

AGM 2016 - Chair's Statement.

2016 has been a period of consolidation and stabilisation for Royal Mills (RM) following the completion of the residential development in 2015. Today, Royal Mills is increasingly recognised as one of the Manchester's prime residential locations. It is popular because the apartments are authentic, desirable and premium quality. The development is well maintained and very secure, yet accessible.

Royal Mills is pivotal to the resurgence of Ancoats as '...Manchester's cultural, artsy quarter...'

The Royal Mills Residents Association (RoMRA) is the legally recognised association for around 700 residents who live in the Royal Mills complex. The Association is a local community stakeholder group whose aims and objectives include supporting and preserving the Ancoats Conservation Area. All residents of Royal Mills are automatically members of RoMRA. There are 376 apartments in the seven buildings, which comprise Royal Mills: Old Sedgewick, New Sedgewick, Royal Mill, McConnel, Fairbairn, Paragon Mill and Kennedy.

The RoMRA committee, who are elected annually at the AGM, has met several times throughout 2016 and discussed issues affecting individual residents, the complex as a whole and matters concerning the wider community. RoMRA has liaised closely with Zenith Management in the development, delivery and refinement of the various services and support which they provide to owners, residents and tenants. Minutes of all meetings are available at <http://royalmills.net/royal-mills-residents-association/downloads/>

Some of the key issues and developments addressed by RoMRA throughout 2016 are:

1) Meetings

- a) An ad hoc security meeting was held with Zenith in March for residents concerned about personal security resulting from some isolated incidents of unwelcome visitors to specific floors in RM. The meeting was very useful with improved reporting and feedback protocols being agreed with Zenith. Since this time no other significant security issues have been reported to Zenith
- b) Meeting with Councillor Ollie Manco (October 11th)
 - i) Ollie lives locally and, as a resident, has many similar concerns and hopes for the area as do residents of RM
 - ii) He is keen to protect the area, in particular Cutting Room Square (CRS) – and that it should not be over-run with bars etc
 - iii) Concurs with our concerns regarding on-street car parking, traffic management, anti-social behaviour, flooding / drainage problems due to construction traffic etc etc
 - iv) He's also optimistic for the area e.g. new 'independent' operators opening restaurants, bars and retail offerings. Also new arts and culture initiatives and the opening of the local school etc.

2) Key developments in 2016

- a) Change of Landlord to Longharbour. Homeground is their 'agent'. Demands for ground rent have been issued.
- b) Some isolated incidents of break-ins to commercial properties, bikes allegedly stolen and some cars damaged in the car parks. Generally however security at RM is very high due to the vigilance of Zenith and residents.
- c) Following the security meeting in May, a more rigorous vetting of intercom-to-concierge access for visitors was implemented. Also, external door handles were removed from the Cotton St entrance (next to Uber).
- d) Zenith and the Landlord successfully implemented various enforcements on residents and tenants who were in breach of their lease e.g. anti-social behaviour, keeping of pets, AirBnB lettings etc
- e) New Zenith team members were recruited in security and maintenance resulting in fewer 'agency' locum security staff being required.
- f) New roof completed on NS/OS.

- g) Recycling initiative undertaken to provide grey food bins and recycling posters / leaflets to residents.
 - h) RoMRA, on behalf of RM residents, successfully applied for and received a NIF grant (Neighbourhood Investment Fund) from Manchester City Council to restock the railway planters in CRS– much to the delight and pleasure of local residents and visitors to the area.
 - i) Occasional Social events for RM residents. Regular Pop-up events / restaurants at Ancoats Coffee shop.
 - j) Greater occupancy and utilisation of commercial premises in RM noted e.g. Uber, Deliveroo, Hairdresser etc
 - k) Castlefield Markets – successful ‘street’ market held first Saturday of each month in RM atrium
- 3) Going forward into 2017
- a) Redhill St entrance door – repair is imminent
 - b) Hyperoptic superfast broadband cabling – awaiting Landlord’s signature, which is expected / hoped for before year-end.
 - c) Sky Q upgrade – surveys completed, installation is imminent.
 - d) Zenith ‘rebrand’ anticipated in early 2017. Launch of quarterly feedback newsletter planned and Zenith web portal upgrade and improvements anticipated.
 - e) Zenith are in final stages of agreement and enactment of a long term planning and maintenance contract for Royal Mills commencing in 2017
 - f) Homeground (aka landlord) reminder letter to residents ref terms of lease expected early 2017
 - g) Electric car charging points, a report is being prepared by Zenith (using AMRA guidelines)
 - h) Garage cleaning regime to be instigated.
 - i) Ongoing construction of Murrays Mills, Hood St and Jersey St / Dantzie St with expected completion in 2018
 - j) More planting in CRS anticipated.
 - k) More independent bars, restaurants, retail offerings and cultural events for the Ancoats Urban Village community.

Finally I would like to thank the following on behalf of RoMRA and residents.

Alan Simper and Alan Govett - and the rest of the excellent Zenith team of concierge and maintenance staff - for doing such a great job in service of RM residents.

RoMRA committee members and the RoMRA Facebook moderators for giving up their free time to support their community.

Last but not least the residents of RM who have initiated, contributed or /and participated in projects in support of our community e.g. recycling, Hyperoptic, planters, social gatherings etc. - you know who you are!

Thank you.

Patrick Langan.

Chair

RoMRA.

18 November 2016