

TNRA CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023-2024

The Committee

Two observers, Elaine Scullion and Sky Cracknell, were elected to the Committee. Chandler Morris began to attend meetings as an observer in December. After over forty years of extraordinary service Lesley Exton has to our great regret decided to not to stand for re-election. The Committee is considering how best to recognise and celebrate her contribution to the community. In the meantime we are extremely grateful that she has offered to continue to help us in various ways, most notably in running the pop-up book stall and allowing us to store certain documents and materials in her house. Paul Sheils – whose experience and advice has been invaluable – has also decided to stand down.

Two separate meetings during the year addressed ways in which to best to meet the varying and changing needs of TNRA's members vis-a-vis the amount of time, skills and energy that Committee members have available to devote to these matters. This was followed up with another meeting in February devoted to deciding what could be done to lessen the considerable workload born by the Chair and others, many of whom are no spring chickens. It is worth repeating last year's word of caution, especially now that Lesley Exton has resigned: should other key members of the Committee decide to stand down, move away or otherwise be unavailable it will be a challenge to replace their individual skills, experience and commitment.

Estate management

We regularly provide reports in e-Letters and Newsletters on key objectives, issues and developments, with the most recent information being summarised in the Spring Newsletter.

TNRA presentation to Trinity House

For the very first time TNRA was invited to give a brief address to the Corporate Board of Trinity House chaired by the new Deputy Master, Rear Admiral Iain Lower, on 19 March. This I did as Chair, focusing on the human face of Trinity Village; stressing how important it was that the residents provided the ears, eyes and beating heart of the community; and summarising the very significant added value that TNRA's actions and initiatives have contributed over almost fifty years for the benefit of residents, Trinity House and their agents and many others. In doing so I underlined the following in particular:

- * TNRA's programme of regular social events has initiated, fostered and enhanced a strong sense of identity, cohesion, and community;
- * Amongst many other things TNRA has lobbied for improved traffic routes and road safety; monitored the state and quality of the built environment; pursued community safety initiatives; helped the elderly and vulnerable; worked to preserve and enhance the conservation area; provided input into redevelopment planning consultations; liaised with the Council and production companies on all filming proposals and their implementation; and provided volunteers to work on the gardens and litter-pick up and down the estate;
- * TNRA has provided an invaluable, well respected and productive conduit between the residents, Trinity House and its agents, the Council and other third parties.

The minds of the Board were opened. Iain Lower in particular expressed warm thanks and appreciation for our presentation and said that he looked forward to learning more and meeting us in due course. We now know that he will be making a formal visit to the estate on the afternoon of 16 May.

Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs)

The availability and affordability of rental property in London remains a cause of concern, particularly as it can affect security of tenure for those who wish to put down roots in Trinity Village but are faced with significant

rent reviews. As well as providing a regular surgery for tenants seeking advice on how best to negotiate their rents John Moore also meets regularly with Louie-Mae Gibson to discuss and pursue our members' rent and contract interests.

Repairs, maintenance, preservation and restoration work

Ali Walker continues to monitor such matters and liaise with the estate office to pursue specific issues when necessary.

Long leasehold properties

Devere-Catt Ltd provides an exemplary service for the long-established properties (on whose behalf Tim Horsler remains the liaison contact) and those in the Trilogy development (similarly represented by Elaine Scullion and Jane Salveson).

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy

The need to pursue our interests in such matters was flagged at last year's AGM. Progress has not been as fast as we would have hoped but important discussions have recently taken place to build on initial work done by Ali Walker and Ann Tyler; Paul Sheils has carried out further valuable research; and Sky Cracknell is now working on policies to present and propose to Trinity House.

Gardens

Ed Heckels liaises closely with Knight Frank's gardening contractor, TNRA member Penny Hinves, and continues to organise and lead bi-annual TNRA Garden Action days along with a repeated recent initiative, an annual Litter-picking day. TNRA owes a vote of thanks to those members who volunteer to help in these activities and in helping the Roebuck Action Group (the RAG) in its work on the Roebuck piazza.

Planning applications and developments

Ed Heckels monitors and reports on submissions and representations to the Council concerning planning proposals. A matter of particular concern involves Berkeley Homes' plans for the redevelopment of the substantial Borough Triangle site, the latest revised version of which proposes that two very tall towers, 44 and 38 storeys high) plus another two, 18 and 14 storeys high, should be built. Jane Salveson, Ali Walker and Tim Horsler represent TNRA at meetings of the Save Borough Triangle committee whose work in opposing the current scheme (principally its overwhelming bulk and height, a failure to take into account the impact of the large number of occupants on already overstretched GP and other services, etc, unanswered questions concerning the future of Mercato Metropolitano traders etc) is admirable.

The Trinity Church Square Conservation Area and the Council

TNRA has taken great care to keep members fully informed of the Council's dereliction of duty in failing to properly protect and enhance Trinity Village's universally recognised quality of architecture and design. Although six months of lobbying finally resulted in the removal in October of the e-bike/e-scooter parking bay in Trinity Street the installation of inappropriate lamp standards and lanterns throughout the estate continues to greatly exercise us.

