

Chairman's Annual Report 2024

This report covers the events and activities on the estate since our last AGM.

As you all know it has been an extremely difficult year after the sad and untimely passing of Carol and none more so than for Carol's family, and again, we extend our condolences to them. Carol's brother, Martin, who owns a chalet has hand crafting and recently installed a bench close to the office area as a fitting tribute in Carol's memory so please take time to wander by and sit awhile.

Things did not go to plan for John Tucker our Maintenance Manager, who presumed he would recover from his shoulder replacement operation and return to work. As an employer the Company acted more than fairly and reasonably in giving John extended sick leave to recover, until it became clear that medically he would not be able to return to the manually intensive role he once did on the estate. We could not make any adaptations to his job role and being such a small company there were no other positions we could offer, so we had to let John go.

Obviously, we are no experts in employment law and so we subscribed to the Small Business Federation (SBF), who have been invaluable in guiding us through the processes and the paperwork needed to ensure we met all our employment obligations. This has taken up a lot of my time, this year, as this is the first time the Company has needed to deal with this type of employment issue, and we needed to make sure all documentation was correct and in place.

The SBF subscription gives us instant access to a solicitor's helpline if we ever require any advice on any issues associated with the running of a small company. We have sought advice on a few occasions for other matters over the last 12 months. Their subscription cost is very reasonable, and we wished we had thought about joining this organisation years ago and we will probably continue to renew with them in future years.

Maintenance work and improvements

Although we have not carried out any major work on site this year there has been a lot of smaller jobs undertaken by our volunteer helpers, in the main. Some of these jobs have been linked to our H & S Action Plan and are not necessarily visible. Our three newsletters in December, March and July, kept shareholders informed of any maintenance and improvements carried out on site, or any work done by others that effecting the site, like Seaweed Lane improvement works, National Grid electrical fault repairs and the Double Yellow lining of Bovisand Lane.

Our Health and Safety Action Plan was produced by our NFU H&S Adviser, last year, a service provided by our then new NFU insurers. On their annual visit this year they were very impressed by the number of high priority action points we had dealt with. These included: clearing out and disposing of old propane bottles from the flammables store, replacing fire extinguishers in all the company buildings, extending fencing to the cliff edge to prevent access to the cliff top, periodic ladders inspections and record keeping, defects repaired, or the ladders replaced, which has led to the introduction of our Ladder Policy. Medium risk points actioned, included the chalet rear access to be accessible from both sides providing emergency egress in the event of fire, as reported last year, the workshop roller shutter has been repaired, and the workshop combustibles (mainly wood) kept to a minimum and the whole area tidied. Finally, the materials have been purchased to repair the perimeter fencing around the sewage treatment tank is another medium action point, waiting to be cleared. Thanks to Denise and Pete Drummond who organised and carried out most of this work.

We planned to undertake tarmacking to some of the poorest areas of the road, as shared with you all in last year's 5-year maintenance plan. We did obtain new quotations for the cost of this work, but it was significantly higher than the original estimates received, and we felt shareholders' approval would be needed before we continued with this. However, in the intervening time Pete Drummond has spent many hours filling potholes and cracks in the worst areas of the road using cold lay tarmac. It is hoped that we can defer any major road repair work for a few years to concentrate on other priority areas, such as the cliffs and sewers, and request estimates nearer the time of the planned works.

One such priority is the cliff slippage area below chalets 45 – 48. We reported recently that we planned to have the area pinned, matted and netted, the more robust of the two solutions recommended by John Grimes Partnership (JGP), but there are differing opinions on whether this is right for this area, as the exposed scar shows only soil and green shoots are already emerging. The slippage was mainly vegetation and soil, witnessed by the muddy colour of the sea in this cove at the time and very little rock deposit at the base of the fall. The other, possibly less evasive option is to hydroseed the area as soon as possible as Autumn is a good time to do this work. Both solutions are highly specialised work and there are only two contractors recommended by John Grimes Partnership (JGP), in our area, one in Newquay and the other in Ilfracombe. We have a quotation from one of the companies for the pinning, matting and netting and we are in the process of getting a quote from the other company. We are also getting more information from JGP on the hydroseeding option and depending on this, obtain additional quotes for just hydroseeding. We will still need to investigate and apply for licenses before we can carry out any of this work.

