

Management Committee – FY 2021/22 Annual Report

Chairman's Introduction

It seems a long time ago since we were last together on site in Riviera Palms 2 and many people must be wondering what has been happening. I remind you all that we have a website and the best way to keep informed is to log in. All maintenance issues, progress reports, minutes of our Management Committee (MC) meetings and up to date photos are all available on the site.

The four person MC continues to meet (we are still one person short on the committee) via the internet and are working hard to keep control of maintenance and financial matters. Once again I must draw attention to the invaluable benefits we gain from having our Treasurer, Vishnu Kapoor, resident on site for most of the time. He spends more time and travel miles on Palms 2 business than you could imagine and has never asked for one rupee to cover expenses. Likewise David Morphey continues to apply his considerable talent and experience in his role as Secretary and deserves recognition for the work he does. Nick Arnold, our Maintenance Officer, oversees the ongoing programme of routine work and necessary repair. Some friends who reside on a different Riviera site in Arpora called in to our site recently. The report they sent back about the Palms 2 site was glowing, bearing in mind we were hit by a cyclone in May of 2021, and is testament to the way Nick & Vishnu have held things together. And of course the staff who continue to turn up and do their work should be congratulated. They are a real asset and we are lucky to have them.

Please see below for a more detailed overview of the management of Palms 2 in the year since the last AGM.

As stated above, the MC is one person short of complement and ideally we need a Membership Liaison officer to help with communications. The position is also important because we are operating with four people; ideally there should be five to help spread the workload and also to avoid the possibility of a stalemate in the event of contentious decisions arising.

We live in hope that the pandemic loses its grip on the world and that overseas owners will once again be able to travel to Goa and visit Palms 2. When that time comes I sincerely hope you are satisfied with what you find. If we are able to maintain such standards at this remote distance we should be optimistic about the future when we can be there in person.

Ron Oldfield

Chairman. Palms II Complex Maintenance Association

MC Summary

Covid

At the time of the last AGM in February 2021, there was hope that the Covid pandemic in Goa was beginning to wane. Restrictions that had been in force for much of 2020 were being eased and major maintenance works at Palms 2 that had been in abeyance, were restarted. However by the end of March 2021, Covid cases in India were on the rise again and restrictions were re-introduced. Visas for the vast majority of Foreign Nationals to enter India have been suspended since the pandemic began.

The Management Committee

The MC for FY 21/22 has been made up of Ron Oldfield (Chairman), Vishnu Kapoor (Treasurer), Nick Arnold (Maintenance) and David Morphey (Secretary). One MC vacancy has remained unfilled.

Because of visa restrictions, the three UK based MC members have been absent from Palms 2 for all of 2021. However regular MC meetings via Zoom have continued and the MC feels it has been able to satisfactorily manage the affairs of Palms 2 despite the limited MC presence on site. Once again the Association's Treasurer, Mr Vishnu Kapoor has been key to Palms 2. As a resident on site, albeit having to make work related trips out of state sometimes for lengthy periods, Vishnu has been our eyes, ears and communicator with GEMS, Riviera, our Bank, the staff and the various contractors who have done work for us. His presence & hard work continues to be so beneficial.

Staff

There have been some limited disruptions to working patterns because of Covid restrictions (For instance Kaptan was delayed returning to Palms 2 from annual leave at his home village because of travel restrictions) but for most of the year our three staff, Kaptan, Alpana Giri and Sankar Mandel, have been working normally.

Kaptan has been promoted to Site Supervisor and he is responsible for the day to day management of the site and the two other members of staff complex. The flexible working that was introduced in early 2021 has continued and as such our staff undertake painting and small repair jobs as well as their day to day cleaning, pool and gardening duties.

Feedback indicates the team are happy with their roles and rewards.

We have continued with the reduced night security (one guard instead of two) without problem albeit the security company's personnel change too frequently for our liking.

Maintenance

During the year, the day to day work of our staff – e.g. cleaning, pool upkeep and gardening – has continued almost as normal with little impact caused by Covid. Reports indicate the complex is looking good.

There were also high hopes that the major works programmes would be able to restart in earnest after the disruption of the previous year.

In particular a priority was to complete the roof repair work on all villas and apartment blocks before the monsoon. Much has been done including the damp proofing of flat roofs, repair of parapets, replacement of broken tiles, cutting back of overhanging trees and repairs of specific leaks into properties. But in late spring 2021, when Covid was prevalent again, the contractors doing the work returned to their villages out of Goa and work had to stop. Work has been reinstated now with the aim of resolving all known and reported problems. However it is clear that roof maintenance will be an ongoing task – new problems are always cropping up and we ask all owners to report water ingress incidents as soon as they become apparent.

After the monsoon a new and urgent major project was initiated. Problems with the flushing of toilets resulted in inspections of the site's drainage lines and septic tanks, prior to potentially increased occupancy levels as travel restrictions were eased (as was the stated intention of the Govt. of India at the time). It subsequently transpired that one of the tanks (behind L Block) was full to overflowing. Further investigation revealed that the tank design was faulty allowing grey water to contaminate the sewage which resulted in the sewage not decomposing as it should - hence the overflowing. The tank was emptied and a new double chamber tank dug and constructed with waste flow channels created to enable it to function as it should. The work is now complete at a cost of over 2 lakh.

