



## Chairman's Report

21<sup>st</sup> June 2017

Having completed my first twelve months as SPRA Chairman, I have pleasure in reporting that we have experienced another successful year. SPRA and its members have demonstrated a fresh approach, not just through its re-branding exercise, but also through working collectively to address and solve significant industry challenges. The development of an online training and assessment programme to support those working within the small roof sector, and outside of membership to improve their knowledge and understanding is just one example of this.

Membership continues to grow and our financial reserves have also increased. SPRA now has 16 major membrane manufacturers/suppliers on board, and we therefore represent the majority of the sector, both for thermoplastic and EPDM membranes. At the end of 2016, Council agreed to use some of the reserves to support development in training and also to invest in a new website to compliment the refreshed branding ensuring that all of the SPRA services, guidance and documentation is easily accessible to members and stakeholders alike. Our 'shop window' is a vital tool in the promotion of quality and technical excellence, and I am sure that the new website will open up new opportunities for us all to gain more benefit from our membership, and to encourage the wider industry to use and promote these excellent resources.

Another key development is the establishment of two new membership categories: Installer and Affiliate. I believe that the Installer category in particular will have a significant impact on our industry. Linked directly to the Level 2 vocational qualification in single ply roofing, this category is an important part of SPRA's determination to ensure professionalism in the workforce and add value.

Communication and collaboration remain at the heart of our objectives to promote SPRA. Working closely with our partner organisations, SPRA has ensured that it contributes at every opportunity and our voice is heard on important industry initiatives such as Build UK's effort to reform Pre Qualification, the Basic Competency Programme and Trailblazer Standards.

However, SPRA Council has also agreed that SPRA must continue to stand proud and ensure that it is able to fully represent its members, promote best practice and be the organisation that is recognised as the regulatory, research and development body for the single ply sector. To this end, Council have agreed to only offer joint membership with the National Federation of Roofing Contractors for our contractor members. To remain both competitive and able to respond to industry challenges, and for the first time in several years, SPRA has reviewed membership fees and these will be implemented from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2018. SPRA has also examined the membership renewal process, and will be introducing a more streamlined and efficient process for members at the same time.

Our future priorities are to embed the new resources and to look for new ways to reach our stakeholders and use our new resources to do this. We also want to see greater involvement of

members in this process, and to grow the commitment for collaborative working within SPRA to use our combined strength to influence, educate and support the single ply sector.

## **Financial**

I am pleased to advise that at the end of 2016, SPRA had a trading surplus of £ 14,313 on a turnover of £267,787 Revenues increased by 13% on 2015, whilst costs increased by 23% for the year – mainly due to training (up to £80,902 from £36,475) and increased subscriptions to industry bodies. Membership fee income increased by 9% and income derived from training also increased. Reserves went up to £108,512 from £94,199 which covers all known commitments and allows for some re-investment into the organisation to support membership services. SPRA Council approved reinvestment of £52,560 at the December 2016 meeting. This has been used to contract a new part-time Training Manager, to pay for a new website and re-branding process, to support the audit process and to invest in further waste & recycling research.

## **Governance**

The resignation of Fraser Maitland from Protan forced a Council election in April. This was completed online, and John Whittaker from CCM Europe was duly elected. As a result of this, the Articles and procedures have been reviewed by the CEO and approval of changes form part of the 2017 AGM.

## **Objectives**

At the time of writing our membership has reached 16 manufacturer members (up 2 on last year's report), 33 associate members (no change from 2016) and 50 contractor members (up 1 on last's year's position). There are currently 8 companies in audit for membership, 1 company has passed the audit but is yet to pay the membership invoice and a further 2 who have contacted us regarding membership, but are yet to pay the audit invoice. Representation of all polymer genres continues to increase and SPRA is working across the membership to introduce new standards and guidance, with the launch of a new training and assessment module for the small roof market at the 2017 Conference.

SPRA continues to invest in training with the appointment of a new part time Training Manager, Mark Thornton, who has considerable experience in the roofing sector and replaces Gary Walpole. He is rapidly getting up to speed on SPRA training programmes and has started Assessor training with the CITB. SPRA and its manufacturers are meeting the Basic Competency Programme funding targets and we are now embedding this new programme as a core training offer. Mark is working with the SAP5 trainees who are due to complete at the end of 2017, and has started SAP6 with the support of industry assessor, Don Clift at Cambridge College. SPRA now has three centers approved by CITB for us to deliver our SAP and SUPs, but encouraging take up from contractors continues to be a major challenge.

Government led changes to education have introduced a new apprenticeship standard called Trailblazer. SPRA members are being consulted on the development of a new roofing Trailblazer and we hope that members will become actively involved in this new initiative as it must be led by employers. This is very important as the Trailblazer will affect our existing

programmes, and we must ensure that the new standard is fit for purpose for the single ply sector.

Our Technical Programme continues to provide advice and guidance at the highest level through our helpline, Technical Committee and Task Groups. New guidance on Damage Protection will be launched at the 2017 Conference and is a direct result of the 2016 conference discussions and recommendations. The whole Design Guide and all related guidance notes and standards have also been revised and re-branded and will be released at the SPRA conference 2017 on credit card flashdrives. These resources will continue to be free to download from the website, and we hope that members will use the flashdrives to promote the Guide and raise awareness with their clients and stakeholders.

We continue to work with stakeholders at every opportunity to provide a single voice from the roofing industry on relevant issues. We will however ensure that we focus on delivering high quality support services and information to our members and to seek new and effective ways of promoting the single ply sector across all stakeholder groups.

### ***The Year Ahead***

This is my first Chairman's report and I am very pleased and impressed with the progress that SPRA has made over the last twelve months.

SPRA has proved that it does not shy away from difficult challenges, and we have shown that by working together we can agree a way forward. We have for instance agreed that SPRA must try to influence quality of workmanship, knowledge and skills in our sector, and therefore we have created a solution that we hope will also enhance the current career path for specialist installers and lead to SPRA membership and all the benefits that that will provide. However, we must be strong and continue to collaborate through the early stages of all new initiatives as undoubtedly the road may occasionally be rocky along the way.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Council members for their time and support, and our Executive team; Cathie, our Chief Executive, Jim, our Technical Director, Mark our new Training Manager and all the support team behind the scenes for their continuing commitment, enthusiasm and hard work.



***Anthony Carlyle***

*Chairman  
Single Ply Roofing Association*