Very belatedly the Council has recognised that the lanterns and their LED lighting are inadequate and has therefore agreed to replace them. Until this happens, however, we reserve judgement as to their suitability or not. Ali Walker continues to fight our corner on this and all related matters with great determination backed up by great skill, knowledge and experience. In due course she will pursue the replacement of the recently installed lamp standards by those of better design which properly recognise the precepts set out in the Council's own Conservation Area Appraisal. In the meantime the Council's ill-advised decisions have resulted in a very significant and entirely unnecessary waste of tax payers' money.

TNRA continues to urge our councillors to provide active support in achieving these aims and helping us to persuade the Council to properly consult with and listen to us as they always used to do - to their and our clear mutual benefit.

Refuse collection and street cleaning

Ed Heckels continues to liaise with the Council's cleaning department to ensure that household waste, leaf-fall, refuse and graffiti is speedily dealt with. He also liaises with Knight Frank and Devere Catt on such matters.

Community safety

Shaun Stern monitors and takes action concerning incidents of crime, noise, anti-social behaviour and other similar issues. This he does by regular attendance at meetings of the Chaucer Ward Safer Neighbourhood Panel, in meetings and correspondence with the local police and by sharing information and pursuing action with the Trinity Street estate office.

Membership

Our year end membership totalled 172 households in which 294 individuals resided. Exactly why our membership has declined from what in recent years has consistently been over 200 households is not entirely clear. However, this spurs us on to pursue ways to restore, increase and maintain a high number of members.

Following detailed work during the course of the year Raff Manfellotto - who manages TNRA's members' database and subscription records - has been able to introduce greatly simplified subscription and payment procedures. In addition and with immediate effect the former concept of a membership year ending on 30 April will no longer apply: membership will instead run for 12 months from the date that a subscription is paid.

Events

We hugely rely on Ed Heckels to plan, organise and run these, which during the course of the year comprised the following eleven events:

- 20 May – Garden Action Day
- 2 June – Drinks Party to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone for Holy Trinity Church (now Henry Wood Hall)
- 11 June – TNRA Garden Fete and Open Air Yoga (part of London Open Gardens Weekend)
- 20 August – Borough Welsh Choir concert in Merrick Square
- 11 September – Roebuck Pub Quiz
- 5 October – Opera in the Mediterranean concert in Henry Wood Hall
- 2 December – Garden Action Day
- 7 December – Christmas Carols in Trinity Church Square
- 13 February – Pancake Day Races
- 24 February – Annual Litter-picking Day
- 19 March – Wine Tasting

We, our members and many regular passers-by also greatly appreciate the regular Saturday second hand book stall run by Lesley Exton.

The Committee continues to discuss possible new social events, concerning which it warmly welcomes ideas and initiatives from our members.

Filming

Very little shooting took place during the course of the year, mainly because the film industry has only slowly been recovering from the extended strike organised by the Screenwriters Guild that has hugely affected production plans on both sides of the Atlantic. In the meantime Ali Walker continues to maintain close contact with Southwark's Film Office on behalf of TNRA and has been instrumental in proposing a protocol with Knight

Frank and Trinity House to establish clear principles and procedures for them and TNRA to follow concerning all filming that takes place in Trinity Village.

Website

Raff Manfellotto has provided much needed expertise and advice in simplifying online payment systems subscription renewals and attendance at events via the website. Sky Cracknell has now stepped forward to handle the regular updating of the website with details of forthcoming events, meeting minutes, e-letters and similar information.

Finances

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

- Total income at £8,249 is almost exactly the same. Events income is down £1,657, partly because we have stopped running porch sales, but this is counterbalanced by a resumption of Filming receipts (albeit small) and Bank interest. We hope that filming income will return to its previous average of c. £4,000 pa or so but though there is no guarantee of this. In the meantime Subscription receipts of £3,083 and Pop-up Book Stall sales of £1,056 remain important sources of income.
- Expenses decreased from £13,315 to £10,158, demonstrating firm control over such costs. A related general principle is that the costs involved in running events should be covered by the income they generate. We continue to believe it essential to provide a regular and good communication service for our members and as such make sure to fund the production of two Newsletters every year, the maintenance of the website and the payment of appropriate professional fees etc. when necessary.
- Reserves decreased slightly from £33,483 to £31,574, a still healthy figure. A very important and new element is our opening of an interest-earning deposit account with a transfer of £20,000 to it from our current account. This new account is currently providing TNRA with a return of 4.5%pa.

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 everyone abreast of current issues, developments, events and news through the TNRA website, bi-annual Newsletters, the Trinity Street noticeboard, flyers, posters, the TNRA Facebook group (managed by former resident and Committee member Tanja Jost) and monthly e-Letters designed and circulated by Raff Manfellotto. Sky Cracknell has begun to understudy and take over from Lesley Exton the editing, design and production of Newsletters, flyers and posters.

The Committee also arranges occasional formal and informal meetings to give potential and current members the opportunity to learn about our activities and to discuss issues, concerns and interests.

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, social events and other activities. Nevertheless we still urge others to provide more and regular assistance for the Committee.

Tim Horsler, TNRA Chair