

Chelsea Bridge Wharf Resident's Association (CBWRA) minutes – October 2021

Attendees

Chairperson: Stephen Thompson (and Eustace rep)

Company Secretary: Catherine Thomé

Treasurer: Charlie Garton-Jones

Kirt Bains	Building representative Horace
Louis Kendall	Building representative for Warwick
Natalia Nyudyurbegova	Technology
Susan de Laszlo	Building representative Howard (on zoom)
Toby Spoerer	Building representative for Lanson, technology & scrutiny
Vasundhara Talwar	Building representative for Warwick (on zoom)

Action points:

1. Stephen to draft a code of conduct and terms of engagement including use of language, attendance, warnings.
2. Natalia to draft the next newsletter, light in tone and focused on community.
3. Dorota to continue to work on the residents' database.
4. Louis and Vasundhara to draft a poster to announce the residents' meeting on December 5th or 12th to be confirmed
5. Charlie to draft an invitation to residents for the next RA Chair elections on app.
6. Toby to post on the app R&R's maintenance progress
7. Toby to draft/post on the app bullet points of the main items the RA is working on (eg ponds, intercoms etc)
8. Toby to pin the residents' survey initial findings to the top of the app page
9. Toby to re-post Mike's letter on the app with the RA response

Committee members had a discussion about Mike O'Driscoll's resignation and the public allegations he had made on the residents' app. The Chairman said he had prepared a statement in response and it was agreed that Mike's letter would be re-posted on the app along with it so readers would have both views. Catherine voiced her concern over Mike's accusation regarding the integrity of the committee and stated that it had been open and transparent, minutes of meetings had been posted regularly and that the committee had always welcomed any resident's request to attend a meeting. Catherine also mentioned 'for the record' that there had been several complaints from different committee members about Mike.

Kirt suggested that the RA communicates more with residents and public bullet points in addition to the minutes. Vasundhara noted that Mike had been working on a number of projects for the Warwick residents specifically such as the insurance which she and perhaps Louis could take over from Mike after a handover conversation. She added that that residents needed to be made more aware of what the committee was working on and that acting on the survey results was important. Louis said that whilst he appreciated the specific issues at Warwick, the priority was the whole development and that there were so many outstanding issues that it was necessary for the committee to prioritise some. It was agreed the committee would work to better engage and communicate more with residents.

Vasundhara raised the outstanding point about a code of conduct which Mike had agreed to draft. Catherine added that it should include terms of engagement and attending some meetings in person. Stephen agreed to draft a document and circulate it for everyone's input.

The committee proceeded to review the last meetings' action points.

R&R current environmental measures

Stephen said he had circulated R&R's actions which seemed fairly minimal and that the committee should explore further areas with them. Toby suggested that a sub-committees could work on issues such as better recycling if there were more volunteers willing to invest their time. Natalia said she had raised solar panels with Berkeley Homes but had had no response. She suggested more work could be done with the council and with the MP as they were likely to have ESG committees. Louis suggested that as R&R were looking into additional lighting on the piazza, the committee should ensure it is LED or review other options such as solar power. Susan suggested that R&R could assist more with the installation of smart meters.

Residents' survey results

Further to the initial findings, it was agreed the committee would discuss priorities at the next meeting. The findings had already been posted on the app, however they would be re-posted and pinned at the top for easy access.

Residents' meeting in December

Catherine reminded all that the residents had been waiting for a meeting to be arranged with R&R and with the RA for some time. She also noted that the main reason there had not yet been a meeting was Covid-19 restrictions and the reason there had not been a zoom meeting with all the residents was because it was not straightforward to manage a meeting with potentially hundreds of people on the call. The committee would propose December 5th to R&R and request a zoom option if possible.

Right to Manage timeline

Instead of writing to the MP, Charlie said he had contacted Professor Hopkins directly about the timeline for RTM and he was awaiting a reply. He said he had asked for a rough timescale and confirmation that it would be ready at the beginning of next year and then going to Parliament at the end of next year.

Sopwith Way

Further to the update which he had circulated, Louis said he was waiting for R&R to come back with costings and suitable proposals to then be put to Berkeley Homes. Once this was obtained, the committee would communicate information to the residents.

'Night watch' R&R credit note

Mike was the only person who commented on the R&R letter. Stephen said that this letter summarised how the re-credits were being allocated to residents in different buildings. A sum was credited to the buildings' accounts [and essentially would reduce the service charge]. It was not a direct refund to residents' bank accounts.

The committee moved on to discuss the main agenda points.

