

FIELDEND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Registered London 647147
Registered Office: 21 Fieldend, Twickenham, TW1 4TF

DIRECTORS' REPORT
OCTOBER 2022–SEPTEMBER 2023

1. CHAIR'S REPORT

The FRAL board of directors continued to meet roughly every six to eight weeks, publishing occasional newsletters and other notices of interest by email. The Fieldend website was kept up to date and recently thoroughly refreshed thanks to Sarah Dietz. The board has offered advice and guidance to residents seeking to extend and repair their houses. We have also maintained close relations with key council departments, St Mary's University and Newlands House School.

These twelve months have seen the board continue to invest residents' funds carefully, albeit under quite some pressure from inflation. Our trusty contractors have tended the gardens, trimmed the trees, fixed wobbly paving slabs, washed windows and upgraded electricals.

October 2022 was the first full month in which the new Controlled Parking Zones in nearby roads were in effect. It was feared these might turn Fieldend into a virtual Temptation Island for errant drivers seeking a freebie berth for their cars. However the result was actually fewer uninvited cars, and so we continue to enjoy perhaps some of the best hassle-free community parking in the area. The board, however, remains on its guard!

In November there was another well attended bonfire night party with cool bangs, hot dogs and warm beverages; we thank Jo & Killian for making it happen. The new tradition of advent window displays went up a notch in quality, and we saw Jim Strike's swansong as Director of Carol Singing. Thanks Jim, for your tuneful dedication over the years.

Summer saw a few informal gatherings plus the usual Summer Party in early July. Well done to all those who got involved, helping to organise and motivate.

Finally at the end of September it was 'Lights, Camera, Action' again as the original 1960s showhome, No1 Fieldend, was restyled as a film set. For a day or two there was a large number of people, kit and vehicles located around the entrance road, there was inevitably some minor inconvenience but the £1500 earned by Fieldend as a location fee has been put to good use.

There is always more to be done but hopefully once again we end the year with Fieldend in slightly better shape than it began.

Theo Williams, Chair

2. GARDENS

It has been another eventful year looking after the many trees, lawns and plants of Fieldend. A concerted effort by the gardeners saw substantial renewal of beds in both squares with shrubs removed and replanted, and new turf laid. The results have really smartened up the spaces and have allowed us to enlarge the lawns in some places. Allen and team continue to keep Fieldend looking its best.

In late November the gardening team had a tidy-up bonfire on the Triangle. It was a rather dank misty day and unfortunately a lot of unpleasant pollution was released into the local area. This led to many complaints from Fieldend residents, our neighbours and indeed, to the council. As a result the board decided that, with the exception of the traditional Guy Fawkes bonfire, further bonfires of garden waste would be stopped. Garden waste will instead be shredded or removed from site.

The fireworks-night bonfire will take place on a new fire pit to be built in the coming months as part of the Triangle re-landscaping.

The annual tree survey took place and part of the work was carried out in August. No major problems were found and minimal work needed to be done.

Tidy days were held, perhaps fewer than in the past but welcome all the same. We all share and enjoy the gardens; it is a joint effort and much appreciated.

Sally Stones, Gardens Director

3. PLANNING & CONSERVATION

2023 was a busy year with several houses either planning, building or completing extensions. Members of the Board met with residents to discuss works at numbers 14 Waldegrave Park and Nos 1, 5, 20 and 32 Fieldend.

As was noted in last year's AGM report, the board felt that the window design as installed on 14 WP's extension was not in keeping with Fieldend's Span aesthetic and not in accordance with the drawings that had been submitted and approved by FRAL. After discussions with the residents it has been agreed that the window facing the access road (the west facing elevation) will be re-made, either as one large pane or three smaller panes, without the opening casements at the top. Once this work is carried out, the Board will accept and approve the extension as built.

