

Online meeting: Getting Right to Manage for all of Chelsea Bridge Wharf!

Dear CBW residents

Are you tired of paying huge service charge increases?
Do you want a better level of estate upkeep and service?
Please join one of our online meetings – find out how we can get Right to Manage, choose our own managing agent and take back control of our development.

The meetings feature a presentation by
Canonbury Estate Management
followed by a Question and Answer session

**November
30th
7-8pm**

Zoom link

<https://qrco.de/bdWj64>

You should not need a passcode but if asked please enter **TrK6yG**



**December 1st
1-2pm**

Zoom link

<https://qrco.de/bdWjbi>

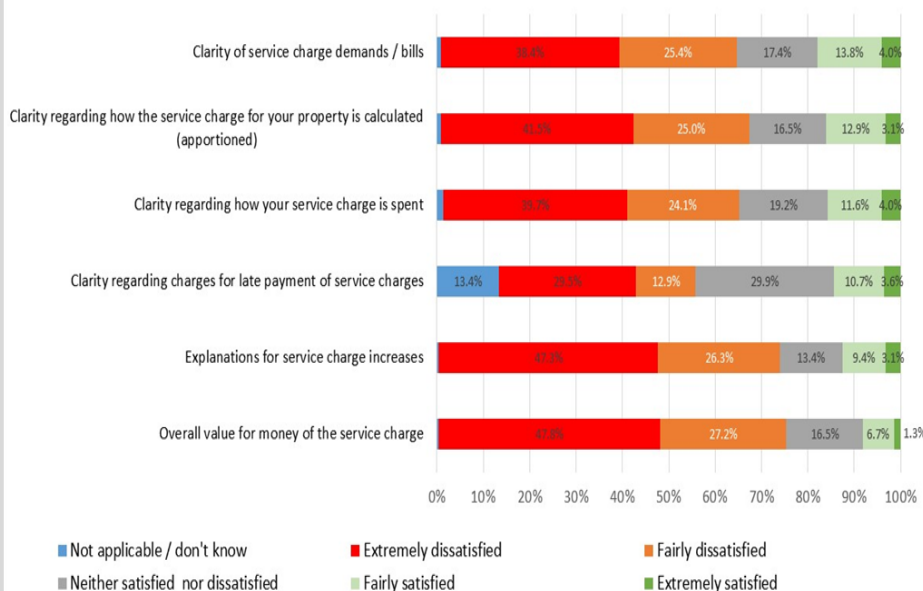
You should not need a passcode but if asked please enter **2ajx11**



All residents welcome! Contact residents@chelseabridgewharf.org.uk if any questions

As shown in Rendall and Rittner's own presentation (10th October 2022) service charges have increased way beyond inflation (almost doubling in 7 years for Warwick Building 4). **The only way we can end this and get to choose our own managing agent is through Right to Manage.**

Attitudes to service charges and service charge information (n=224): Leaseholders only.



The CBW Residents' survey shows that just 8% of residents are fairly or extremely satisfied with the value for money of the service charge; 12.5% are fairly or extremely satisfied with explanations for service charge increases; 14.3% are fairly or extremely satisfied with clarity regarding charges for late payment of service charges. See full [survey report \(http://tinyurl.com/22eu77wu\)](http://tinyurl.com/22eu77wu)



Sadly, the current Residents' Association leadership will never deliver Right to Manage

Scrutiny of Rendall & Rittner by the Chelsea Bridge Wharf Residents' Association should be holding Rendall & Rittner to account but this is only happening to a very limited extent e.g. in scrutiny of large capital expenditure. However, as the latest large service charge increases show, this only checks some of the worst excesses. **While CBWRA committee is doing some good work, there is a massive failure of leadership** which means that Rendall and Rittner are still in place and service levels and value for money are declining. Mr. Thompson has repeatedly asserted (e.g. failed AGM, May 2022) that Rendall & Rittner's performance is improving following the appointment of (another) new estate manager (Brian Klue), a view not shared by many residents or indeed the committee.

