**The Element Newhaven Owners’ Association (TENOA)**

 **2018 NEW YEAR LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

3rd January 2018

**Dear Fellow Owner,**

I am pleased to be able to report that we have started to build the kind of community here that will safeguard a valuable asset and attract newcomers, based on our new **TENOA** constitution adopted at the end of 2017. We are currently upgrading our website, encouraging neighbourliness in the various blocks and addressing individual concerns that may be experienced from time to time. We will not admit that “there is nothing we can do….” Challenging apathy involves determined work on your behalf in which your **Committee** is pursuing many good ideas and facing up to problems.

Some concerns raised – noise from banging doors, fire alarms triggered by smoking in public areas, rubbish carelessly dumped, the behaviour of dogs, cars illegally parked, damage to the building’s fabric – all of which can be expressed as “anti-social behaviour” – are an infringement of the burdens placed on **owners** by their Title Deeds. I emphasise **owners** because the responsibility is **ours**, whether resident (as I am) or having a tenancy agreement allowing someone else to occupy your property. The proportion is about half-and-half but we must never set one against the other; **all responsible owners** will want to ensure the safety, comfort and well-being of everyone who occupies any flat at any time.

Six months on from the tragedy of the fire at Grenfell Tower in London last June came a clear signal that when things go wrong those affected are *not* powerless to act against the irresponsibility of others. Determination to work together can meet challenges that will improve the situation. Setting aside specific fire-related issues that we have had to address in checking the fabric of our building, we have become critically aware that the demands of a multi-owned, multi-occupied building like ours call for particular consideration for the needs of others.

Owning a property in **The Element** is not the same as owning a detached house in the countryside. We have a collective responsibility for those parts we own in common: corridors, staircases and lifts, roof and car park, garden and perimeter, as well as sharing costs of electricity, insurance and maintenance. We have a contract with ***The Element Factors (TEF)*** to help look after **our** building but they are neither our nursemaid nor our policeman. As I reported at the AGM, we enjoy an excellent working relationship in which we maintain daily contact of monitoring what they do on our behalf and those who have owned a property here for many years have been first in their praise of the steady improvements being made. Look out for more success stories as the weeks go by.

However, one of our biggest challenges is to identify individuals who disturb others by their irresponsibility, whether they are owners, tenants or weekend visitors. Experience has proved the effectiveness of CCTV monitoring in this regard, even though against this has to be weighed the argued invasion of personal privacy; in this we are governed by Law. But step by step we are determined to find effective ways of creating an acceptable atmosphere and calling to account any who threaten our peace. We continue to invite practical suggestions and will keep you informed of progress.

Meanwhile, I take this opportunity at the outset of 2018 to encourage the small number of owners who have not yet registered as members of the reconstituted **TENOA** to do so now, as you will find it very much to your own advantage. I hope I have been able to demonstrate our determination to make **The Element** an ideal community whatever the challenges, taking all views into consideration.

Please contact me with any comments or questions: chairman@tenoa.co.uk or use any of the following details: 33/9 Western Harbour View, EH6 6PG 0131 555 2217, mobile 07749710369, email

westerlodge@hotmail.co.uk

I will personally deal with your enquiry and would be glad to meet you for a chat if that would help.

 Yours sincerely,

 **Rodney Matthews** (Chairman)