

CM CANNOCK MILL COHOUSING

Annual Report

1 February 2018—31 January 2019

Cannock Mill Cohousing Colchester



The mill with lift tower—August 2018

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Aerial view of site—March 2018

CHAIR'S REPORT

Our website has a 'Gallery of Site Progress' and it is a source of comfort and pride to see how far things have changed over the last 12 months. This is a consolation, as the building programme is behind schedule with the latest estimates of 'hand over' in April 2019. Of course, delays in construction projects are not unusual and an annual report is not the place to give a detailed explanation of the hold-ups. I will confine myself to saying that building to Passivhaus standards is an exacting requirement but is one we have insisted on since the first design brief right through to the detailed tender specification. Our homes will be to this standard.

At the end of January 2019 we have roofs, windows and doors on all of our future homes and a great sense of the look and feel of the site. The top block of homes have been tested for air-tightness and the fitting out is in progress. The other homes will follow in sequence.

We have agreements signed for 21 of the 23 leases, with the remaining two allocated but waiting on the sale of the members' existing homes before they can proceed. Meanwhile, we have been actively recruiting to our 'waiting pool' and also sounding out interest in the three additional homes that may be created in Cannock Mill House where we have planning permission for two flats and a maisonette. One of the most encouraging things over the last year has been the way new members have been so easily integrated into the wider group, taking up responsibilities and bringing new energy and enthusiasm.

We are conscious that the delays impact not only on our members but also on our neighbours. We have emphasised the importance of consideration regarding noise and parking with our contractor and their subcontractors. We hope that when we move in we can quickly establish ourselves as good neighbours and an asset to the wider community.

We remain very grateful for the continued help and support of our neighbours at Cannock Mill, our MP, our local Borough and County councillors, local authority officers, the UK Cohousing Network, Homes England (formerly the Homes and Communities Agency) and our stalwart team of professional advisers.

Phil McGeevor, CMCC Chair

Group Reports

BUILDING

This is a difficult section to write as if the building programme had been completed in line with the programme envisaged in the contract we would have all been occupying our homes by now. In building projects things do not always go according to plan, errors occur, the unexpected happens and we have to find a way through.

The Building Group was renamed, prematurely perhaps, the Building/Estates Group part way through the year with slightly amended responsibilities. This was done so that the Group would be able to move seamlessly from the construction phase to one of snagging and ongoing management of the whole site post occupation.

The Group has continued to act as an interface between the Board Members and the Design Team and to assist where possible in collating and/or providing information.

The contractor has continued to permit regular access to the site for Board Members which we are grateful for so we can see progress at first hand and Members can see for themselves the good standard of workmanship being achieved in their future homes.

Key Points:

- Cannock Mill House: various investigations took place to check on foundations and possible floor heights in the lower ground floor as preparation for producing a suggested scheme for subdividing the house into three units. ATA prepared a scheme comprising one 1-bedroom unit and two 2-bedroom ones. Approval was granted by the Board to submit a Planning Application and consent was granted by CBC, subject to a Section 106 Notice linking it to the main site so we can benefit from the more favourable parking requirements.
- A new culvert was discovered next to the Mill and this was investigated to check where it went and whether it was free flowing which resulted in various discussions with Anglian Water and Highways
- During recladding work on the Mill rot was identified in some structural timbers. A remedial proposal had to be designed and agreed with the local authority, as this is a listed building, before repairs could take place.
- Monthly reviews of contract progress and of cost reports prepared by our cost consultant. The Group contributed to updating the Risk Register reporting on a quarterly basis to the Board.

- Falkus Joinery offered to provide custom built kitchens for each home. This involved a great deal of liaison over what was possible in terms of layout with the architect and individuals to ensure the best outcome.

In February we had snow and icy weather courtesy of the "beast from the east" causing work on site to cease for a few days while later in the year the hot sunny days provided tricky conditions when the roofers were installing the metal roofs to the flats. Otherwise most of the year the weather has been clement and we hope this continues to the end of the project.

Susan Roche
Chair, Building/Estates Group



The architect with professional team representatives on the roof for

'Topping Out Ceremony'

6 April 2018

FINANCE

The group, convened by Sara Scott as CMCC Treasurer, has continued to meet regularly throughout the year. Legal matters have also been included in the business of the Finance Group with Linda Redlich attending as Company Secretary. Meetings have alternated between London and Colchester. Sara's 3-year term as Treasurer is due to end in April 2019.

