

# Bickenhall Mansions Management Ltd

## Welcome

Welcome to this special edition of the BMML Newsletter which will provide you with an update on the Refurbishment Project. For those new to Bickenhall Mansions or for those in need of refresher, you may be interested to read a bit on the process and timeline to date at the end of this newsletter. The progress that we see on site today is the culmination of 6 years of extensive work by the Board and consultation with Leaseholders.

## Residents Tours

All Residents were invited to join the Directors for a tour of completed Block 7. Whilst many of you have seen the transformation externally, it was a welcome opportunity to showcase the internal common parts and explain the scope and specification of the works. Thank you to all of those who attended and for your positive feedback. For those who couldn't attend, the photos that accompany this newsletter will give you a flavour of what you missed.

## Brief for the Refurbishment Project

It was evident that Bickenhall Mansions external areas and common parts needed to be updated to restore our reputation as an elegant block of flats in the heart of Marylebone. A sympathetic refurbishment would make Bickenhall Mansions a better place to live; welcoming entrances, upgraded main reception and common parts, 21st Century infrastructure to support our increasing demands and enhanced compliance with Health & Safety and other regulations.

## Improved Look & Feel

After long periods of under investment, we are delighted to have now embarked upon the major refurbishment project, completing both the internal and external refurbishment of Block 7, and establishing the desired 'look and feel' to be replicated across Bickenhall Mansions.

- Welcoming entrances befitting of our Marylebone location
- Sensitive clean, repair and refurbishment of the terracotta and stonework details, extensive brickwork repairs and repointing; replacement of missing terracotta features (string courses, window heads, pepperpot tops

etc).

- Solid doors (oak to outside as agreed with Westminster) with walnut inside to match lobby finishes
- External feature lighting to entrance and first floor to highlight stonework, terracotta and arched window details
- Portland stone steps befitting of the quality of the external facade at Bickenhall Mansions
- Windows redecorated (or replaced by individual owners, cost effectively using scaffold)
- Security cameras appropriately sized and not detracting from entrance portal
- Half height panelling with generous mirrors to the entrance lobby
- Consistent high quality finishes to all doors (flat doors, communal doors, inside face of external doors etc)
- Consistent matching 'bronze' finishes to all lights, signage and ironmongery throughout
- New Greek Key pattern carpet that references the traditional Bickenhall window fenestration
- Elegant feature light fittings to communal parts, supplemented by discrete emergency fittings with feature lighting to stained glass window and vaulted space internally.

## Maintenance and Operational Benefits

Specifications and scope of works were also considerate of maintenance and operational benefits, endeavouring to ensure that we inherit an estate that is easier to maintain and cost effective to do so.

- Installed solid entrance doors in lieu of painted which were continuously chipped. Automatic opening mechanism should reduce damages to finishes further. Omitted noisy opening/closing buzzer and door slam which was intrusive to adjoining flats
- Removed applied paint to the west façade leaving a low maintenance self-finish brick
- Removed known redundant items (cabling, boxing etc) to simplify future management
- Replaced missing/damaged rainwater goods and tiles, resized inadequate hoppers, renewed leadwork to roofs, removed weed growth and installed new flashings to reduce leaks
- Replaced corroded steels above windows heads to prevent further damage to terracotta, replaced failing brickwork, repointed throughout to maintain integrity of the fabric

- Entirely stripped back railings to allow easier paint application over the coming years
- Removed damaged pigeon netting to prevent further build-up of trapped debris
- Installed extensive area of traditional hardwearing material in the entrance lobby to remove dirt from shoes and laid suitably hardwearing carpet to the common parts
- Installed TV screen centrally linked to Building Manager allowing information to be shared quickly and easily across the estate
- Removed radiator covers that were energy inefficient and confined circulation space
- Reduced areas of applied painted finish (eg: internal face of external doors, fire doors) to limit ongoing redecorations
- Installed lights, signage and ironmongery with low to no maintenance finishes
- Installed plasterboard ceilings with hidden zones for 21st Century infrastructure and new risers with single key access panels for easier access by the Building Manager
- Adopted a more energy efficient lighting strategy; PIR sensors so that lights come on/off as people move through the common parts, LED light bulbs that have a far greater life span and reduced number of fittings to ease maintenance.