An inspection of the M block tank found it to be of the double chamber design and in satisfactory condition at present.

The tank servicing the villas & N block has also been inspected and found to be of the same unsatisfactory design as the one by L Block. But only minor problems are being experienced at the moment which are being resolved by cleaning of lines. The tank may need to be rebuilt in the future.

Other works to improve the functioning of sewage and drainage on site include the construction of a new inspection chamber near N block and clearing access to, and where necessary raising of, all manhole covers on site.

Other improvement works completed during the year include a refurbishment of the staff washroom/toilet, repair/replacement of faulty solar panels, the repair of pool surround tiling, replacement and repair of garden paths, repair and painting of poolside benches and sunbeds, and addressing an area of ground sinkage near the wall adjoining the paddy field.

It is intended that the painting programme will resume in advance of occupancy levels returning to normal.

The next major maintenance issue to be addressed by the MC is the state of the internal and external parking areas. The MC has investigated re-laying the tarmac of the internal car park but initial quotes indicates it will be a very high cost repair (in excess of 10 Lakh). The MC will investigate further but, given the likely high cost, will consult with owners before initiating any work. It is important to note that whilst it may be possible to obtain a cheaper price, works of this nature must be of good quality – a low quality job would soon result on the tarmac deteriorating and the money spent would have been wasted

The external (2 wheeler) parking area is also of concern – advice has been received that it would be wise to make better use of it / improve the security of it to avoid encroachment by others (particularly as occupancy of the newly constructed hotel increases). The MC is currently considering options.

Banking

Taking control of the day to day financial processes, previously under Riviera control, was one of the early priority tasks.

For the last year the Association has achieved a position where purchasing, approving expenditure, signing cheques, receiving bank statements, managing the Fixed Deposits etc., is all under the control of the MC.

The Association's banking arrangements have been improved with the opening of a new account with a facility to earn interest on short term surplus funds. This will enable the, non- interest earning, current bank account, which we are required to have by law, to be funded at a low level. Short term (i.e. <less than 12 months) funds will be held in the new account earning interest. Longer term funds will continue to be held in the Fixed Deposits.

Financial management.

The financial management processes of Palms 2 have been improved during the year and significant step forward has been the engagement of a Chartered Accountant (Ms. Menaka Gawas) to fill the void created by the loss of Noel, the Financial Accountant of Riviera and his team and Russell Barreto, the CA that Riviera used.

Menaka is proving to be a real asset providing ongoing assistance with the financial management of the Association

The financial position of Palms 2 remains healthy - but still with the caveat of **only if the annual maintenance fees are paid by members.**

Through streamlining the management structure & careful cost control, the MC has reduced the basic operating costs of Palms 2 to about Rs 12 lakh a year. This covers the wages of our staff, provision of guards and garbage collection, electricity, pool chemicals, bank charges, CA and GEMS fees and the costs of small parts and repairs. **The total monies received through annual maintenance fees just about covers the basic running costs of Palms 2** with perhaps a little left over to put to improvement projects.

The MC intends Palms 2 should continue the financial strategy set out in the last AGM report i.e:

1. Use the income from the annual maintenance fees to pay for the basic operating costs of the complex with any surplus going toward repair/improvement projects.

2. Invest the balance of the Palms 2 fund in high interest fixed deposits and, where necessary, use some of the interest income for repair/improvement projects.
3. Maintain the Palms 2 fund at approximately the current level in order to:
 - a. generate a decent amount of interest
 - b. have a contingency should monies be needed in emergencies.
4. Initiate repair/improvement projects on a prioritised basis as monies permit.

Fees

This year all owners, except one, have paid their maintenance fees and, where necessary, cleared their arrears. Moreover the revised fee collection process, as approved at last year's AGM, has made the collection task much simpler.

Heartfelt thanks are due to all the owners who paid their fees promptly and without argument. It makes the job of the MC so much easier and your support is much appreciated.

Where owners did miss the payment deadline, late payment charges of 2% a month have been levied i.a.w the revised fee process approved by Association members. The MC urges all owners to pay by the due date to avoid late payment charges being levied.

The MC understands that the one owner (of apartment LF3) who has yet to settle this year's bill lives in Canada and has rarely, if ever, visited the apartment since it was built. The Association does not have the contact details of the owner but is pursuing the agent to settle the bill.

Website

The Palms 2 website www.rivierapalms2.com is intended to provide an easily accessible, 24/7 source of information for, and means of communicating with, members of the Association with a secondary aim of providing a Palms 2 web presence for potential purchasers / renters etc.

It is the main method of keeping owners informed about what is happening at Palms 2. Currently the restricted area of the website, to which only Association members can gain access, contains a lot of information relating to Palms 2 such as notes of Committee meetings, information about maintenance projects, finances, fee collections etc. To gain access to the restricted section a member needs to open an account and register for a password. Once the account is authorised, the account holder can enter freely to keep up to date with developments.

In future, communications from the MC to members such as AGM information, fee notices, maintenance updates etc. will, as far as is possible, be via the website.