

Detailed Minutes for All-Residents Meeting with Savills, Tuesday 23rd July 2025

In attendance from Savills was Lee Chapman (Head of Residential) and Aimee Wright (Building Manager).

A number of members from the Residents Association were in attendance, including Oliver Parsons (chair SGRA), Isabel Palmer (chair AHRA), Rhys Fowler, Rhys Jones, Philip Brassington, Dan Cowdrill, Lizzie Creek, Mark Easton.

Total attendance of the meeting: 20 in-person and 25 online.

Participant Introductions and Meeting Kickoff

- Lee Chapman introduces himself, the head of residential at Elephant Park, responsible for block structures and resident engagement.
- Aimee Wright is introduced as the building manager for South Gardens, handling staffing, logistics, and compliance.
- Lee Chapman introduces the Residents Association (RA) members: Isabel, Ollie, Philip, and Rhys J and Rhys F, who are present both online and in person.
- Rhys J briefly mentions the new website set up by him and Alexandros, which includes useful guides for residents.

RA Roles and Responsibilities

- Ollie explains the roles of the two RAs at South Gardens: Isabel chairs the Arum and Henderson Resident's Association (AHRA) whilst Ollie chairs the overall South Gardens Residents Association (SGRA).

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Lee Chapman reviews the minutes from the first meeting on January 16th, noting the welcome of new participants and the encouragement of sign-ups to southgardens.org.
- The RA's implementation of a homeowners guide on the website is discussed, with a call for suggestions on additional content.
- The regular communication between the RA and the team is highlighted, along with the introduction of a tracker for managing ongoing queries and issues.
- Operational updates from Savill's perspective are mentioned, including the parcel safe system and its impact on staffing.

Parcel Safe System and Resident Concerns

- Lee Chapman discusses the parcel safe system, noting its split among residents and the ongoing efforts to improve it.
- Aimee has been in communication with Royal Mail and other couriers to ensure proper parcel handling, but the system still faces challenges.

- Isabel expresses ongoing concerns about the parcel system, suggesting that concierge staff need to intervene more to manage issues, with about 50% of parcels not being logged by couriers.
- Lee Chapman emphasizes the need for cost-efficient solutions and encourages residents to report individual cases through Adriana or Aimee, so that they can collate complaints to better understand the scope of the problem
- Isabel suggests the need for better intervention by concierge staff to manage parcel issues.

Fire Door Compliance and Responsibilities

- Lee Chapman discusses the completion of fire door surveys for all flats and the pending results.
- Responsibility for front doors is clarified, with leaseholders handling their own repairs (and the costs associated with them.)
- Savills can only encourage leaseholders to fix defect fire doors under a 'best intentions' policy by sending frequent reminders.

Security Updates and CCTV Integration

- Lee Chapman mentions progress in exploring security technology for the estate as part of the ongoing Section 20 security contract process initiated at the end of 2024.
- CCTV surveys are being conducted for various developments, including South Gardens.
- The goal is to integrate CCTV systems across South Gardens, West Grove and Park and Sayer and potentially reduce the number of security guards.
- The tendering process for a three-year contract is ongoing, with the hope that it will save costs.

Pest Control and Contractor Changes

- Lee Chapman updates on the transition to a new pest control contractor. Incidents under the new contractor appear to have reduced, but not to zero.
- Issues with rats and pigeons are mentioned, with ongoing efforts to address them. A resident raises the issue of people on the non-EP side of Wansey Street feeding the pigeons as well as a family of foxes living under their decking.
- The importance of reporting pest control issues promptly is emphasized.

South Gardens Management Update

- Lee Chapman discusses the use of cleaning companies for both blocks and the estate. The Estate cleaning company had quoted a significant increase so currently the block cleaners are also cleaning the estate under an ongoing trial
- The dynamic allocation of cleaners' hours across both buildings and the wider Elephant Park estate is described as a potential cost-saving measure, allowing cleaners to move where cleaning is required.

