

## AGM Chairs Outgoing

Good evening

This is the fourth and final time I will be addressing the Barbican Association's Annual General Meeting.

Last year, I concluded my review by stating my willingness to continue as Chair for another year to ensure the completion of ongoing tasks. While acknowledging that no task is ever truly complete, we have made significant progress.

I mentioned that change within the City of London is attainable, albeit slow and requiring persistence.

You all should have received a copy of our latest newsletter which sets out in more detail what has been going on over the past couple of years.

Much has been accomplished through close collaboration between myself and Sandra Jenner, the Chair of the RCC.

We served together on the Transformation Board responsible for implementing the Altair review of the BEO. The board has now been dissolved, confident that Dan has taken charge of his new organization. He now fully controls the management of repairs and major works, with Metwin recently replaced by Chigwell.

Dan will tell you more.

Reviewing my remarks from last year, it looks like I will be addressing similar themes tonight, focussing on work in progress.

Some good news

This year's service charge budget is more than two million less than last year's.

The City has acknowledged the unsatisfactory management of repairs over the past decades and the potential overcharging of residents for subpar work. A joint resident-BEO working group has been established to identify and quantify these failures, aiming for restitution.

Last year, I reported that a joint BA/RCC working group was formed to evaluate our relationship with the new BEO organization and current representation structures.

The Reporting Committee has since been established for direct communication between resident representatives and Dan's team, alongside the Major Works Board, which is charged with developing a five-year renewal plan for the 65-year-old estate.

Due to time constraints, the BA/RCC working group did not address the relevance of our existing structures and we welcome Dan's decision to initiate a governance review.

Last year, I mentioned the City's failure to consult residents on their appointment of Hays to supply

temporary workers and their subsequent withdrawal of a tribunal application seeking dispensation for this failure.

Last May, the City of London invited the BA and potentially 1000 leaseholders from across the City to an informal discussion, which we attended with our lawyers.

Subsequently, an individual lessee from the Barbican challenged the City Of London at the tribunal regarding the legality of certain service charge elements. His claim was mostly rejected.

The City has now applied to the tribunal for dispensation for failing to consult on the initial appointment in 2017, and for their proposal to enter into a new contract. The Barbican Association considers a challenge to the 2017 appointment unlikely to succeed and would incur significant legal costs. We support the second application, reassured by assurances that the contract will be properly managed.

We have persuaded the City to refund our legal fees of approximately £35,000 upon tribunal approval if we do not oppose the application.

I also reported last year that Jane, my predecessor proposed, over five years ago in response to the Lisvane report on Governance in the Corporation, the creation of a strategic body to oversee the entire Grade II listed Barbican. This body should include leaders from the

Barbican's various constituencies: the Arts Centre, the Schools, public spaces, and residents.

Despite little progress initially, two years ago, Mark Bostock proposed a motion at the Barbican Residential Committee supporting this. A year later, Policy and Resources approved, in principle, strengthening the dormant Barbican Area Advisory Group, with its first meeting scheduled in eleven days' time.

I did say in the City of London things take time.

London Wall West

As you are likely aware, planning permission for the demolition of the Museum of London and Bastion House for the construction of three office blocks was granted. However, this is not the end of the matter, as Barbican Quarter Action has applied for judicial review of the decision.

Recognising that the administrative burden was becoming difficult to manage it became clear that we should employ the services of a part time administrator.

We were delighted to find a resident David Preston with the skills and time to take on the role.

The Association is well-funded. When I took on the role of Chair, our Hon Treasurer reminded me that our funds were meant to be utilized, not just admired.

Over the past five years, we have spent over £100,000 on professional advice, but thanks to the revenue from Barbican Life, we have managed to recoup these expenses.

Jim Davies, our dedicated membership secretary for many years, moved away from the Barbican and relocated north two years ago. It became clear that continuing to rely on his services would not be feasible. Jim had developed his own systems, but we felt it was time to transition to a professional membership system. Consequently we implemented

Membermojo. We should Jim, Ted Reilly, Helen Hudson and David Preston who managed the change. David has assumed the role of Membership Secretary.

Please note that the arrangements for paying you annual subscription have changed. Payments are no longer by standing order, you have been asked to cancel these arrangements and pay by credit transfer. You will be reminded in advance when payment becomes due.

We are in the process of rejuvenating the Association's website and we will announce its publication in the next couple of months.

Last year, I encouraged your participation, though much of it may have gone unheeded. We have endeavoured to

enact positive changes with some success, achieved by a small, dedicated group.

I urge you to engage with your house groups, ensuring they keep you informed and responsive to your needs.

In conclusion I want to thank all of you, members, those who have sat on our General Council and others who have made my tenure interesting, enjoyable, fulfilling and exhausting.

Thank you I hand you over to Dan