

HOLMEFIELD PROPERTIES LTD DIRECTORS REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD 26.06.24- 20.06.25

This report supports the financial statement for the year ending December 2024

The following people acted as Directors during the period of this report

Mike Emmans Dean, Bronwen Bracamonte, Bev Heap and Ann Williams.

Mudd & Co Ltd continued to act as Management Agents.

The principal activities of the Directors during this period are outlined below.

Community Centre and Laundrette

The Residents' Coffee Mornings have taken place on the first Saturday of each month throughout the year, and the Holmefield Christmas party took place on the 14th December. This was enjoyed by all. The committee would like to thank Alison and Steve Mummery for facilitating these events for the enjoyment of Holmefield residents.

The centre has been hired on Thursday evenings in term time for the Stained Glass Group. This year there has also been a regular short private booking every five to six weeks. Bookings generally remained steady throughout the year from residents and non-residents. At time of writing three requests have been agreed for bookings in July, August, and October. It was decided in April to increase the centre hire to £6 per hour for Holmefield Residents and £12 per hour for Non- Residents. The committee felt this was necessary to off-set the increase in the cost of running the building, and still represents good value for money. The deposit of £30 remains the same. The increase in the hire fee has been updated on the Holmefield website. A regular advertisement is placed in the quarterly Parish Council Newsletter.

Following a discussion, and on the recommendation of the laundry engineer it has been decided to increase the charge for the washing machines from £2.00 to £3.00 per load. This will take place on 23rd June. This has been confirmed to owners and residents by email and notices in the laundrette. The cost of using dryers will remain the same. It has been necessary to call out the laundry engineer more often this year due to washing machine failure. Most of the problems have been due to some users overloading of the machines. On the last occasion this caused a flood in the laundrette and main hall. We have been advised by the engineer that the machines will hold a maximum of 8kg, dry weight.

Grounds Maintenance and Gardening

Michael Hill has been responsible for the annual hedge trimming and the hard surface cleaning. Hedge trimming takes place at the end of August in line with RSPB regulations. The hard surfaces are cleared monthly. As agreed at last year's AGM, Michael Hill has been asked to use weedkiller on the concrete areas to control growth.

Andrew Hill has continued to maintain the grassed areas twice a month from March to October.

York Gardens Ltd have been contracted to maintain the flower beds and borders twice a month throughout the year. Due to the number of flower beds and borders, a group of interested residents felt that help could be offered to assist with general maintenance and weed control. The Gardening Task Force was formed and members have supported the work of York Gardens through the Summer and Spring. Individual residents have also helped with maintenance, typically near their own properties. The committee would like to thank everyone for their hard work and enthusiasm in improving the environment for all residents. Additionally, York Gardens have spread wood chippings (from the felled trees on Holmefield Lane) on the flower beds to slow down weed growth. On the recommendation of a gardener living on the estate, chicken manure is also being added to the beds and borders to provide nutrition for the soil. York Gardens have been asked to carry this out each visit. Due to the number of beds and borders a decision has been made to approach York Gardens to attend the estate weekly from April to September. From October to March this will revert to two visits each month.

Tree Maintenance

As stated at last year's AGM, Lewis Tree Surgery identified several trees in the early stages of Ash Dieback, on the grassed area between Peel Close and Turners Croft, and on Holmefield Lane. A decision was made in the Autumn that the trees were dying, and due to the proximity of the path, a risk to pedestrians. Due to this section of Holmefield Lane being part of the conservation area, a planning application for was submitted for one ash tree on Holmefield Lane to be felled. This was granted and the work took place in January. Unfortunately, Lewis tree Surgery discovered that another Ash tree in this area was also diseased, and was in dangerous condition. LTS made the decision to fell the tree. A retrospective planning application was then submitted to the council on behalf of Holmefield Properties. The two Ash trees on the grassed area between Peel Close and Turners Croft were felled on the same occasion. Directors and residents then liaised with the tree officer at the council about suitable replacements for Holmefield Lane. A third Holm oak and three Himalayan beech trees have been planted in this area. A Great White Cherry has replaced the two felled Ash trees between Peel Close and Turners Croft. Holmefield Committee would like to thank David Grimshaw who planted the new trees, and was assisted by the Gardening Task Force. Thank you also to the Gardening Task Force for continuing to nurture and maintain the new trees.

