

Chelsea Bridge Wharf Resident's Association (CBWRA) Minutes – 18 July 2021

Attendees

Chairperson: Stephen Thompson
Company Secretary: Catherine Thomé
Jean Dornhofer - Community liaison
Kirt Bains - Building representative for Horace
Louis Kendall - Building representative for Warwick
Mike O'Driscoll - Building representative for Warwick and researcher
Toby Spoerer - Building representative for Lanson, technology & scrutiny
Qin Xie - Building representative for Burnelli

Apologies

Treasurer - Charlie Garton-Jones
Patrick Savage - Building representative for Centurion & scrutiny

No show

Alexander Minakov - Building representative for Oswald
Aarya Mishra - Building representative for Hawker
Dorota Szelagowska – database
Hasher Marouf - Building representative for Oswald
Jovdat Guliyev - Building representative for Oswald
Natalia Nyudyurbegova - Technology
Rui Ramalho - Building Representative for Howard
Susan de Laszlo - Building representative for Howard
Vasundhara Talwar - Building representative for Warwick

Update on ponds

Toby updated the committee and said the quotes for pond lining from the RA's consultant came to just under £250,000 plus VAT which was substantially lower than Rendall & Rittner's (R&R) quotes of 1.6 million plus VAT, plus fees. The RA quotes were only for the pond lining and additional costs such as electrics and any other work would be added. R&R's consultants had planned a three day visit to measure up and do their own surveys the following week and Toby had a call scheduled with their consultants on 6th August to run through their findings before tendering the work out to contractors.

Stephen asked whether the R&R's quote included electrical and lighting components and Toby said it was unclear. His understanding was that R&R's pond lining specialist called Triflex charged £70.00/sqm, which was similar to the costings he had received which he presumed would be the highest cost. Toby said he would clarify the quote differences to ensure we were comparing like-for-like quotes. Toby added that the contractor he was in contact with provided a 25 year guarantee on the product as well. Stephen thanked Toby for his hard work on this.

Jean queried whether the RA had the ability to stop R&R from going ahead with the 1.6 million contract. Stephen explained that there was a statutory measure called Section 20 intended to protect residents from high expenditures undertaken and allowing residents to provide alternatives quotations. One of the main provisions of Section 20 is that residents have to approve the proposed expenditure, through ballot. Information about this process was subsequently circulated to the committee.

Update on fountains

Stephen said the underlying issue was the age of the system and the constant need to replace different components. He said that Brian Clue, the R&R facilities manager, had confirmed fountains would be fixed in the coming week. [The fountains became operational again on Friday 23 July]. Stephen said the immediate plan was to get the fountains working and that in September/October there would be discussions to explore options going forward such as wholesale renovation, replacement, or potentially transforming into flower beds. These options would be put to the residents in the upcoming residents' survey [which was launched on 21 July].

Update on insurance

Stephen advised the committee that it was not possible to seek alternative quotes for the Berkeley Homes (BH) buildings as the policy was a group one. It may be possible to get an alternative quote for the Estate Management buildings, notwithstanding we have to evidence that we have more than 50% of the residents as members. This evidence will be available in the form of the subscription fees as per the R&R accounts letter sent in July. In short we should be able to get an alternative quote for the E and M buildings in early September.

Update on intercom system

Stephen said he had reviewed an R&R draft document for the Section 20 consultation process for the intercoms and that Toby was putting together the formal proposal from a suitable alternative provider that was less expensive than the R&R quotation received. Toby said that importantly their systems had a history of lasting. He said R&R were in the consultation process and were looking to bring in two additional vendors, and so it could take another 22 weeks. The first stage of replacement would be Centurion Building and then rolled out to the remaining buildings.

R&R management

R&R's performance and potential options for change were discussed.

Stephen then updated all on the £360,000 'waking watch / fire safety enhancement officers' refund which R&R did not communicate clearly about to residents and led to numerous queries. Richard Daver [of R&R] promised he would provide in the next week a clear, concise and precise summary of how the re-credit mechanism would work.