## Accessibility, Health and Safety Benefits

Specifications and scope of works were also considerate of accessibility, health and safety matters to ensure that we occupy an estate that meets modern safety standards. Improved ease of access for inhabitants was also considered within the limitations of a historical building.

- A better lit entrance at street level offering a safer arrival at night
- External door that opens automatically easing access for elderly, those with prams, delivery drivers carrying goods etc. The single leaf opening allows control over access and privacy but in the event that both external doors are required to open (eg. house move), the Building Manager holds a key to enable this
- Railings installed to roof perimeter allowing operatives safe access for regular maintenance
- Internal lobby doors operate on a sensor, opening as a pair to ease access for the elderly, those with prams, delivery drivers etc with no need to 'prop' doors open
- Removed lobby floor finishes that required a frequent wet clean and the associated risk of slippage
- Installed communal landlords fire doors that sit in the 'hold open' position to ease movement through the building. This negates the need for residents/delivery people to wedge doors open which presents a fire

risk. The new doors are on magnetic locks and will automatically close in the event of fire

- All flats have installed new fire-certified apartments doors that maintain the integrity of the fire strategy for the entire block
- Panelling in communal parts now has a class O fire rated finish
- Smoke vents on the 6th floor open automatically to rapidly release any smoke in the stair well in the event of fire
- New fire alarm system installed throughout the communal parts with a fire alarm sounder installed within each flat
- Lightning cable renewed and replaced.

## Phasing, Programme and Cost Overview

### Background to the Current Strategy

Surveys undertaken in 2014/2015 confirmed that Bickenhall Mansions needed to undergo a comprehensive refurbishment programme, both internally and externally and so a 'Major Works Contribution Fund' was established.

The full scope of Internal and External Refurbishment works was tendered back in 2018. A contract could only be let totalling the monies secured in the 'Major Works Contribution Fund' at that time but phasing the works would allow us to commence on site as soon as possible, preventing further dilapidation whilst accruing additional funds for latter stages of the works. The Board deemed the internal refurbishment a priority (namely due to fire alarm upgrades, fire rated doors etc). However there remained a concern that the external fabric of the building may pose greater risks that might only be uncovered once works to the externals had commenced on-site.

### Phase 1 – Scope

The Board proposed that Phase 1 would comprise the internal works to all blocks and the full external works to one block only; this was the maximum scope that could be procured with the funds in place at the time. Block 7 was chosen as it is the smallest block, it offers a sample of all three elevation types and does not pose party wall issues with neighbouring buildings. Including the external works to one block at this early stage would inform of any unknown risks in the external fabric of the building that may present across the wider estate and help ascertain if they required prioritising or additional funding. This Phase 1 scope was subject to a Section 20 Consultation process in 2019 and these works continue on-site today.

### Phase 1 - Costs

The Board entered into a contract with Collins Contractors Ltd for Phase 1 in early 2020 on a fixed price basis. Any

rising material or labour cost since then are therefore at the Contractors risk and are not borne by BMML. Internal works to block 7 completed on budget and we therefore anticipate the internal works across all blocks completing on budget.

External works to block 7 informed us of the unknowns that the Board were cautious about, namely corroding steelwork at high level behind the terracotta on the main facade. We can reasonably anticipate that we will meet the same conditions on all other blocks.

Whilst on-site, Collins Contractors Ltd were also asked to undertake some elements of works that would ordinarily be funded from the rolling maintenance budget as it was cost efficient to do so whilst the scaffold was erected. These included stopcock replacements for future ease of access and replacement of unlagged corroding pipework. Emergency repairs were also carried out to the north block roof.

