Chairman's report

20 August, 2025

Dear Members,

It is my privilege and pleasure to deliver the final chairman's report for this outgoing committee, and to remark on the successes it has achieved. Our first chairman, Paul Riley, implemented several important measures, including new communication channels, bringing our levies system in line with best municipal practice, and extending the summer holiday volunteer patrol system into a permanent arrangement.

This led to the proposal last year of a new patrol levy to cover the costs of patrols and CCTV monitoring. The majority of homeowners accepted the cost and voted in support of this proposal. There was some objection to the use of St. Monica's residents for these patrols and their professional status, and a few unpleasant incidents between residents and patrol staff, which led them to temporarily suspend patrols.

These issues have been resolved, and the patrols have since been a key factor in protecting our village from the rising crime levels in the Valley. The patrollers do much more than provide a visible presence – they cheerfully assist residents in many ways, from reporting overflowing sewers to looking for lost cats. I commend Paul and former committee members Rosa Kruger, Dewald Lindeque and John-Henry Roberts for implementing these measures and for the great efforts they made to improve this village.

In December 2024 Paul felt he could no longer afford the time required to manage his role, and I was invited to take the chair. One of my first tasks was to review our finances and the high rate of arrears. After spending many evenings reconciling the accounts, I presented them to the committee, and we instructed our legal team to recover arrears. Thank you to everyone who is now paid up.

It was also clear that the accounting system that had served the OHA for decades was no longer suitable. Apart from unwieldy arrears management practices, the committee had no real-time access to financial information, and legislative requirements such as CSOS were proving hard to meet. To resolve this, we investigated several solutions, and chose management company ZenTeq and the online WeconnectU platform. This platform – used by many community schemes – is powerful, efficient and accessible and has reduced a growing administration burden. We are now fully in control of our finances, and legally compliant. This is one of the most impactful projects of this committee's term and will be of enduring value. Thank you for your patience and support while we made this far-from-easy transition.

There has been a disappointment. The fibre project I was co-opted onto the committee early last year to implement has stalled. A year ago, we began talks with Openserve, and I gathered expressions of interest – with 93 out of 94 owners in favour. Openserve confirmed their commitment early this year. However, in late July their project manager said that they had decided the project was too expensive and were cancelling it. I am not going to let this matter drop, and am exploring alternatives.

Thank you to my fellow committee members, Greig Stewart, Chantal Smuts and Lynne Glass for their hard work, particularly in the move to ZenTeq. This is not always an easy job. I think it's worth noting that of the current committee members, only one was elected three years ago. Four of us were co-opted, stepping in to help out as elected members resigned. Without some committed homeowners willing to give of their time and effort the Village would be a very different place. To those putting themselves forward for election, we thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Rod Russell