Cladding and state of balconies update

Stephen said he had spoken with Simon Challen of Berkeley Homes about the cladding removal target date for Q1 2022 and the residents' escalating complaints. Simon explained there were macroeconomic issues such as workers availability, access to materials and logistical problems. Stephen said a statement would be issued from Berkeley in the coming week that would provide the new removal dates for the first quarter of 2022 and that he had insisted on a firm, realistic deadline to avoid repeated delays. Catherine added that a cladding update had also been requested in the upcoming monthly R&R maintenance update due the next day.

Kirt commented that a gap between completion of the works and scaffolding removal was needed to check on any residual issues. He explained that there had been a lot of water pouring on to balconies of Warwick and Horace and that a good clean would be required followed by a check for leaks after a rainy day. Stephen said he would make this point to Simon. Vasundhara [Warwick] said it was more than water and something like clay or a chemical mixed with water. It was noted that issues in Warwick were not related to the cladding as it has no scaffolding.

Communications

Mike had raised a residents website previously. It was agreed that no one on the committee had time to invest in creating and maintaining it.

There was a discussion about the next newsletter and the email distribution list which brought to light that much work remained to be done to optimise the residents' database. It was agreed that this was an important means to communicate with residents, particularly when the time came to vote for the Right to Manage (RTM).

Natalia agreed to draft a newsletter and to advertise the residents' meeting once confirmed with R&R. It was agreed to keep it light-hearted and community-focused. Natalia suggested a feature supporting residents' businesses. Vasundhara recommended that any promotion of residents' business on the app be done by the individuals themselves rather than CBWRA Official as it could be misinterpreted as a paid post.

Vasundhara offered to design and print a poster and to arrange distribution all buildings' lifts and the Marketplace shop.

Toby said there were currently 790 members on the app and that it would be good to cross reference with the email distribution list. Kirt suggested reaching out to residents via the building reps to ask them to share their email addresses. Toby also suggested sharing an R&R monthly summary of maintenance matters and progress, different to the one circulated to residents via the R&R portal.

Traffic calming measures and antisocial behaviour

Stephen said that he and Jean had been in touch with the Wandsworth representative and the local MP but that things did not seem to move forward. He said he could not understand why in an area that is so prone to racing high performance cars and dangerous driving, there still was no traffic calming and enforcement. He said he would continue to try and work out who was the right person to approach to get things moving. Queenstown Road was not a red route

and the cycle lane bollards had gaps in front of the burger shop which was a further danger to cyclist as cars pull in and out to park.

Constitution and next Chair of RA elections

Stephen said the original constitution which had been circulated was mainly there as an emergency check on any dangerous or autocratic behaviour of any current or future Chairs of the RA. He said Mike was the only committee member who commented on it and that anyone who would like to draft a new constitution was welcome to do so. He did not feel it was a priority. Stephen asked whether committee members had any objections to a light-touch, broad brush approach to managing its own affairs. He said that his “three strikes and you’re out” approach was to keep it simple. There were no objections.

The discussion moved on to the next elections as Stephen’s tenure would come to an end on January 1st. It was agreed that elections would be promoted as soon as possible. Charlie reminded everyone of the process whereby anyone could put their name forward, prepare a one page manifesto and that all residents could vote anonymously to elect their Chair. It was agreed that it would be preferable to have candidates attend a meeting in person to answer any questions from residents.

Any other business

Kirt raised that parcel deliveries were a major topic of complaint on the app and that residents blamed R&R for this issue. Toby said that Louis and he had recently spoken to R&R about this and that they were planning to issue a statement on what the policy on parcel deliveries was. Some committee members had heard that a fob was given to some delivery men to access buildings during the pandemic and that this endured. All agreed this was a security issue.

The conversation moved to big projects such as the ponds and the intercom system which needed addressing adequately so they did not involve constant expense. Toby said the pond lighting was expected to be fixed in the coming week, they would then be relined in the new year. He confirmed that R&R were still planning to temporarily refill the ponds in November. Stephen added that R&R were cutting down the trees around the big lights. He said that the piazza would soon look cosmetically good and that this showed the engagement with R&R in getting things done, however humble an achievement.

Louis suggested that it was R&R’s job as the estate managers to investigate achievable projects such as recycling or energy saving ones and to submit rough budgets to the committee for review, rather than expect committee members to spend time and energy coming up with ideas or solutions. Everyone agreed.

Catherine thanked Toby to hosting the meeting at BPS.

The next meeting would take place on Sunday 5 December (to be confirmed).