The Warden's Quarters (WQ) are now occupied, thanks to Denise Drummond, who led on this task. Again, this was a steep learning curve if you have never rented a property before, which she hadn't. Needless to say, all our previous paperwork needed updating in line with current legislation, so for a very small subscription fee we registered with the South West Landlord's Association (SWLA) and this gave us access to a range of letting-related downloadable documents. This gave us peace of mind and confidence to rent the property knowing that all the relevant paperwork was completed, and all statutory safety checks were in place.

Joining SWLA has also provided us with a list of recommended trades people we can call on to do work for us. We have been very impressed by Shave and Son, Electricians, who we have used to do work in both the QW and the Shop/Café. They have been reliable and do not charge a call out fee.

Updates on Issues reported last year

Shareholders were encouraged to lobby MPs and Councillors about the proposed injustices of applying the Council Tax Premium on seasonal, restricted occupancy second homes like our chalets. Unfortunately, we never received a definitive answer from anyone we contacted about this matter. Since then, we have not heard anything about this issue which is being introduced from April 2025. Our initial understanding was that the Councils needed to inform the properties giving 12 months' notice of application of this premium. As far as I am aware we did not receive this notification in April 2024 with our Council Tax bill, so unless the rules have changed, we may have escaped this tax for the time being, but who knows.

You may well remember from last year; Directors submitted a Motion to the AGM to ensure annual fees being paid to BPL specifically for the replacement of the sewage plant are not taxed as revenue. We proposed two options on how Directors were seeking to achieve this and asked that you leave the decision to us when we had further investigated the best way forward. This Motion was supported by Shareholders and on speaking to our Accountant it was agreed to make a "Provision" in our accounts.

This provision can be identified in the End of Year, March 2024 Accounts, which are presented at the AGM for Shareholders information.

Other updates

In our most recent Newsletter when we presented our proposal to enter into a 12-month contract with Vickery Holman, a Property Management Company, who would take over the day to day operations of BPL, if approved by shareholders. We prepared ourselves to deal with many questions and concerns but to date we have not received one. In fact, when speaking with shareholders on site, all supported the initiative, particularly as we did not have to enter into a long-term agreement and gives us all the opportunity to review how things have gone at next year's AGM.

Myself, Denise and Sarah rallied round, using our experiences and skills to run the day-to-day business of the Company over recent months, when there was an urgent need to do so. It has provided us with a much better insight into this aspect of the operational side of the Company and we hope this will help with the hand over to Vickery Holman, if this is the route shareholders decide to take. We have all invested a lot of time, energy and commitment into these months and although it has been a steep learning curve we are proud that we rose to the challenge, however, we are looking forward to getting our lives back.

Although I reported a record-breaking year, last year, when chalet prices topped £200K. This year has surpassed the previous record as chalets prices have continues to soar. We have sold two chalets this year with a further two chalets nearing completion. Four chalets selling in one year could also be a record.

The website www.bovisandpark.com continues to provide a valuable resource to visitors to the estate and informs them of many local attractions and things to do, as well as suggesting places to eat, local weather and tide times. It would be good if we could encourage more owners to register, and if you are local owners, you may not need the same information as visitors, but you do have additional access to the "owners" section that provides historical information, vintage photos and documentation that you may be interested to read. If this is you, and you want access to the owners content you need to register your name and email address at BPLwebmail@gmail.com.

Our community benefits from the generosity and goodwill of many owners and their families who help to maintain and preserve our beautiful estate. Once again, I would like to thank each one of you who has helped in any way over the past twelve months. We take pride in the appearance of our estate, and this impacts positively on the way others behave when they visit. The litter left on our beaches and greens has reduce dramatically over recent years and the more we respect our surroundings the more others will too. So, congratulation and thank you for your efforts they are really paying off.

The appearance and attractiveness of our estate is often commented upon by walkers, visitors, and guests to the estate.

I would, personally, like to thank my fellow Directors who give of their time freely, for their commitment and contribution to the running of the company on behalf of shareholders. I hope the Directors who are standing down this year will be able to find more time to relax and enjoy their chalets and I wish them well.

Best wishes

Debbie Macleod

Chairman of the Board of Directors Bovisand Park Limited