## Phase 2 – Scope

The specified scope of work for the externals across all remaining blocks will remain as defined for Block 7 but we can reasonably anticipate also encountering some of the discoveries from Block 7 (eg: corroding steelworks behind the terracotta). Such works can be included in any future tender documents to ensure that we receive the most competitive tender. This demonstrates why it was important to include part of the externals in Phase 1; to uncover any unknowns, to assess their likelihood across the estate, to understand their urgency to be undertaken and their financial implications.

## Phase 2 – Phasing & Funding

Since we originally sought tenders for the External works back in 2018, construction costs have increased significantly. When we are ready to undertake Phase 2 works they will need to be tendered and we will be subject to market forces at the time of tender.

The Board are considering how these Phase 2 works might be further phased into smaller contracts; to prevent further dilapidation, maintain momentum on site and make best use of funds as they become available. Any proposals on how the Phase 2 works could be undertaken will be subject to a Section 20 Consultation process. A 'Rolling Reserve Fund Forecast' is attached based on costs at March 2022. Key points to note are:

- Phase 1 Major Works Forecasted Final Cost inc VAT is £7.3m as noted in the Financial Accounts March 2021 issued prior to the 2021 AGM.
- General maintenance works have also been undertaken and will be reported in Year End 2022 Accounts.

- Phase 2 Major Works are shown as being expended Financial Year Ending 2024 – 2027. It is important to note that the phasing strategy will not be finalised until the works have been tendered as Contractors are best placed to advise on the most cost and programme efficient manner of sequencing the works. For cashflow purposes only we have assumed the elevations/roofs to Bickenhall Street, Gloucester Place and North Block lightwells will be completed first, followed by Marylebone Road elevations and lastly rear elevations to south blocks 5 and 3.
- Phase 2 Major Works will be subject to a Section 20 consultation process and allowances are based on budgetary figures as at March 2022. Works for Phase 2 are yet to be tendered and will be subject to market forces at the time of tendering.
- Additional items of capital expenditure that are included to future-proof the building are major electrical intake upgrades and boiler replacement to meet energy efficiency standards moving forward.

## How did we get here?

The progress that we see on site today is the culmination of 6 years of extensive work by the Board and consultation with Leaseholders. Here we take a look back at key milestones.

### 2015-2016

- Established a 'Major Works' Committee
- Undertook full buildings surveys (measured survey, building condition survey, fire strategy review, building services review)
- Established internal refurbishment proposals with a publicised Residents Exhibition
- Obtained an initial cost model for the internal refurbishment works
- Tendered a 'Mock-up' of the internal proposals
- Issued regular comms to leaseholders
- Established a refurbishment section on the intranet
- Presented plans at the 2016 AGM

### 2017-2018

- Constructed a 'Mock up' to help scope the works and understand cost implications.
- Leaseholders invited to complete feedback forms on the 'Mock -up' options and a report followed with artist impressions of preferences
- Appointed Earl Kendrick Associates (EKA) as surveyors and contract administrators following a tender process
- Obtained fire risk assessments from leading experts CS Todd



- Detailed inspections of North block roofs to understand extent of works required, tenders prepared and works completed under the pre-tender budget
- Completed emergency repairs to the fire alarm systems in line with fire report recommendations
- Obtained an abseil survey of the external envelope with de-frassing works to remove and make safe loose masonry
- Created a Digital Bickenhall Mansions Health & Safety File
- Prepared and issued a tender for the internal and external refurbishment works
- Received tender returns for the internal and external works, with the internal works coming in within the lower range of the original cost model estimate range
- Communicated tender outcomes and proposed plan to all residents and leaseholders via a Project Letter Update
- Carried out a Section 20 Consultation
- Issued regular communications throughout 2017 and 2018 and presented the Refurbishment Plans at both the 2017 and 2018 AGM

## 2019

- Issued further clarification letters to all residents and leaseholders
- Held an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) with leaseholders to discuss the refurbishment plans
- Set-up an 8 week 'Residents and Leaseholders Information Period' at the request of leaseholders. This involved:
  - o A publicised exhibition at the management office
  - o EKA technical reports being made available for review at the management office
  - o Four information surgeries held by EKA surveyors
  - o Series of meetings held with individual leaseholders at their request
  - o Three project update letters including all Q&As (c.130 questions answered)
- Carried out Section 20 Consultation with Leaseholders. Issued detailed written responses to the four leaseholders who submitted written observations to S20
- Carried out a thorough pre-qualification process to select a list of contractors
- Prepared and issued a new tender for the first major works contract which included the one single contractor nominated by three leaseholders
- Consulted with Westminster City Council Planning Department whose response was generally positive and supportive
- Commissioned a discrete and sensitive external lighting design scheme, limited to the entrances.

