

**FIELDEND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION LTD**  
**DIRECTORS' REPORT**  
**OCTOBER 2017 – SEPTEMBER 2018**

**1. Chair's introduction**

The Board met at regular, six weekly intervals throughout the year, focussing on the general upkeep and maintenance of the estate, within this year's agreed budgetary constraints and with the greatly appreciated assistance of many of our shareholders. We facilitated the sale of three properties. We issued four newsletters, kept the website up-to-date, supported the regular Fieldend events run by residents (including the Go-Slow day, Summer Party and Bonfire Night) and hosted a FRAL Christmas drink and nibbles event.

But it's not all fun and relaxation, there's been some work going on too! It is clear from the reports of the individual directors following that this has been another busy year with the grounds and the fabric of the estate needing continuing attention.

New data protection legislation was passed in May 2018 which forced us to examine our data protection protocol. We produced a privacy policy, which is available on the website, and asked all shareholders to complete an updated data consent form. This was a hefty task and took many hours of research and legwork to complete, and we are now fully compliant with the new legislation.

We continue to have issues with parking on the estate. We again noted with concern instances of anti-social behaviour from outsiders. While we continue to work with the University and police to tackle the problems, we urge residents to contact the police directly if they see anti-social behaviour taking place on the estate. Thank you to all residents who help ticket nuisance parkers. We again discussed the use of CCTV but again felt that the practical and social implications of this were not commensurate with any potential deterrent value.

We investigated erecting a Fieldend notice board on the external wall of the small garage block as you enter Fieldend. We had hoped that this would create a place for residents to advertise items or post notices of events. Unfortunately, the council advised that an advertising licence would be required, and we deemed this too expensive. We will continue to use the newsletter and email distribution list to pass on information to residents.

FRAL owns the freehold for the Fieldend garages. Some years ago, shareholders were given the opportunity to purchase a long-term lease; for those who did not these leases are now relatively short (less than 40 years) and this is causing problems for residents wanting to sell their properties. This year, Helen Middleton-Price has been running a project to identify the leases in question and pull together a protocol for extending them. This is a work in progress and we will be able to circulate more information to the residents concerned soon.

We had some changes to the Board last year with the resignation of Barbara Atherton as Chair and Sarah Chudleigh as Treasure. These positions were filled with the election of myself and Colin Hatton-Smith to the Board.

Shareholders will not need reminding of the importance of contributing to the care, maintenance and events which are the cornerstone of life at Fieldend and if anyone would like to consider joining (or re-joining) the board please do speak to any of the Directors in the next week or two.

**2. Gardens report**

It has been a challenging year for the gardens: we had a wet winter followed by the long hot summer – not an ideal combination for trees and shrubs.

The tree survey carried out in the spring highlighted phytophthora – a soil born fungal disease that thrives in heavy waterlogged soil – in two silver birches, which then had to be felled. This was especially relevant given the winter rain and the proximity of these trees to soakaways.

We are pleased to report that the Council adopted the trees on Red Square and carried out the much-needed pruning.

The drought posed its own problems, with the newly planted shrubs most vulnerable. A big thank you to our residents who took on watering duties, thankfully most survived.

Allen and his team have once again done an excellent job maintaining the estate. Older failing shrubs have been replaced and new turf laid where needed.

We have had regular tidy days and would love to see more people join our hardy volunteers. These days are a good way to meet your neighbours and maintain the estate. Many thanks to Barbara who supplies much needed refreshments.

### **3. Maintenance report**

It has been a steady but eventful year in the maintenance department, with improvements being made on a couple of fronts.

Firstly, with encouragement from FRAL, the Council agreed to replace all Fieldend's aged sodium and florescent lighting with modern LED, dimmable lighting. By allowing the tree and path lighting to appear brighter, this more economical, directionally focussed lighting has substantially improved the night time atmosphere of the development, not least for any bats.

As feared, the new pathway lights have proved vulnerable to breakage at the base. Reinforcement plates were installed and now these lights will be far more robust when under attack from the mysterious light hating creature that stalks Fieldend. An LED light was installed above the entrance sign by George and Mark Hammond plus all FRAL maintained lights were cleaned twice during the year. Thanks, as ever, to Ian McCann for supporting us when needed, though almost all the bulbs now super reliable LEDs, he hasn't got nearly as much to do!

Repairs to entrance road parking bay 'Reserved' signs were carried out, though these wooden posts prone to rot and damage, especially when given the odd nudge. These probably need a better, long term solution.

At our instigation, the Council installed French gravel around trees in several paved areas, providing a tidier, better surrounding for expanding tree trunks, plus a heavy moss infestation was cleared from the small garage block off the entrance road. It has been noted the tarmac here is severely worn and will probably need complete replacement in the not too distant future.

A small section of play area garden wall was collapsing as were several other wall tops on the perimeter sections, these were rebuilt by excellent brickie, Dave Mathews. Additionally, the ha-ha wall on the northern perimeter road was root infested and refurbished by Allen and his crew. Allen has also built large leaf composting bins in the gardens and maintenance storage area. Several blocked drains have plagued the estate this last year, with the council and Thames Water conspiring to avoid taking responsibility, however FRAL, along with help from residents, ensured Thames Water did eventually act to unblock the drains, though damage to the sub structure remains and is being chased.

Two new wheel barrows were purchased to replaced one that were rusted out, and a new salt dispenser is being bought. All in all, it was an economical year for maintenance with

most costs being routine and only a modest emergency expenditure on the brick walls required.

#### **4. Financial Report**

For the summer 2020 repainting we currently have a provision of £72,500. With further funds to come from 2018/19 year and 2019/20 year, we are aiming to have a final provision of £135,000.

In addition to our usual spend on gardening, trees and grounds maintenance, we are planning to replace the garage gutters which are past their useful life. This cost will be spread over the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years.

Maintenance contributions are currently set at £130 per month, but we will review this once we have confirmation of our 2020 repainting costs.

Our accumulated fund (general reserve) stands at £7,081 as at 30 September 2018.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks for Sarah Chudleigh's work as treasurer from June 2015 to February 2018.

#### **In conclusion**

The Board is extremely thankful to residents who have aided and supported its 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.

The Board is always keen to improve how it serves the Fieldend community and would welcome any suggestions from residents. Board member details are available on the newsletter and on the Fieldend website.

The Board submits 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  
Chair, Fieldend Residents Association Ltd  
January 2019