- Landscaping contracts are being reviewed to find savings without compromising quality.
- The replacement of a tree at a lower cost is highlighted as an example of cost-saving measures.

Staffing and Duty Manager Roles

- The new structure for concierge and duty manager roles is explained.
- The savings from the new structure are described as a permanent cost reduction.
- Duty managers are utilized across different areas of the park to support smooth operations.

Budget Review and Expenditure

- Lee Chapman provides an overview of the budget versus actual expenditure.
- A saving of around £126,000 for 2024-2025 with some commitments still pending, including a drain stack CCTV inspection coming in at around £15,000.
- The increase in budgeted electrical costs for South Gardens is explained. This is down to the volatility of electricity costs and the inability to accurately forecast future costs, so Savills have added a significant budgetary increase to cover this and try and avoid a future deficit.
- The new budget is introduced, with a slight (1.1%) increase

Reserve Fund and Capital Expenditure Plan

- The purpose of the reserve fund is explained, including emergency works and capital expenditure planning. This has increased substantially in the 2025-2026 budget as we were previously underpaying into this fund. The reserve fund covers future planned capital expenditure and repairs and avoid future deficit demand letters and spreads out the cost of these works across multiple budget years.
- Lee Chapman mentions need to re-survey assets to ensure accurate capital expenditure planning is mentioned – it is possible some savings may be possible.
- Lee Chapman explains the increase in the estate (Elephant Park) budget (increase of 8.8%) is primarily due to higher than expected cleaning costs.
- The impact of new developments on the estate budget is discussed. Savills continues to maintain that the overall cost to leaseholders should decrease as new buildings come on line, as Lendlease only covers a portion of unbuilt/unopened building contributions. However, residents and the RA remain sceptical of these long-promised decreases.
- Lee Chapman confirms that residents should receive their individual service charge demands for the 2025/2026 year in the next two weeks.

Major Works and Planned Projects

- Lee Chapman discusses the EV charger modification and the need for infrastructure updates.

- Mentions ongoing discussions with the freeholder (Lendlease) regarding financial contributions for EV chargers. Lee is hopeful that they will cover the increased costs of install.
- Residents question the cost and charging structure for EV chargers, as most residents do not have access to car parking or have cars. It seems likely that this will be apportioned in the service charge to under the 'car parking' budget which is only allocated to those with parking spaces. Lee to confirm.
- Lee Chapman explains the potential for government grants currently being discussed in Government, but it appears there is no current grant available to South Gardens

Access Control Survey and Drainage CCTV Survey

- Lee Chapman talks about the access control survey and the need to check the intercom system's lifespan via a series of inspections.
- Mentions the drainage CCTV survey and its expected completion within six to eight weeks.
- Discussion on the emergency lighting survey and its impact on future maintenance.
- Lee Chapman emphasizes the importance of transparency and sharing survey results with the RA.

Section 20 Process and Health and Safety Compliance

- Lee Chapman outlines the Section 20 process, including security, cleaning, and M&E tenders.

Solar Panels and Energy Efficiency

- A resident asks about the potential expansion of solar panels across the estate to save money for South Gardens
- Lee Chapman mentions the current solar panels producing minimal energy and each panel only producing 6p of electricity per day
- Resident queries this low number and would like to continue conversation and read the recent report on efficiency of existing solar installations.

Gym equipment theft

- A resident raises a question about the gym equipment and the investigation into missing weights.
- Lee Chapman confirms this investigation is ongoing, suggests it may be from within the development rather than outside. Says there is no CCTV camera in the gym and will look into why this is and if it's possible to install one for the future.
- Aimee confirms they have asked Technogym for a quote to replace stolen items. Also confirms they may move to renting gym equipment as this is seen as a cost-effective solution for the gym.

Balcony Decking and Pest Control

- Lee Chapman addresses the issue of balcony decking warping
- Mentions the potential for NHBC claims and the responsibility of the management company for decking.