This year has been extremely busy and subjects discussed have included the following:

- **Sale of leasehold properties:** Individual agreements to lease 21 of the 23 homes have been signed and exchanged with CMCC. A number of leaseholders have sold their previous homes during the year and have been able to pay substantial further deposit sums.
- **Construction Progress:** Jerram Falkus Construction Ltd are the main contractors and effective financial controls are in place. The anticipated completion date of October 2018 was not achieved.
- **Homes England loan facility:** The loan facility with Homes England (HE) has been significant in managing the cashflow for the construction. Five instalments of the loan were drawn down from February to June 2018. Further loan drawdown is available if we need it. The loan will be repaid when leaseholders complete their purchases.
- **Interest free loans from Directors:** Several Directors have been able to make interest free loans to the Company and this has enabled us to make monthly payments to the main contractor and to the ancillary consultants without further drawdown of the HE loan. This has served to limit the potential extra interest payments caused by the delayed completion date.
- **Financial reporting:** Xero accounting software continues to be used to record all financial activity by CMCC and is accessible online to view by all Directors. David York produces accounting reports as and when required.
- **Banking:** All of CMCC's banking is with Triodos Bank.
- **Annual Accounts:** The annual accounts for 2018/2019 are reported on elsewhere in this document. We are grateful to David York for his continued work producing the accounts, reclaiming VAT and ensuring that we comply with all financial regulations.

Sara Scott, CMCC Treasurer
Chair, Finance Group

LEGAL

Legal aspects of CMCC, such as the Agreement to Lease, the final Lease, and company and financial matters, were ongoing throughout the review year. The Legal Group therefore needed to meet less frequently than in previous years and legal matters, and decisions arising for board discussion, were combined with Finance Group meetings.

During the year, the Group was involved with:

- Meeting the Ecology Building Society to establish the possibility of finance for units unsold at the end of the building contract, and directors' own mortgage arrangements
- Meeting the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, to be included in representations on the Leasehold Reform Consultation being conducted by Government
- Finalising a Scheme of Management document that will be part of the final Lease; it addresses possible future 'enfranchisement', where a leaseholder purchases the freehold of a unit
- The company's data protection policy. This was formally adopted in compliance with new European GDPR legislation.

Thanks to the diligence of our own team with experience of leases and leaseholds who have been working with Wrigleys, our solicitors, amendments and updates have been made to the final Lease. This is now being completed for inclusion in the individual home purchase documentation.

Linda Redlich , Company Secretary
Chair, Legal Group

Millers on the roof for 'Topping Out' - April 2018



MEMBERSHIP

We have replied to 53 enquiries, compared to 101 in the previous year and 92 in the year before that. This may be because we have more information on our website, both on costs and on the availability of homes. There have been 12 formal applications (i.e. returning of the questionnaire), compared to 25 received last year and 24 in the year before. This year we have had seven more people complete the membership process (five households). The corresponding figures for last year were 16 people (12 households). We have two new Directors, who have taken on the lease for one of our 3-bedroom properties.

At the end of the report year, we had two 3-bedroom properties where a lease is yet to be signed. Both have been allocated to members who are busy trying to sell their current homes. We hope a sale will enable them to take on these remaining leases and join us as Directors of CMCC.

We now have a waiting pool for all properties, except the 3-bedroom houses.

The work of the Communications Group has been tireless, with our 'Discovery Event' in September proving to be an interesting and effective recruitment activity. Four of those attending have subsequently attended Board meetings. Perhaps the most impressive work has been with newsletters, particularly the UKCN's and also the Cortijo Romero newsletter. Having caught attention in this way it is essential that we have an attractive and informative website on which the curious can 'land'. Our Comms team have ensured that our website is accurate and inspiring - with just enough of a reality check to ensure that only serious prospects begin the membership process.

We are also grateful for those other contributions made towards the recruitment of new Directors and additions to the waiting pool: the work of Sue and Joanne on the finance meetings and of those members who took on buddy roles, as well as everyone's involvement in the membership meetings and social events.

Finally, for the first time in our 12 year history, I have to report the sad loss of two of our members. Monica was a founding member and played a crucial part in establishing our ethos and durability through difficult times. Stuart was the first Colchester resident to join our group after the purchase of our site. As one of the youngest and fittest members we looked forward to enjoying his wry humour for many years. Sadly it was not to be. Both are greatly missed.

Rosie Fooks

Chair, Membership Group

EVER AFTER

The last year has seen our attention start to move from the present reality of getting our scheme built to the future questions of how we want to live. Our approach to this re-focussing involves identifying manageable chunks and getting small groups to work on each bit. The umbrella term we have for this is 'Ever After'.

It is an interesting experience because our members are bringing forward their dreams and aspirations and hoping to find they are shared and supported. So questions of keeping bees or chickens or of what to plant or how to organize a cooking rota all come under this heading.

Our Travel Group is steaming ahead (not literally!) with establishing a company for a carpool, with the proposed name of 'Millwheels'. Our Garden Group has been considering planting and garden construction. Life in the Mill, our common house, has currently no less than four groups operating - one for each floor - thinking about the interior design and general organisation. There is also a group for the Kitchen and Utility Room (our spacious workshop in the right hand 'lean-to' of the Mill). Here the questions concern equipment and getting the right balance between spontaneity and organisation.

These groups are essential to our long term success. They have taken up a range of challenges, applying the usual blend of practicality and humour.

