

FIELDEND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION LTD
DIRECTORS' REPORT
OCTOBER 2018 – SEPTEMBER 2019

1. Chair's introduction

A sense of community is a central tenet to Span living and communal management is fundamental to conserving the design intention, character and community on Fieldend. While, at times, the rules and regulations may seem petty and restrictive they are essential in maintaining Fieldend's identity. This may seem an obvious statement but I think it worth promoting the underlying philosophy of Span and reflecting on its success. Fieldend is a stellar example of a Span estate; very few have survived so unaltered and in-line with the original Span vision. This is testament to the strong management committees we've had over the years and we are thankful to all our residents who obviously take pride in the estate and help us maintain its character for future generations.

Community events are a big part of life at Fieldend and as a board we have supported resident led events such as Bonfire Night and the Summer Party. We also run regular tidy days and hosted a Christmas drinks event for all residents. We endeavour to keep residents informed via regular email communications and quarterly newsletters. We keep the website up-to-date with Fieldend news and wider Span-related information.

Between September 2018 & 2019 action by the board in the role of general estate management has included the sale of 3 properties and 6 garage lease extensions. The Board met approximately every six weeks to review issues and scrutinise the accounts. We would like to thank Joy Jermy who left as a co-opted member of the board in 2019, and we welcome Shaun Betteridge who joined as secretary following Helen Middleton-Price's departure.

The garage lease extension project continued and we would like to thank Roy Dietz for his hard work taking over this project. Thanks also go to Ray Pinches who has scanned Marion Rogers's collection of historic Fieldend documents; these are now backed up and will provide a valuable insight into past events and life on the estate.

During 2019 we investigated switching Fieldend to a green electricity tariff. We thank Kate Thomas for her tenacity and perseverance with EDF and Bulb and even though the project concluded after the period under discussion here, I think it worth mentioning as Kate will be stepping down from the board. We thank Kate for her time on the board as Minutes Secretary, how she managed to pick out the salient points from our rambling discussions baffles me!

Anti-social behaviour – cannabis smoking, garage and shed break-ins, fly tipping, and even a hit and run where a police officer suffered a minor injury – was an unwanted feature of 2019. I'm pleased to say that we built up a very positive relationship with our ward officers and the police increased patrols around Fieldend. I have been struck by how quickly information about this antisocial behaviour is disseminated and how willing residents are to react and confront the perpetrators. Thank you for your vigilance.

Parking is an ever-present issue on Fieldend and we have worked with St Mary's University and Newland House School throughout the year to raise awareness of local parking restrictions and concerns. It's been clear for some time that the premature ending of the yellow lines outside number 48 cause confusion for drivers who see the end of marked restriction and assume it legitimate to park outside numbers 47/48. In 2019 we conducted a survey of all residents to gain views about extending the lines, 98% were in favour. We have been working with the council who have now instigated their long and protracted process to extend the markings. Thank you again to all residents who discourage inconsiderate parking and ticket persistent offenders.

We are always open to forging links with other Span estates and in 2019 we hosted a group from the Westfield Span estate in Ashsted, Surrey. We discussed the pro and cons of becoming a conservation area as well as a myriad of other maintenance and management issues. It was affirming and reassuring to hear that other Span estates have similar issues to us, and are dealing with them in similar ways. We hope that by forging these links we can encourage an appreciation of the significance of Span housing and a sense of shared responsibility towards the conservation of our unique environments.

2. Gardens report

It's been a busy year for the gardens with a focus on tree maintenance. The Horse Chestnut in the garage block near number 48 was pruned as was the Lime near number 38. The Copper Beeches near number 4 and the Plane trees along the entrance road were also all cut back. Unfortunately, we've had to remove a couple of dead Silver Birches near number 9 and number 28. Dead wood has been removed and we continue to work closely with our tree surgeons, OTT, and the council to monitor the health of our trees.

2019 was another dry summer and we'd like to thank residents who watered young trees and shrubs. We ran 4 tidy days and planted new bulbs and wildflowers around the estate. We thank residents who regularly come along to these events and Barbara Atherton who has provided much-needed refreshments.

Allen and his team at Reds Landscaping continue to look after the gardens well. Along with the usual tasks Allen has been busy replacing gravel in the alleyways, filling rat holes and filling the sinkhole outside number 7. We're very lucky to have a team that understand the estate so well and are willing to take on these minor maintenance tasks as well as the gardening.

3. Maintenance report

Maintenance on Fieldend during this last year was fortunately fairly low level with only a handful of unexpected repairs required. Exactly what we need with all the excitement of the repaint approaching.

After a number of mysterious breakages, the new pathway lighting installed in early 2018 was evidently not quite up to the brutality of life on Fieldend and needed to be reinforced.

New brackets were custom made and fitted. Now the lights are fit for purpose and no further failures have since occurred.

Much needed robust new hardwood parking posts were installed in the entrance bays giving a much smarter look with new Private Parking signs delivering a clear message at a readable height for those that choose to take any notice.

Small repairs to paving and re gravelling has been done as usual and some routine repairs were made on the vulnerable trellis and fencing on the southern perimeter road. We bought a new salt spreader which was used just once to guard against slippery paths in the one and only freeze last winter – global warming means 20 bags of salt has lasted 8 years!

Re Paint Preparations

In recognition of the scale of the task at hand and a need for scant carpentry skills to be shared amongst residents, preparations for the 2020 repaint cycle were started even earlier than usual, a full 18 months ahead of the scheduled start of painting. Mark Tullet was once again approached and, despite being based in Poland, agreed to undertake the repaint again. Due to good faith and general approval of workmanship, no tendering process was undertaken.

FRAL asked Mark to undertake more extensive surveys of each house than usual. The board encouraged him to examine each house as close as he dared and he then produce detailed survey documents. These surveys were delivered a full 12 months before any painting was due to commence giving residents the maximum possible window of opportunity for repairs.

A number of batches of correctly profiled larch weatherboard were bought and kept on hand for residents. A big thanks especially to Tom Barney for the continuing loan of his garage for storage of wood and paint. It makes a huge difference to the ease of this stock holding - and there's still plenty to go around.

In all, with Mark painting over his own work from last time, and as residents have been able to plan their repairs so far in advance – the chances for a reasonably smooth repainting process would seem reasonable.

4. Financial Report

Our accumulated fund (general reserve) has increased from £7,081 to £12,408 as at 30th September 2019. This increase is mainly due to not yet starting the replacement of the garage gutters. Theo has, however, been looking into suitable materials and potential contractors. We estimate the cost of this project to be in the region of £10,000.

We are on course to obtain a provision of £135,000 for the 2020 repainting. We currently have a provision of £105,000 as at 30th September 2019. If all goes well with the repaint, we will have funds left in the provision for repainting, to carry forward to the 2024 repainting.

In addition to our usual spend on gardening, trees and grounds maintenance there will be some additional costs in 2019/20 for the Fieldend 60th anniversary celebrations. We believe that we have sufficient funds to cover these additional costs and, the board recommend that

maintenance contributions be kept at £130 per month for the next financial year beginning on 1st October 2020.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Dietz', written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Dietz
Chair, Fieldend Residents Association Ltd
January 2020