

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 47

7.30 pm, Monday 4 November 2013

Present: Louise Robertson (Chair), Nicholas Orme, Raquel Stremme, Anne Hall, Adrian Olsen, Imogen Olsen, Paula Reynolds and Mary Tovey.

In attendance: Rebecca Hill

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Apologies

1.2 Apologies were received from Tao Tao Chou, Sally Duncan, Lynda Williams and Miles Thompson.

2. Private Business

2.1 None.

3. Minutes

3.1 Approval of the minutes from meeting 46 (09/09/13)

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record. Members were reminded that no mention would be made of the relevant director responsible for a particular action on the public set of minutes.

4. Matters arising from the minutes from meeting 46

4.1 A number of members commented that they were still having problems with accessing Google docs. Those directors should contact the director with responsibility for maintaining the access rights.

4.2 Those directors who had taken up the role of lead contact for the Gardening Sub-Committee and the Apartment Block Sub-Committee were noted.

4.3 It was reported that no problems, or damage, had been reported as a result of access being granted to Network Rail to the back of Cox's Ground to complete line-side works.

4.4 It was noted that the relevant replacement waste bins had been ordered to comply with the changes which were due to be introduced by the Council to its recycling policy. A letter advising residents of the new rules had been drafted along with a leaflet, both of which would be distributed upon delivery of the new bins.

4.5 Having reviewed the adoption plan for Lark Hill it had been identified that the Council may have been misplaced in its understanding of the land ownership of a strip which

was being considered for the introduction of yellow lines to ensure the safe passage of emergency vehicles. Further discussion would take place.

- 4.6 It was noted that the Council had agreed to pay for the purchase of a green salt box and for the provision of the salt. The box would be situated next to the pumping station adjacent to the roundabout by the lake.
- 4.7 No further correspondence had been received on the gate closure and, further to the decision made at the previous meeting, an order had been raised to re-evaluate the apartment blocks to ensure the correct level of building insurance cover was being purchased to pay for the reinstatement of the blocks after a serious event such as a fire or flood.
- 4.8 It was reported that the number of complaints being made by a regular correspondent had temporarily reduced and that the amount of correspondence received would continue to be monitored.

RESOLVED

- 4.6 That those items that had been completed should be closed.

5. Health and Safety

- 5.1 It was reported that several of the recommendations arising from the risk assessment of the development remained outstanding. Window restrictors were being sourced for apartment blocks and regular communications were being issued to residents reminding them of their obligations to keep public thoroughfares clear.

6. Updates from Managing Agent

- 6.1 A resident had reported that a motorcyclist had been using the bridges over the wildlife corridor as a short cut on to Frenchay Road.

RESOLVED

That OM distribute a letter to residents within the vicinity (Green Square) to remind them that pedestrian routes across the development should not be used for vehicles of any kind.

- 6.2 It had come to the attention of the Managing Agent, due to a resident, that work had commenced on the conversion of the garage at 20 Cox's Ground without planning permission. Neither had the owner sought permission from the WMC for the external alterations to the property.

RESOLVED

Suitable letter to be drafted for issue by the Managing Agents to the owners and for the local authority to be notified to pursue enforcement action.

Closer monitoring of planning applications should be undertaken within the development.

7. Items from WRACIC

7.1 It was noted that a Hog Roast event would take place on 7th December 2013 which would be promoted in the next edition of the residents' newsletter. Numerous items were identified which could be included in the newsletter as follows:

- Changes to the recycling regime for the apartment blocks
- Update on the swale and flooding prevention initiatives undertaken
- The process owners should adopt when considering a planning application in respect of seeking prior permission of the WMC in certain instances.
- The requirement for two more directors to support the Residents' Association, including the role of Treasurer.
- The annual Christmas tree shredding initiative.

RESOLVED

That directors draft relevant articles for insertion into Waterways World before its distribution at the end of November.

8. Report on the objectives for the year

To produce a plan of action to resolve maintenance issues relating to the Frenchay Road culvert and the wildlife corridor watercourse

8.1 It was reported that Total Drainage had completed works west of the canal to a good standard. Directors enquired whether the company would also consider clearing the section of the wildlife corridor from the balancing tank to the first bridge within Phase Two of the development. In effect, the area which the Conservation Volunteers and residents had been unable to clear in August.

RESOLVED

That the Managing Agent establish whether Total Drainage would be interested in completing and quoting for the work.