- Issued regular communications and established a regular BMML/BFL Quarterly Newsletter
- Received Tender returns for Phase 1 on 1st November at the level expected and in line with the budget
- Detailed tender analysis undertaken completed by EKA surveyors
- Held our very first quarterly Residents Forum

## 2020

- Invited lessees to view the tender returns and return comments by 13 February 2020 in accordance with the Section 20 Notice of Estimates
- Delayed the original start date of April 2020 to August 2020 due to Covid
- Commenced work on-site in Block 7 in August 2020 (external and internal – Phase 1)
- Established communication channels with Block 7 Leaseholders/Residents:
  - o Introductory Letter from the Board (project contact details, timescales, reminders on security and need to notify insurers, flat door replacement and cost arrangements)
  - o Introductory letter from the Contractor as well as Progress Reports each month and specific letters for individual items of works (eg: flat front door replacement)
  - o Feedback form to identify and address issues that could be improved for subsequent blocks
- Held Quarterly Residents Forums throughout 2020
- Issued Quarterly Newsletters to all Leaseholders/Residents including Refurbishment Project updates

## 2021

- Completed works in Block 7 in July 2021
- Commenced internal works on-site in Block 5 (July 2021) and Block 3 (October 2021)
- Hosted a Residents Tour of Block 7 in November 2021
- Removed Mock up external doors to Block 8, installed new external doors and steps
- Held Quarterly Residents Forums throughout 2021
- Issued Quarterly Newsletters to all Leaseholders/Residents including Refurbishment Project updates

## 2022 - To date

- Commenced internal works to Block 8 in January 2022
- Commenced 'soft start' works in Block 6 in March 2022
- Storage areas constructed and ceiling grid installation commenced in Blocks 2 and 4 in March 2022
- Block 5 works are being snagged in March 2022
- Block 3 works are well underway and due to complete late Spring 2022



Before refurbishment works



Damaged and stained entrance features



Poor lighting | Low quality light fittings | Broken fixture at 1st floor



Low quality floor finishes | Exposed cabling and wiring | Oversized CCTV | Stained masonry and terracotta



Redundant wiring | Broken floor tiles | Stained paintwork | Vault doors water damaged



Stained and damaged details to facade | Multiple layers of peeling paintwork to railings



Continuously chipped paint finish to doors



Heavy and loud doors | Tired and dated interiors | Insufficient matting to remove dirt - slip hazard when cleaning floor



Tired and dated interiors | Poor quality signage | Mismatched timber finishes



Dirt stained and bulky radiator casings | Untidy appearance from clutter and poor signage | Inefficient bulbs (previous frequently blown)



Before refurbishment works (continued)



Inconsistent finishes and fittings throughout



Varying door types and finishes



Varying door types and finishes



Poor lighting levels | No lighting control and energy inefficient fittings



Dated and tired appearance | Inconsistent finishes and fittings throughout | Bulky high level cabinets



Fire doors with excessive gaps and of poor appearance and inconsistent finish throughout



Fire doors with excessive gaps and of poor appearance and inconsistent finish throughout



Poor quality and badly sited cabinets



Fire rating of doors unverified and without self closers | Inconsistent appearance



Examples of what we found and rectified during the refurbishment



Corroded rainwater goods



Loose and damaged building fabric



Damaged roof coverings and guttering



Loose and crumbling masonry



Damaged roof coverings and guttering | Loose and missing roof tiles



Water damage to window sills



Progress during cleaning of brickwork



Poor brickwork repairs and previous re-pointing



Rusting steels damaging terracotta



Examples of what we found and rectified during the refurbishment (continued)