Phil McGeevor
Chair, Ever After Group



Mill Dining room taking shape—September 2018

COMMUNICATIONS

The focus of the Communications Group has again been drawing in new membership enquiries, this year mainly through our newsletters, social media and website, as well as via the UK Cohousing Network (UKCN), with the aim of both finding buyers for our remaining homes and attracting people to join our waiting pool.

Activity through the year included:

- Continuous updating of our website, in particular to showcase available properties and photos of build progress, as well as four blog posts
- Three newsletters, each going to some 480 subscribers
- Continued exposure to an increasing following on Twitter and Facebook
- A second 'Discovery Event' in London, at which guests heard presentations about cohousing and what Cannock Mill has to offer
- Representation at two local authority events, at Chelmsford (May) and Dover (June), promoting community-led housing
- Maintaining visibility via the UKCN, a valuable route for new enquiries; Cannock Mill has been visible on its website home page throughout the year, and build progress has been featured in UKCN monthly newsletters since May 2018
- Continued collection of material for a video about the Cannock Mill journey, initially via a commission but latterly, as those commissioned withdrew, by Cannock Millers themselves. The commissioned footage has been reviewed and catalogued.

Following meagre returns from the input required to get national press attention, we have put less effort into getting press coverage. Articles appeared in Yours magazine (April), the Colchester Gazette, covering our topping out ceremony (April), and the newsletter of alternative holiday provider Cortijo Romero (July).

With a view to starting to build local awareness, an advertisement was placed in the University of Essex choir winter concert programme.

Considerable effort was put into ensuring that CMCC Ltd is compliant with the new data protection laws (GDPR) which came into force in May 2018.

During the coming year, the emphasis of the Communications Group, working closely as always with the Membership Group, will continue to change from generating interest in remaining properties to maintaining public awareness of Cannock Mill in order to developing a healthy waiting pool for when properties become available in future, and to continuing our support for cohousing generally.

Lesley Scordellis
Chair, Communications Group

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Internal Communications Group has supported CMCC members throughout the year in their use of cloud based storage and communication. It has also maintained both the CMCC web presence and the use of audio/video technology during CMCC meetings.

David York
Chair, Internal Communications Group



Kitchen construction at Falkus Joinery -January 2019



Pond side apartments—January 2019



South side of 3-storey houses—January 2019

Summary of the accounts 1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019

	2019 (£000s)	2018 (£000s)
Cannock Mill land and development	8,220	4,876
Money owed to CMCC ^(a)	21	30
Funds in the bank	1,396	1,161
Sales deposits	-7,009	-5,664
Other money owed by CMCC short term	-2,628	-403
Surplus or deficit retained^(b)	0	0

Notes on the accounts

^(a)Money owed to CMCC is mostly our VAT reclaimed, which we receive after the year end.

^(b)As a not-for-profit company we aim for no surplus or deficit.

PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Solicitors:

Wrigleys Solicitors LLP, 19 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AG

Pemberton Greenish LLP, 45 Cadogan Gardens, London SW3 2AQ

Design Team:

Architect: Anne Thorne Architects LLP, iINDUSTRY, Adelaide Wharf, 21 Whiston Street, London E2 8EX

Landscape Design:

Robert Bray Associates, Palace Chambers, 40 London Road, Stroud GL5 2AJ

Quantity Surveyor:

Peter W Gittins & Associates, Riverbank House, One Putney Bridge Approach, London SW6 3JD

Services Engineer:

Alan Clarke, The Woodlands, Woodland Close, Whitecroft, Lydney GL15 4PL

Structural Engineer and Principal Designer:

Ellis & Moore, Sovereign House, 1 Albert Place, Finchley, London N3 1QB

Bankers:

Triodos Bank NV, Deanery Road, Bristol BS1 5AS

Tax Advisers:

MHA MacIntyre Hudson, New Bridge Street House, 30–34, New Bridge Street, London EC4V 6BJ

Valuers:

Morley Riches & Ablewhite LLP, 4 Newcomen Way, Colchester CO4 9RA

MAIN CONTRACTOR

Jerram Falkus Construction Ltd, 14 Anning Street, London, EC2A 3LQ

**CMCC DIRECTORS
at 31 January 2019**

Joanne Alston
Charles Atkinson
Jane Blackburn (*Vice-chair*)
Ian Blackburn
Nigel Carter
Jane Ferguson
Rosie Fooks
Tim Haines
Karen Harris
Brefni Langdon
Phil McGeevor (*Chair*)
Jenny Payne
Linda Redlich (*Company Secretary*)
Sheena Robertson
Susan Roche
Lesley Scordellis
Sara Scott (*Treasurer*)
Barbara Simpkins
Mike Slavin
Anthea Stone
Andy Thorne
Anne Thorne
Eve Tibber
Peter Tibber
David York
Sue York



Garage interior 3-bed house November 2018



Fitting the oak floor in the Mill August 2018



Front of 3-bed houses August 2018

CM CANNOCK MILL COHOUSING



Cannock Mill Rise flats, view from the new road—January 2019

www.cannockmillcohousing.co.uk

Registered address:

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Company number: 6805556