

## **TNRA CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-2023**

### **The Committee**

Two new members, [Jane Salvesson](#) and [Ann Tyler](#), joined the Committee at the start of the year. [Elaine Scullion](#), [Sky Cracknell](#) and [Xenia Chiru](#) also attended monthly meetings as observers. Due to changed work and other matters Kristen Macpherson decided to resign from the Committee in March. Aside from that change the membership details set out in the Spring 2023 Newsletter are accurate as at the year end. Brief details of individual Committee member's responsibilities have been publicised in recent e-Letters.

Following questions and comments from the floor during last year's AGM the Committee has taken steps to actively encourage members to put their names forward for election this year so as to bring fresh ideas and perspectives to the fore. Relevant matters concerning this objective have also been published in the Spring Newsletter and in e-Letters.

### **Strategic review**

During the course of two separate meetings the Committee discussed how best to meet the varying and changing needs of TNRA's members. First and foremost is – as ever – the pursuit with Trinity House and their agents of equitable contract, rent and rent review policy and practice. Closely related to this aim is the need to encourage and persuade Trinity House to adopt strategies that address crucial environmental, social and governance issues. The importance of mounting a programme of regular social events is also seen as a vital ingredient in fostering and developing the strong sense of community and identity that is such a feature of Trinity Village. Details of these aspects of our work and other initiatives and developments – including improved communication with members and attempts to encourage new, and younger, residents to get involved with TNRA's activities – are summarised below.

A matter of concern – to which there is no clear solution – is how to ensure the levels of involvement (time, application and energy) necessary to maintain the Committee's ability to do all that it currently does. This is all the more so in that three of the Committee's principal members, [Tim Horsler](#) and [Lesley Exton](#) are both well on the wrong side of 70 whilst [Ali Walker](#) is also not so far away from hitting the three score years and ten mark – the other one, [Ed Heckels](#), is still a comparative youngster. Should any of these resign, move away or otherwise be unavailable it will be a challenge to replace their individual skills, experience and commitment.

### **Estate management**

Regular reports in e-Letters, in the two Newsletters published over the course of the last year and during various meetings with members have provided updates on key objectives, issues and developments, with the most recent information being summarised in the Spring Newsletter.

#### Assured Short Tenancies (ASTs)

The availability and cost of rental property remains a real cause of concern throughout the country and especially in London. [John Moore](#) provides a regular surgery for tenants seeking advice on how best to negotiate rent reviews with Knight Frank. He, [Ali Walker](#) and [Ed Heckels](#) as Chair of the AST sub-committee also meet with concerned residents when necessary to discuss and decide how to pursue rent and contract issues with Knight Frank and Trinity House. All the issues set out in the Spring Newsletter together with related matters will be raised at the 2 May Committee meeting to be attended by Martin Atherton and Louie-Mae Gibson.

#### Repairs, maintenance, preservation and restoration work

[Ali Walker](#) monitors such matters and liaises with the estate office to pursue specific issues when necessary.

#### Long leasehold properties

As [Tim Horsler](#) pointed out in early January 2019 to the then newly appointed Martin Atherton the owners of such properties have suffered over a period of at least thirty years from Trinity House's appointment of a succession of poor agents. In addition Trinity House's very hands-off approach to monitoring and reviewing the

performance of all these firms did nothing to mitigate matters. The latest incumbent, Mainstay-First Port (appointed prior to Martin Atherton's arrival) was no better, and the management of the new long leasehold apartments in the Trilogy development also proved to be far from satisfactory.

Tim Horsler's long-running campaign for such issues to be resolved eventually resulted in Trinity House's termination of Mainstay-First Port's contract and the appointment of Devere-Catt Ltd in their place in late December 2022. The new company has made an excellent start to its work. TNRA nevertheless continues to liaise with them and monitor their performance on a regular basis, in which task Elaine Scullion and Jane Salveson play an active part.

On all contract, lease and other matters Paul Sheils and former Committee member Sue Trinder provide expert advice and/or legal opinion.

