

Acting Chair Report for Wesley Square

The Committee met five times during 2025 on 12th January, 28th April, 16th June, 15th September, 17th November, the AGM happening on 3rd March 2025.

The main business of the year is as follows:

Subletting:

Cerys Mathews and Dominique Van Roey joined Hilary Arnold, Philippa Collie Cousins and Denise Heywood on the subletting committee.

Flooding: Murray John presented copies of the “Household guide to Floor projection and the committee agreed to look at flood risk for Wesley Square. The main concern lies with nos 31-50. RL raised speaking to Thames Water and the council about the street drains, as they are quite frequently blocked, including the drains by the church which don't seem to be cleaned terribly often. It has been mooted that a report should be carried out and that residents should be made aware that paving can reduce drainage and should be discouraged. Updates on a report at the AGM/

Substation: The Electricity substation was raised as a problem by Robert Larkins and Marie Travers agreed to approach London Power. Marie also put Wesley Square down on this list for Open Gardens, with a view to see whether volunteers can be found to run it nearer the time. Well done both as this has now been resolved.

Roof Repairs: At the AGM on 3rd March 2025, we looked at the surveyor's report that said the roof was designed to last until at least 2039; it was decided that going forward we should clean the moss from the roof every six months and to repair the roof when necessary.

Pets: Pets were discussed and it was decided if you are in a flat you need to get the buy-in of your neighbour if the pet would be using a communal staircase. Save that the committee received legal clarification that if someone needs a guide pet of any description, that is mandatory and allowed.

Vermin: It was noted that mice had been seen in the common parts and that co-owners should be scrupulous about putting food away as we all share the roof space.

Car Parking and Rubbish Dumping: During this and previous years, solutions were discussion to stop rubbish dumping and to raise parking revenue in the back car parking spaces. Some on the committee want to extend PP to co-owners and after that allocation, to renting residents, this would be on a yearly basis and for a fee. Unoccupied car parking spaces have made the adjoining garages believe that these spaces can act as an extension of their repair workshops.

Formal Complaints procedure: It was discovered that there was no formal complaints procedure and this should be put in place. Do any co-Owners have any suggestions, if so, please bring to a committee meeting.

Financials: At the January 2025 meeting Hilary Arnold explained that there would be a yearly 3.25 increase in service charge every year. It was agreed that the end of

year accounts would be sent out to co-owners before the AGM in 2025 and that a Treasury Committee would be the best way forward with Hilary Arnold and Billie Dainton on the committee and two co-owners not on the committee helping. In 2025, there was a surplus of £30000. Money largely comes from the service charge and clawback. Clawback was lower than average (£12000, compared to £20,000 in previous years). This meant overall revenue was down 11%. The costs to run the square rose by 4%. Irregular costs (external repairs, carpets, survey etc) cost £27000. Any surplus is transferred to the reserve. Clawback has its own sub-ledger and is used when there is a need to pay for major works. PCC asked for a show of hands whether people are happy to use 100% of clawback for major works. This was unanimously agreed. MT told the AGM that since the end of the financial year, there has been an increase to clawback: The finance sub-committee presented a proposed service charge increase based off a 12-year forecast. This is because they wished to include 2 more external re-decs. They have allowed for the cost of re-decs to go up by 15% over the 7-year intervals. The booked survey in 2032 has also been included. A 10% contingency on overall expenses for unknown costs that arise has also been included. The suggestion is that the service charge will remain as it is for this year, with an increase from the next financial year of 3.5%.

For the last financial year (24/25), income was significantly higher than predicted, mainly due to unforeseen clawbacks. Ben Lamb, the lay treasury committee member, noted that the decision was made to include £20,000 in the budget as that was the average over the last 17 years. The actual clawback received was over £50,000, through three sales. Ben Lamb stressed that this is never guaranteed. Operating costs came in a little lower than estimated. This meant there was a surplus in the accounts, with an increase in bank account funds by £32,000. Total in account: £312,000. Service charge has increased by 3.5%, since 1st October. Ben Lamb told the meeting that he has an 11-year financial plan for WS, making sure there is enough cash in the bank to service two rounds of re-decs. Marie T explained that money is held in a reserve account. Marie can share interest Rates and will circulate those after the AGM.

This means each will pay an extra £105 per year in service charge. This would be proposed as an annual increase, but it is subject to need and actual expenditure in the normal way, which is gauged at the AGM.

Garden: Hilary Arnold has concerns about some large trees in front gardens and the fact that they are requiring reduction. The main issue is that if someone plants a tree in their garden which becomes a very large tree, this can become an issue. The issue gets exacerbated if the owner who originally planted the tree, then leaves the Square. The gardeners do not feel that they can touch anyone's tree without permission. HA confirmed that technically WS has the right to cut back anything that comes over the boundary

Exterior back walls on Lancaster Road side, Next Steps.

Last year Murray John brought a concern to the committee. He is concerned that the walls along Lancaster Road are becoming structurally unstable. This is because they are straight bits of wall, against pavements that are spreading', which pushes against the wall. Marie Travers suggested getting a structural engineer to investigate. Robert Larkin noted a detailed report within the WS archives. It was flagged that one of the problems is that there are only sporadic piers in the brick wall. MT to speak to Clive Watson with a view to getting him into several gardens to have a look. Clive Watson's report was duly commissioned and read. He suggested that the wall was leaning in several key areas and may need replacing. A zoom meeting was convened with co-owners and the surveyor. As RBKC was the

initial builder of the wall and with highway responsibility, RBK&C, should be informed. PCC believes would not be prudent for the burden of cost to fall on Wesley Square. Also, the original report from 1986 when the buttresses were erected should be found in the archives. Updates from Murray and Marie to come at the AGM or next committee meeting

Defibrillator: It was agreed to buy a new defibrillator, and training is underway for those in the square who have kindly volunteered. Please let Marie know if you would like to be trained on the defibrillator.

With thanks to Marie, Barnards, our auditors and to all who serve on or of our committee.

Thanks also for the life of one resident: It was noted at 2025 AGM that Judith Blakeman has left the Square due to ill health and Judith Blakeman was thanked by all for all her hard work on behalf of Wesley Square. Very sadly, Judith has recently passed, and this 2026 AGM remembers Judith for her lifetime work in RBKC and Wesley Square. A tree in her memory will grow in the square.

Compiled by Philippa Collie Cousins, as Acting Chair.