8.2 It was noted that a meeting between Thames Water, the Oxford County Council Flood Officer and Berkeley Homes was due to take place this week to discuss the on-going drainage problems within the development. Our local councillor had also said that they would attend, if available. The WMC felt that, having cleared the necessary sections of the water system and removed 200 tonnes of silt, it was now in a strong position to demonstrate to Thames Water that the failure in the drainage system had to be due to the siphon. It was reported that discussions were also on-going with the Council regarding the ownership of the lake and the maintenance cost split.

RESOLVED

To receive an update at the next meeting.

.9. To secure the transfer of the freehold land of the Waterways development from Berkeley Homes to the WMC

- 9.1 A strong message had been given to the developers that the WMC would not take on the freehold of the land for the development until the current problems with flooding and the provision of the correct drainage system, as per the original specification for the development, had been corrected and provided respectively.

RESOLVED

That any transfer of undertakings relating to the land would only take place with a majority of the directors of the WMC present at a meeting of solicitors.

Sub Committee news round up

10. Finance Sub-Committee

- 10.1 A query had been received regarding whether a property on Stone Meadow should be contributing to Schedule 3. This anomaly was being investigated.

RESOLVED

To confirm the outcome of the review at the next meeting.

11. Apartment Block Sub-Committee

- 11.1 Following a request made by a resident, Environmental Health had visited the development to review the standard of cleaning undertaken within the bin stores. The Council had been satisfied that the bins were being maintained to an acceptable level and that no remedial action was necessary.
- 11.2 Subsequent to the completion of the welcome booklet it had been identified that a few amendments were necessary.

RESOLVED

To amend the Waterways welcome booklet to include reference to the new police telephone number – 101.

- 11.2 The directors were reminded that one of the health and safety risk assessment actions was that residents should maintain their smoke alarms. The Managing Agent had issued a letter to residents accordingly.

RESOLVED

That an article on the requirement for residents to regularly check their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors should be included within the Waterways World newsletter.

- 11.3 A disabled resident had recently asked whether the location of the latch to the entry of Complins Close flats could be altered to allow them to reach.

RESOLVED

OM to ensure the necessary modifications were made to assist entry.

- 11.4 The bike stores within Complins Close remained full which made it difficult for new residents to utilise the facility. It was recognised that there were several old bicycles within the bike store and efforts were being made to remove any bicycles which had been abandoned. However, due to the fact that residents were often absent from the development for long periods of time, bike culling had been less than easy to implement.

- 11.5 It was noted that no additional estate regulations had ever been made by the WMC and that, to date, the terms of the lease remained the guiding principles to which residents and owners must adhere. It was agreed that it would be useful to include a regulation which allowed for bike culling.

RESOLVED

To consider what estate regulations the WMC might wish to introduce at the next meeting.

That reference to bike culling should be included in the welcome pack for new residents.

12. Gardening Sub-Committee

- 12.1 It was noted that the contract for the estate's gardeners was being re-tendered. The scope included upkeep of the gardens and wildlife corridor and maintenance of the trees both within the development and on the boundaries. It was appreciated that due to the level of maturity of some of the planting, the total charge to provide the service was likely to increase.

- 12.2 It was reported that during the current inclement weather some garden furniture residing in back gardens could be potentially dangerous to other residents, for instance, large table umbrellas which remained in situ. It was appreciated that it was not the WMC's responsibility, however, where there was a risk to the safety of other residents on the development the WMC felt it was incumbent upon it to point out the danger.

RESOLVED

That estate agents should be notified, where properties are tenanted, for action to be taken.

13. Feedback

- 13.1 Nothing to report.

14. AGM Sub-Committee

- 14.1 Several dates had been identified for 2014 – 25th March, 1st April and 29th April. It was agreed that whichever date was chosen, the meeting should not clash with school holidays.

15. Scrutiny Sub-Committee

RESOLVED

- 15.1 In order to convene the next meeting, directors were asked to provide their availability.

16. Any other business

- 16.1 It was reported that the next litter picking event would be taking place on Saturday 9th November 2013.

RESOLVED

That OM issue an alert to those residents who had signed up to Your Property Online.

.17 Date of next meetings

The meetings for the year ahead were noted as follows:

13th January 2014 and 10th March 2014.

The directors thanked the representative from OM for their support during the year.