#### Green and environmental issues

Sky Cracknell has answered our call to take an active part in pursuing such matters with Knight Frank, Trinity House, the Council and other bodies. Improved insulation, more and better cycle storage facilities, the installation of EV charging points and the replacement of gas cooking and heating systems etc. are on the agenda with, crucially, ascertaining exactly what plans, budgets and responsible officers Trinity House have in place – or will do so – to meet the challenge of global warming.

#### Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy

Following TNRA member Jonathan Carter's invaluable initial research and advice Ann Tyler has recently taken on the task of researching current ESG policy and practice as exercised by reputable organisations that own and rent out properties (e.g. the Duchy of Cornwall, the National Trust, The Guinness Trust etc.) so as to compare and contrast these with what Trinity House does. The Committee will use the results of this exercise to pursue with Trinity House the interests of our members, most notably – but not exclusively – in relation to fair rents, rent reviews, security of tenure and other matters of concern to ASTs.

#### **Gardens**

The good work carried out by former Committee member Penny Hinves as Knight Frank's gardening contractor continues to bear fruit. TNRA is therefore very pleased to learn that her contract has been renewed. Ed Heckels liaises closely with her to pursue gardening initiatives on behalf of TNRA.

Separately Ed Heckels also organises and leads bi-annual TNRA Garden Action days – mainly centred on the two garden squares – and recently arranged for over twenty volunteers to clear litter and refuse from the Dickens' Fields Park. The Roebuck Action Group (the RAG) also helps to tidy and care for the plants and shrubs on the piazza alongside the pub. Thanks to the Cleaner, Greener, Safer (CGS) grant won last year and to much liaison work with the Council provided by Elaine Scullion four new steel planters have recently been installed and planted to join those already in position. Dead shrubs in the latter have also been replaced with new ones along and various new plants have been set beneath some of the trees on the piazza.

Along with others Jane Salveson and Elaine Scullion provide regular, committed gardening assistance.

#### **Planning applications and developments**

Ed Heckels monitors and reports on submissions and representations to the Council concerning planning proposals. In this he is aided by TNRA member and architect Aaron Spence as well as by Ali Walker and Jane Salveson. All relevant current details are summarised in the Spring Newsletter. The overwhelming bulk and height of the buildings proposed for the Borough Triangle site remain a matter of real concern, to which is now added – urgently – the very recent installation of inappropriate new lamp posts on the estate. TNRA will continue to object to the former and to press for the removal and replacement of the latter.

## **Refuse collection and street cleaning**

Ed Heckels maintains close contact with the Council's cleaning department to ensure that household waste, leaf-fall and refuse left by fly-tippers is collected and removed speedily. He also liaises with the estate office on all such matters.

## **Community safety**

Shaun Stern monitors and takes action concerning incidents of crime, noise, anti-social behaviour and other similar issues by means of regular attendance at meetings of the Chaucer Ward Safer Neighbourhood Panel and in meetings and correspondence with the local police. He also shares relevant information and pursues action with the Trinity Street estate office when appropriate.

## **Electronic vehicle (EV) charging points**

Shaun Stern has expended very significant time liaising with the Council in negotiating the siting, installation and commissioning of EV points set in lamp posts on the estate.

## **Membership**

Committee member Raff Manfellotto manages TNRA's members' database and subscription records. Our year end membership was 209 households, and year on year remains consistently over 200. In future we shall ask house sharers to join TNRA as individual members, thus qualifying to receive their own copies of our Newsletters. Couples and families will though still be able to pay family memberships at discounted rates if they so wish. This change will help us to state more precisely the number of individuals we represent when lobbying for and pursuing our members' interests with Trinity House, Knight Frank and other third parties.

## **Events**

These continue to take place on an almost monthly basis, and during the course of the last year the following took place:

- 7 May – Porch Sale
- 2 June – Drinks Party to celebrate summer and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
- 12 June – TNRA Summer Fete (technically our participation in the Open Garden Squares Weekend/OGSW)
- 21 August – Borough Welsh Choir
- 12 September – Pub Quiz
- 1 October – Porch Sale
- 15 November – Italian Opera Evening
- 19 December – Christmas Carols
- 1 March – Pancake Day Races
- 21 March – Wine Tasting

Ed Heckels masterminds the planning, organisation and running of all TNRA events: we owe him a big vote of thanks for the very significant time, energy and enthusiasm he brings to this task.