Wasting two years—and a lot of money Throughout 2021 the Chair of CBWRA and Charlie Garton-Jones repeatedly told the CBWRA committee that there was nothing we could do about obtaining Right to Manage until the law changed. When residents moved towards Right to Manage without the residents' association (Dec 2021). CBWRA then hurriedly signed a contract (ahead of Chair elections) for £15,000 with Mr. Roger Southam (without resident consultation) to 'retender the management contract' **which Mr. Thompson and Mr. Garton-Jones promised would be a quicker and cheaper alternative to Right to Manage** and that residents would have 'a new managing agent by 1st June 2022 (see [Roger Southam's published timeline](https://tinyurl.com/2p8abrf) <https://tinyurl.com/2p8abrf>). As the author of this newsletter pointed out at the time, this was never going to work, as it depended entirely on Berkeley Homes' VOLUNTARY participation. **Predictably, Berkeley Homes refused to take part and this process failed in September 2022, wasting up to £15,000 of residents' money. You might expect an apology or even a resignation but it was only mentioned in passing.**

CBWRA is misinforming residents about Right to Manage Throughout 2022, Mr Thompson/Mr Southam have absurdly claimed that Right to Manage was not possible at CBW because of a supreme court judgement (First Port V Settler's Court) E.g. see [Mr Southam's letter of 21.5.22](https://tinyurl.com/3ndjnc5w): <https://tinyurl.com/3ndjnc5w>. This is completely wrong as independent advice clearly shows <https://tinyurl.com/28dht6ya>. CBWRA also claimed that the contract retendering process was the same thing as Right to Manage ([CBW app post 17.1.22](https://tinyurl.com/4xnf8hr7)) <https://tinyurl.com/4xnf8hr7> when in fact it has nothing to do with Right to Manage

After maintaining for 2 years that RTM was not possible, for a variety of implausible reasons, CBWRA now claim they will 'investigate' RTM for individual blocks. This is another half-baked idea which will not work (the CBW blocks are joined by the underground car park and so are not 'vertically separated' from each other as required for RTM). Even if individual blocks achieved RTM they would not gain control of the external areas of the development where a great deal of the service charge is spent (these would remain with the Freeholder and their chosen agent i.e. Rendall and Rittner). The idea that the current leadership of CBWRA will deliver Right to Manage block by block has no credi-

bility. This process (if ever started) will fail, just as retendering the management contract failed. **We need RTM for the ALL OF CBW and there is no reason why we cannot get it.**

Empty promises, failures to deliver

In fact Mr. Thompson/CBWRA have failed to deliver on a whole range of promises:

- To appoint a 'new managing agent' by 1st June 2022
- To carry out a 'management audit' Rendall and Rittner
- A hold a vote on the future of the fountains
- To install a barrier on Sopwith Way to improve security and quality of life at CBW
- All scaffolding works were down by September 2022
- No action on sustainability/electricity consumption

The state of governance in CBWRA

No-one on the CBWRA committee has been elected (apart from the Chair) who won 42% of a 250 person turnout in Jan 2021.

There have been no consultations with residents other than the annual residents' survey (2021) carried out by the author of this newsletter.

CBWRA are just about to authorise £27,000 expenditure by R&R for security guards for ten weeks—residents have not been consulted, although it a vague promised to do so later has been made.

No quorate AGM has ever been held (24 people attended the May 'AGM' as no invites to flats went out, contrary to the constitution).

Since Mr. Thompson became Chair of CBWRA (Jan 2021) **there have been just two meetings where residents could ask R&R questions directly** (Dec.2021 & Oct. 2022) and **one where CBWRA could be asked questions** (May 2022). R&R and CBWRA have therefore largely avoided direct resident scrutiny. Residents are frequently told to attend monthly CBWRA committee meetings but are not allowed to ask any questions (non-leaseholders are not allowed to attend at all).

R&R add all leaseholders as CBWRA members by default: the £20 fee is added to service charge, so many members are unaware they are members. **Do you know how this income (£20,000 p.a. approx.) is spent?** No meaningful statement of income & expenditure has ever been given to residents.

Garton-Jones estate agent are getting exclusive use of the CBW app estate agent advertising for just £504 a year, which does not seem a great deal for residents, given that Garton-Jones' commission (1.75%) on a single apartment sale at 600K would be £10,500.

CBWRA are continuing to ignore their own constitution by making changes to it at the request of Berkeley Homes/R&R, and not having these approved at AGM.

Those who argue that Right to Manage is possible for all of CBW or criticise CBWRA committee have their CBW app accounts arbitrarily closed without right of appeal

Stay in touch! If you are interested in working towards Right to Manage & an open democratic residents' association contact (Mike O'Driscoll residents@chelseabridgeward.org.uk)