repairs. Thanks again to Alex S for his advice and also to Roy Dietz (No 20) for storage.

The individual house repairs threw up notable problems such as how to replace the grey asbestos fascia boards. Advice was sought from LBRut conservation officer on whether replacing the asbestos panel required planning permission. The council's advice is that all repairs that do not result in a like-for-like replacement of materials would require planning permission, including the replacement of asbestos fascias due to the fact that such material is obsolete.

Overall the results of everyone's efforts to prepare their houses for painting were deemed highly satisfactory.

Shades of Grey!

Around the same time a trilogy of naughty novels started flying off the shelves, painting started and inevitably, controversy followed. Scratched windows during prep was eventually attributed to one rogue worker, unfortunately the damage was done. While some slap dash painting is par for the course on a big commercial job like this, it was generally rectified rapidly and willingly. This was helped by Jim Strike's regular walkarounds with Miros, the Avalon foreman, who was responsive to concerns such as the *Darker Shade of Grey* (tm) being accidentally used on the top fascias of about 10 houses. Even with Jim temporarily ensconced in one of his palatial foreign hideaways, this was corrected quickly and without fuss.

Contrasting Success

Due to the thoroughness of the previous (2008) colour scheme consultation among residents FRAL the two-tone grey paint scheme was maintained, however it was decided that a slightly more obvious tonal difference between the shades, employing a darker grey, would add definition. Hopefully everyone agrees this has worked well.

Despite what was quite possibly the worst summer weather imaginable in which to undertake a massive outdoor painting project completion was achieved in late September, more or less on schedule. In comparison with one or two of the more troublesome repaints, overall the repaint was deemed a success by the board. Our thanks go out to all those homeowners who took on the process of preparation with such vigour and in particular to Jim Strike for guiding the project to a very satisfactory conclusion.

4.0. Financial Report

We made a loss of £11,558 in 2011/12 (a loss of £4,569 in 2010/11). The Accumulated Fund at 30th September 2012 is £9,579 deficit. Maintenance debtors at 30th September 2012 were £1,106, but all of this has now been collected

The main cause of the loss in 2011/12 was the cost of the 2012 repainting. The actual cost was £87,079 and we had budgeted £80,000.

After the 2008 repainting we had a surplus from the painting fund, and used this to keep maintenance charges as low as possible. With the increased cost of the 4 yearly repainting program , and the increase in the cost of maintaining (an ageing) Fieldend the Board feel that maintenance charges should be progressively increased over the next three years, to ensure that we have sufficient funds to meet Fieldend's needs.

We have budgeted for a repainting cost of £100,000 in 2016 (an increase of 15% over the 2012 cost). In order to achieve this, the board propose to increase maintenance charges to £90 per month from 1st October 2013, and to £100 per month from 1st October 2014.

It is also probable that the board will also need to increase maintenance charges to £110 per month from 1st October 2015.

[After 2015/16 the frequency and percentage value of maintenance increases should fall.]

Fieldend's maintenance charges currently compare very favourably to other similar estates, (and will still do so after the proposed increases over the next three years).

In conclusion

The Board members are extremely thankful to residents who have aided and supported their work over the past year. Your continued support of Fieldend is essential for the smooth running of the estate and maintaining its very special community feel.

As Fieldend ages the job of maintaining and improving it becomes more complex and expensive. 2013 promises to be another busy and challenging year of the Board: We will wrap up the painting programme; kick-off the door varnishing project; continue to look at the Scheme of Management and offer advice to residents on the maintenance of their properties and the estate in general. We will also look at projecting large capital cost maintenance projects and ensure Fieldend is properly financed.

The Board submit this report and the accompanying Financial Statement to Shareholders for your approval and hope to see as many of you as possible at the AGM.

For the Board

Sarah Dietz
Chairman
Fieldend Residents' Association Ltd
January 2013