

# News from your Trustees

## January 2020



### *The Lift Project Takes Off*

Dear Residents,

After years of diligent debate and research, we are at last progressing with an essential undertaking for Mutual Heights' future: the substitution of our lifts.

#### **Why now?**

Our building's lifts were a wonder when they were installed by Otis in 1940. They were the fastest in Africa then and had beautiful metal etchings by Ivan Mitford-Barberton that covered fourteen varieties of animals and birds on the lift doors across our floors. They are a valued part of our shared heritage.

However, as the structure has aged, the integrity of our lift system has declined significantly. Spare parts are difficult to find, maintenance times have increased, and costs have risen dramatically. In 2015, we paid a maintenance fee of R254,760 per annum, and inflation has only made matters worse. It is essential that we seek a permanent solution.

#### **Our Solution**

We've had two priorities in mind since the beginning:

- Keep the original decorative panels, the heritage details will not be altered.
- Installing a new and reliable system might not make it the fastest in Africa, but it will make it safe, efficient, and sustainable.

After an extensive research period, tendering, and conservation approval, the installation will be managed by Kone. The work will be phased to reduce disturbance, although there will be periods where lift access is restricted.

## What to Expect

We will be starting the project early in 2021 and anticipate that it will take several months to finalize.

We are replacing four elevators and taking seven out of service, following a traffic study that shows existing residential use is significantly less than when the building was used for offices.

The cost is budgeted at R7.5 million, and we will keep a tight rein on the budget.

## Looking Ahead

When finished, we anticipate substantial maintenance savings—up to 60% each year—while retaining the distinctive character of our lift doors for generations to come.

It's a big job that will keep Mutual Heights residents safe.

Thank you for your understanding.



Sincerely,  
On behalf of all the Trustees,  
*Andy Bytheway*

P.S. For additional information, go to our website at <http://www.mutualheights.info> or send us an email at [management@mutualheights.info](mailto:management@mutualheights.info). To find out more about our building, you can look at the "Mutual Building" on Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual\\_Building](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_Building).

*Andy Bytheway*