Cracked and damaged masonry



Brickwork repairs



Blocked and undersized rainwater goods



Damaged roof flashings



Missing details



Leaks leading to brickwork staining



Damaged flashings



Damaged roof tiles and flashings



Corroded steelwork and missing pointing in foreground to brickwork

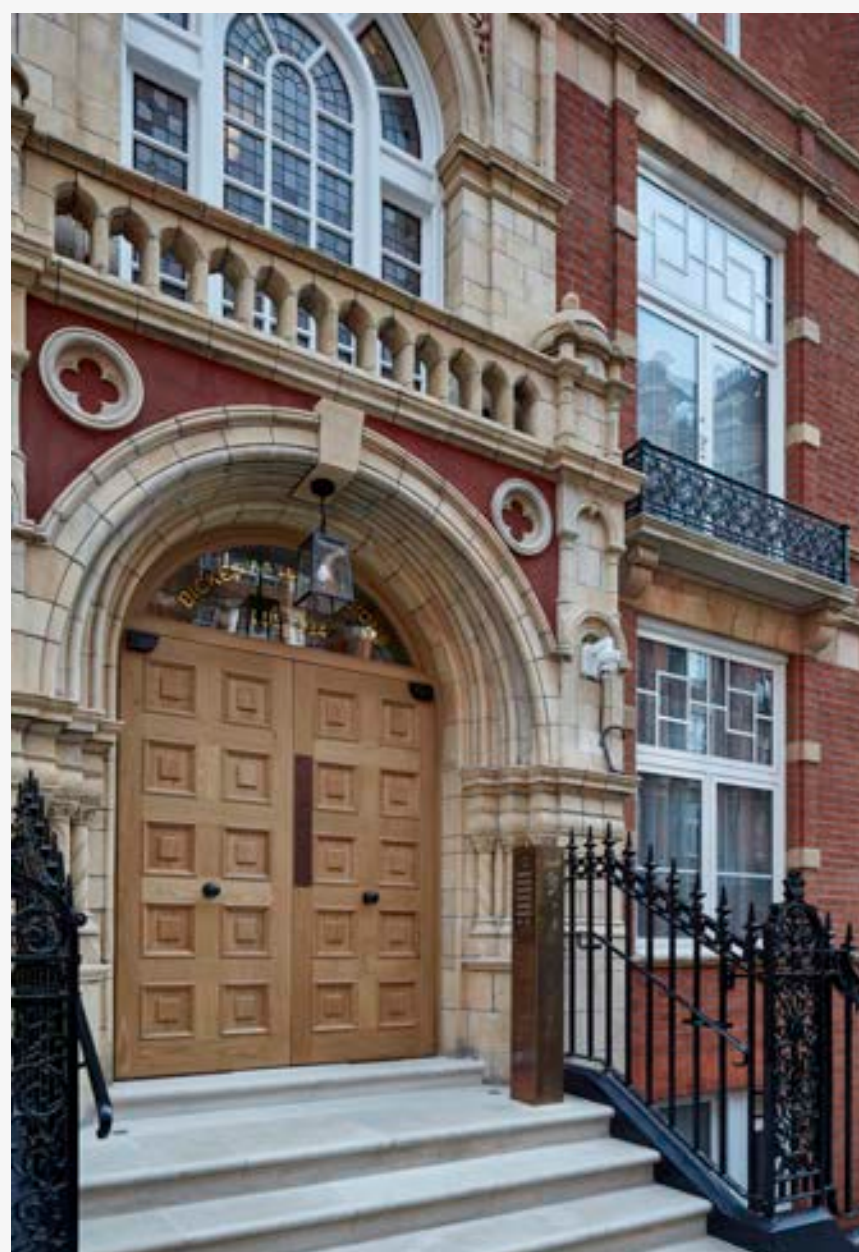


After refurbishment works





After refurbishment works (continued)





After refurbishment works (continued)





After refurbishment works (continued)





After refurbishment works (continued)





After refurbishment works (continued)

