

# Mutual Heights Body Corporate

## Ninth annual Chairman's report: July 2015

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### Introduction

This report concerns the management of the building and the activities of your trustees for the period September 2014 to July 2015.

The first meeting of trustees was immediately after the 2014 AGM in September last year, at which I was re-appointed chairperson. We then continued to meet as needed. In view of the relative quiet this year, this will be a shorter report than usual. From the trustees' point of view this has been a quiet year. Actually, something of an interlude while we wait for the High Court date in November. Most of the legal processes that could be done have been completed, although as we plan for the AGM we are closer than ever to what will be intensive preparations for the court proceedings. We await the High Court date: 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015.

### Composition of the Trustees

In the period of this report, your trustees have remained as previously:

- Andrew Bytheway (Chairman)
- Simon Hudson
- Jared Lamb
- Mark Mallin
- Jonas Thulin

My thanks go to trustees for their time and effort, which is for everybody's benefit.

### Financial matters

Budgets have worked well, although there is of course the matter of the special levy. The first tranche has been collected, and used to pay for the cost of legal and expert services in preparing for litigation, and in executing "urgent" works that threatened the habitability or structure of the building. In the case of the damp works, there have been two streams of expenditure:

- Urgent works approved by trustees have been paid for from the special levy.
- Owners choosing to pay for work that they deemed necessary themselves. I believe there have been four such cases. These costs will be reimbursed to those owners should our claim be successful, according to the level of the settlement.

The financial reports submitted elsewhere summarise the level of expenditure relating to these legal and urgent damp proofing costs.

The second tranche of the special levy was initiated in February this year. About 30 owners have paid 'up front', which is helpful. At the time of writing, urgent works continue, and following evaluation of requests according to the agreed protocol approval has been given for some further work.

### The building

As noted, work on the damp problems has continued as needed throughout the year. Additionally, the unsold portions of the building (principally the Banking Hall, Fresco Room, Directors' Suite and the unfinished apartment on the tenth floor) have all been sold. Further, one of the larger apartments on the seventh floor that was never finished is now being dealt with. And so, right now, we are more aware of the internal building work that is going on than the external damp penetration. Hopefully, these works will be completed within a few months, at the outside.

There is one outstanding issue relating to the way that the sale of the Fresco Room has affected access to certain apartments on the eighth floor. That is still in hand. Anyone who is troubled by this

work for these kinds of reason, or because it exceeds the limitations (of noise and time) in our conduct rules, is requested to inform the office so that we can do something about it.

Routine maintenance continues. One example reminds us that we have had the building for long enough that certain works undertaken at the time of the conversion (2003-2005) have come to need replacement, such as the wooden decking on the balconies which is now unsafe in places because of rotting. If you are aware of any such problems, once again you must let the office know.

## **Community**

### ***Communications***

We circulated newsletters in November 2014 and April this year.

The web community site is still updated sporadically: <http://www.mutualheights.net>. The scamming problems have diminished but prospective purchasers and tenants continue to contact us through the web site and we do our best to deal with their queries.

### ***Safety, Security & Services***

Charles and his team manage our service providers well and I am not aware of any problems. Generally the new security service providers are doing better, but there have been one or two instances where they have tripped up, often at the front door. I am increasingly tempted to argue that our foyer should offer a much fuller 'concierge' service, which would probably add to the costs of the security services. But there are several moments in our lives when a proper concierge service would be really helpful: when you are expecting courier deliveries, when you need to send or receive messages, when you need to leave keys for short term guests to pick up.

At the most basic level we need the 'pill box' to be staffed by people who have inter-personal skills, can deal properly with telephone calls, and might even get to know us all better. Especially if we make the effort to be known to them. I will add this to the topics that we might discuss at the meeting.

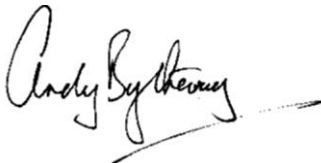
### ***Filming, concerts, festivals***

There continues to be city-centre activity that interferes with our lives. The filming can seem to be a serious interference, but we are paid when the building is directly affected and you will see the results in the financial reports. The problem of festivals and outdoor (even indoor!) concerts is more problematic and we might devote some time to discussing this at the annual general meeting.

## **Final words**

I thanked my fellow trustees at the start, let me now thank Charles Keefer and his staff once again for their excellent work. On your behalf, I extend our collective thanks to the whole management team.

With warm regards,  
on behalf of the Trustees,



(Professor) Andy Bytheway

*Chairman of the Trustees, Mutual Heights, Cape Town.*

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*http://www.mutualheights.net*

*Check out "Mutual Building" on Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual\\_Building](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_Building)*