In addition Lesley Exton continues to run the regular Saturday second hand books stall outside her house. As well as bringing in useful income this also provides a useful forum for estate residents to mingle and chat to one another informally.

Two important forthcoming dates in our continuing programme of events are especially noteworthy:

- 2 June – Drinks Party under the porch of Henry Wood Hall – to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the laying of Holy Trinity Church's foundation stone
- 11 June – TNRA Summer Fete in Merrick Square and Trinity Church Square

We warmly welcome ideas and initiatives from our members to organise new events and social activities.

## Filming

No shooting at all took place during the course of the year, a salutary reminder that such events – and the valuable income deriving from them – are entirely unpredictable. As at the time of the AGM two possible one day shoots are currently in the offing, one to take place in Merrick Square and the other in Trinity Church Square. For these and for all shoots Ali Walker employs much skill and experience in liaising with the Film Office on behalf of TNRA.

## Website

Following very significant skilled work by Xenia Chiru who has recently left the estate our newly designed and much more user-friendly website has just been launched. We now urgently need a TNRA member to step forward to manage the website in Xenia's place.

## Finances

The following highlights are noteworthy when comparing this year's results with those for last year:

- Total income decreased hugely from £23,613 to £8,297, essentially because no filming took place. Putting aside last year's abnormal £16,000 film income our receipts under this heading over the period 2017-2021 average c. £4,000. Half of the balance of this year's income is accounted for by Subscription receipts of £2,952 and Pop-up Book sales of £1,228.
- Expenses increased from £8,541 to £13,315, mainly due to a return to normal post-Covid activities plus the impact of professional fees required to redesign the website and the costs of the Jubilee and opera events. Essential running costs (i.e. those required to ensure regular and good communications with all members in the form of two Newsletters and the website, the latter of which necessitates the payment of hosting fees, plus equipment and storage costs) totalled c. £4,000.
- Reserves decreased from last year's exceptional high figure of £38,501 to £33,483, the complete lack of film income once again contributing to this reduction. The annual average for reserves over the period 2017-2021 (i.e. setting aside last year's exceptional film income) is c. £19,000.

The Committee is currently debating what level of reserves it is prudent to maintain. It should be noted that should there be a lack of volunteers to carry out, free of charge, essential tasks (e.g. managing the website) it may in future become necessary to pay commercial fee rates to ANOther(s) to provide these services.

## Discount scheme

Shaun Stern and Mary Jane Kane liaise with the shops, restaurants and outlets in the scheme. Full up-to-date details of participating concerns are posted on the TNRA notice board and on our website.

## Communication with members

We keep our members abreast of current issues, developments, events and news through the TNRA website, bi-annual Newsletters, the Trinity Street noticeboard, flyers, posters, the TNRA Facebook site (managed by former resident and Committee member Tanja Jost) and monthly e-Letters (designed and illustrated by Kristen Macpherson). We will also soon to begin to make use of Instagram with the help of Sky Cracknell. Lesley Exton continues to contribute hugely to the successful operations of TNRA through her administrative support work, the editing, design and production of Newsletters (and flyers and posters) along with much else, including the use of her house for Committee meetings and the storage of documents and materials.

The Committee also arranges occasional meetings to give new and potential members to learn about our activities and to discuss current issues and concerns.

## Equipment for hire

Mary Jane Kane manages the range of equipment (gazebos, tables, chairs and glasses etc.) available for hire to members at very reasonable rates.

## **Volunteers**

We much appreciate those who offer their services to help us during garden action days, bi-annual porch sales and social events. Setting up, manning and then clearing away after such activities takes time and on occasion some physical strength plus the provision of transport as well. The advertisements appearing in the Spring Newsletter which seek help with the website, design matters in general and the e-Letter express a real and urgent need: without more, regular assistance to help those Committee members who bear the brunt of such work it may be impossible for us to continue to provide the level of communication and advice that our members currently enjoy.

Tim Horsler, TNRA Chair