Each year, as we strive to preserve Fieldend's delicate aesthetic character, the board gains more experience in how to consult with residents on their plans and builds and hopefully reduce any potential stress on the way to achieving a sympathetic build. To this end, the board wishes to re-emphasize how important it is that residents not only consult the board before and during the design stage, but also strictly adhere to the details of the design and materials selection that was approved by FRAL. As is stipulated in the Fieldend Scheme of Management, written approval is required from the FRAL board for all new extensions. This process is separate from the Council's planning application process.

It can be the case that builders do not fully appreciate how critical it is that the FRAL approved drawings are adhered to, hence the Board wants to stress that it is the residents' responsibility to ensure that what is built complies with what has been approved by FRAL. If there are any doubts or unforeseen issues during the construction phase, a meeting with a Board member can be arranged to view the works and discuss any potential issues.

Tim Bystedt & Zoe Fudge, Planning & Conservation Directors

4.MAINTENANCE

Previous years' improvements to fencing, paving and lighting continue to pay dividends, resulting in another lower than usual spend on general upkeep around the estate. This economy has allowed the board to keep investing in the major repairs and improvements that help gradually improve key areas of Fieldend.

In recent years several areas of concrete parking bays have shown severe decline, with pressure from tree roots causing cracking which is unsightly and unsafe. In 2022 the bays on the western edge of Red Square were identified as being in need of renewal. This was a good chance to replace the unecological and easily fractured slabs of concrete with a flexible mesh and gravel system that allows water drainage through the substrate instead of causing more runoff into storm drains.

Our main gardener Allen won the tender and excavated nine bays. These were replaced by eight spaces, better for today's wider cars. The blue brick borders were relaid to accommodate the large London Plane tree trunks and allow them growing space. The original concrete bollards, most of which were rotting or partly consumed by the trees, were removed. Exact replacements of these bollards are no longer available and due to a combination of ecological and economic factors, wooden bollards, more or less identical to the ones already on the entrance road bays, were chosen as replacements. Overall the board feels the investment has been good value for money.

Three further bays at the lowest and most flood-prone part of the perimeter road are being considered for the same treatment when funds allow.

As well as correcting some small defects on FRAL maintained sections of paving, Allen's team also remodelled the access paths to Nos 3 & 4 alleviating slip and trip hazards caused by tree roots and subsidence. Meanwhile, thanks to some persistent nagging, the council attended to several paving slab issues on the adopted pavements.

Once again maintenance of the lighting system was kept at negligible levels thanks to the more reliable electrical fittings and bulbs.

A large stock of profiled larch shiplap weatherboard was kept up; although now double the price it was four years ago, this still represents good value and convenience for residents.

Theo Williams, Maintenance Director

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

We recorded a surplus of £5,863 on our activities for the year ended 30th September 2023, and our accumulated fund (general reserve) carried forward now stands at £23,555. Our surplus for the year is due to the small increase in maintenance contributions, improved interest rates on our deposits, also savings on tree work and some electricity costs.

With Bulb Energy going into administration in 2022, the estate electricity supplies have been transferred over to British Gas and Octopus Energy. Administrative errors by the suppliers while transferring the accounts resulted in some of our electricity costs being waived, saving us £400-£500.

Electricity smart meters have now been installed and we are investigating the possibility of obtaining discounted electricity rates for overnight charging of electric vehicles.

During the year we have also been able to finance the resurfacing of the parking bays in front of houses 43 to 46 Fieldend, at a cost of £14,010.

With regard to the next repainting in 2024, we currently have £105,000 in our provision and are on course to achieve a provision of £140,000 for the repainting in 2024.

We will be able to keep maintenance contributions at £150 per month, at least until we have completed the 2024 repainting, when we will be able to review our financial position.

Financial Director, Colin Hatton-Smith.

In Conclusion

The board is especially grateful to all those residents who have assisted this past year in our efforts to maintain and improve this unique shared asset we all enjoy. As ever, we encourage new ideas and suggestions for improving matters still further.

The board submits the accompanying Financial Statement to Shareholders for your approval and hopes to see many of you at the AGM.

For the board



Theo Williams, Chair, Fieldend Residents Association Ltd , February 1, 2024