Residents' meeting with R&R and RA

Stephen added that the request for quarterly resident meetings with R&R was on hold until a new Estates Manager was appointed. Kirt suggested notifying residents of this as they have been requesting meetings for some time. Mike commented that it had been months and that residents would not understand the delay in meeting up. Stephen said that meetings in person had not been possible due to the pandemic. Catherine reminded all that the RA had been aiming for a meeting in September, hosted by R&R, in a room where the RA would also be present and at the end it would be followed by a social. Mike suggested doing a meeting online and Catherine observed that there were too many residents to have a meaningful conversation online. Stephen concluded that the RA would consider this at the next meeting if no date could be set in September for an in-person meeting. [Brian was subsequently invited to attend the last 15 minutes of the next RA meeting]

Communications

Stephen thanked Dorota and Natalia for their work for preparing and emailing the RA's first newsletter. Dorota was still working on updating the RA database.

Mike suggested that the item pertaining to an RA website be discussed at the next meeting.

Stephen requested that any committee members discussing or writing about matters relating to CBW they make it clear that it is not the official view of the RA committee.

Residents' questionnaire

Mike said that the residents' questionnaire was ready and that it would be launched around 21st July once Dorota had confirmed that the RA database had been updated. He said the posters were ready as well and Catherine thanked Toby and Louis for their work on this. R&R would also be distributing the link to the questionnaire to residents on their database. Mike said the closing date was 11th August and that he would prepare a report within two months of survey closure so that the RA could share findings with all the residents.

Community / neighbourhood

Jean said that the local MP would post a petition on her website concerning the traffic nuisance on Queenstown Road for all residents to sign. She said that the RA would post the link on the app once it is available.

Jean also said that the community safety officer had had a meeting with the Metropolitan Police (Met) and they were due to conduct physical inspections in the coming weeks and closely monitor the receipt of any notices to the Met of the traffic nuisance. The RA would put a post on the app to encourage residents particularly in this next two months to report any nuisance to the Met via their website. This was subsequently posted on 28 July.

Qin enquired whether this pertained solely to the disturbance due to racers on Queenstown rd. or to increasing anti-social behaviour on Sopwith Way as well. Jean confirmed the current focus was on the former but that residents were of course welcome to report incidents about Sopwith Way. Stephen agreed there was a security issue there. Louis added that as a private road associated with the development, perhaps a security barrier could be installed to restrict traffic as it was getting busier with deliveries and taxis to the Battersea Power Station. Mike said he had been talking to Berkeley Homes (BH) about Sopwith Way for years and noted his successful campaign to get speed ramps installed and to force BH to stop using the depots in SW for storage, Mike noted that SW was intended to be open for emergency vehicle access and for deliveries only, but not for through traffic to Battersea Power Station. He said there used to be a gate that could be opened for emergency vehicles and utility vehicles only which was removed around 2016 to link Queenstown Road to Grosvenor arch for access to BPS, without resident consultation but BH had been resisting the idea to have one again.

Mike suggested a sub-committee be formed and this was subsequently done, to discuss this issue further and bring forward proposals for approval of committee.

Constitution

Stephen apologised for the delay in updating the constitution draft further to comments received from committee members. He would circulate an update in time for it to be reviewed and voted on at the August meeting.

Environment

Further to raising environment concerns in earlier meetings, Stephen said he had had discussions with Jennifer Mann [and subsequently raised with Brian Klue] about potentially connecting with a solar power company, using the roof, which would be a cost effective way to producing and selling energy. He said he would forward an email from R&R listing what they are doing in terms of recycling as he felt more needed to be done. He would also circulate a proposal from the gardening company to install a living wall at CBW, which would improve biodiversity, however this was quoted at £20,000.

In closing, Catherine proposed to hold the next RA meeting on Sunday 22nd August in person.

Action points:

1. Stephen to check R&R's terms of engagement with BH
2. Stephen will ask Charlie to provide an RTM timeline
3. Mike to research and provide a list of recommended management companies which other RAs / residents have been successfully working with (beyond the early 'honeymoon' period)
4. Jean to propose a subcommittee to review R&R's performance
5. Stephen to follow up with Richard Daver regarding the clear, concise and precise summary of how the re-credit mechanism for the night watch refund will work
6. Stephen to post an update on the app regarding the delay in having a residents' meeting with R&R and the RA
7. Jean to post MP website link on app regarding the petition once available
8. Sopwith Way sub-committee to propose plan of action at the next meeting