Halifax Estates, Trees and Eastern Hedge

Since 2021 Directors have been in correspondence with Halifax Estates about the lack of maintenance of the full stretch of eastern hedge from 17 Turners Croft to 38 Peel Close, and the Ash trees on the section of the eastern hedge/ Holmefield boundary by the side of 39 Peel Close, and the condition of the Ash tree at the end of the hedge by 38 Peel Close. A land agent from Halifax estates paid a preliminary site visit to Holmefield in 2021, and did show concerns about one of the Ash trees between 16 Turners Croft and 39 Peel Close, stating that it showed early signs of Ash dieback, and would be inspected by Halifax consultants. Halifax estates have, since that time always insisted that the trees are regularly inspected and are healthy. Despite repeated requests from the managing agents, Halifax have refused to give Holmefield sight of any inspection reports, or engage with managing agents and directors in a spirit of cooperation. For this reason, in January 2025 directors took legal advice, and sent a 'letter before action' to Halifax Estates reiterating

our concerns, and including photographs. The Halifax response received by the managing agents was unhelpful and somewhat rude accusing the directors of harassment. However, recently a tree surgeon acting on behalf of Halifax Estates submitted a planning application to City of York Council to fell four ash trees adjacent to 39 Peel Close as they are now suffering from Ash dieback. We have learned that permission has been granted following a visit from the CYC tree officer. Holmefield have received no further details from Halifax Estates, and the issue of controlling the ingress of seeded elders and brambles from the field growing through the hedge onto the Holmefield boundary is still unresolved.

Parking on the Estate

Due to continuing parking issues on the estate, a decision has been made to implement controlled parking by UKCPS. Two proposals have been submitted by UKCPS, one for Peel Close (which will go ahead shortly), and a separate proposal for Turners Croft which will be implemented if it becomes necessary, and permissions from property owners about locations of signage can be agreed. At the time of writing Mudd & Co have been instructed to write to all property owners setting out the arrangements for resident and visitors permits for all Holmefield residents for the Peel Close proposal, and to contact owners on Turners Croft to seek permissions for signage on selected freehold properties, should the Turners Croft proposal need to be implemented in the future.

The rationale behind this decision is there has been an increase in the number of complaints about unauthorised parking. There are times when parking isn't a problem, for instance around Christmas and York University's summer break. At other times, sports field users and university personnel abuse our parking facilities, despite Holmefield liaising with the university and sports centre. Holmefield residents have reported confrontations with drivers of unauthorised vehicles. There have been reports of residents having difficulty in finding spaces on arriving home in the evenings, especially midweek. It is suspected that sports field users are sometimes leaving vehicles in the car park overnight Wednesday to Thursday. Unauthorised parking caused inconvenience to many during the recent Roses Sports. For several days unauthorised users were coming and going, and residents and directors spoke to a number of people about unauthorised parking during this period.

Two residents also reported that a number of groups were moving through the estate to and from their vehicles, showing little respect for our environment, and in one case barging through gaps in the hedge, walking across flower beds, and taking a shortcut across the communal grounds between Peel Close and Turners Croft.

Turners Croft residents have also raised concerns about unauthorised parking on pavements. Photographs have been submitted to the managing agents. There was also a case of an unauthorised vehicle which stopped around midnight outside a ground floor bedroom with full headlights and music playing, waking the occupant. This happened twice. It was suspected that it may have been a student. On that basis this, it was reported to the University who informed Campus Safety, and students were reminded about considerate behaviour in the community through the usual media channels.

Several other complaints with accompanying photographs from Turners Croft concern parking in garage bays, preventing access to garages. In most cases these have been commercial vehicles, but it is also evident from the submitted photographs that residents' vehicles are being left in these areas. It is noted that residents have previously been asked to keep the garage bays clear of vehicles, except for loading and unloading.

Hard Surface Safety Concerns

After a resident had a fall along the path by 1-9 Turners Croft, a white line has been painted along the raised curb into the car parks to aid visibility.

Northern Power Grid

Cabling works along Turners Croft have been completed this year. Some disruption was caused to residents, and some minor damage to the grassed area by the gate on Holmefield Lane, and shrubs were damaged in the flower bed on the corner adjacent to 9 Turners Croft. Northern Power grid have re-seeded the grass, and intend replacing the damaged shrubs. Directors would like to thank Turners Croft residents for their patience during this essential work.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.