



Powderhall Village Owners Association

www.powderhallvillage.org.uk

Minutes of Committee meeting held on Thursday 17th January 2020.

Present: Gordon Chrumka, Jane Garrett (Minutes), Frans Kooy, Roddy Martine (Chair), Kevin Patch, John Riley, Richard Ross, Kathryn Tomlinson.

In attendance: Sarah Wilson of Charles White

Apologies: Elaine Ennis-Blunt, Jane Garrett, Sabine Goldhausen, Emma Hignant, Ramon Inglada, Allan Mackie, Stuart McAllister, Mel and Karen Shewan, Sanne Weenink.

1/ Approval of Previous Minutes:

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th November 2019 were approved.

2/ Review of Actions from Sarah Wilson, Charles White, Factors

Issues were addressed by Sarah as below:

- All jobs raised by Powderhall residents have been addressed
- Lighting: where possible the cleaning company will deal with or report lighting issues, and there are occasions where an electrician is required. New lighting fittings are being looked at to replace the older versions. These are slimline and have sensors. Safety lights are also required. Sarah will receive costs for LED upgrades soon. The fitting of these will bring about energy savings. An electrician will advise if lights need to be on all the time where there is no natural light available in stair wells etc. Tenders for this work are with 4 electricians with drawings due by the end of February and possible upgrades in May.
- When the lighting issues have been addressed, Sarah will look at costings for repainting common areas in the flats on a block by block basis.
- For Sale Signs: solicitors/ estate agents are still not placing their signs in the recommended areas. Sarah will chase this up again.
- Sarah reported that there are now 339 members of Powderhall Facebook group (tenants and owners) . There is a process in place for potential members to be approved.
- Key safes/ Air B&B etc. This is becoming an increasing issue in Powderhall as it is across Edinburgh. Sarah has asked for some key safes to be moved and is going to speak with insurers about the issues relating to Air B&B. Technically tenants,(in line with the deed of conditions) are not supposed to use their premises for commercial business. This does not include the letting out of spare rooms where tenants are present. The Scottish Government is pursuing the issue of Air B&B across the city and it could result in some sort of control of numbers or periods of letting.
- Bin Stores. There remain issues with some tenants re keeping the stores in good order and disposing of boxes correctly, especially over the Xmas period. Boxes need to be collapsed and placed in the appropriate recycling bin.

3/ Canonmills Garden Development

Karen and Mel attended the consultation meeting with Artisan on 6th January about the boundary trees on the Canonmills Garden site. Here is the summary:

1/ The Canonmills development is slightly behind schedule, but due to be completed in November this year.

2/ A tree survey has taken place and this showed there is a clear need for the boundary trees to be managed on an annual basis. They have developed a management plan for the trees and this will be handed over to whoever takes on the factoring for the new development when it is completed. The plan includes annual inspection and maintenance of the existing trees and planting of new ones on their site.

3/ The urgent need is for the trees to be cut back both in height and width. This needs to be done before the bird nesting season starts, so the work will take place during January/February. They showed us a photo of the proposed pruning. They plan to cut the Leylandii hedge down to approx. 9 metres height and trim its width back to the boundary fence on our side. Since the Poplar trees are closely integrated with the Leylandii hedge, they have decided to leave them there for now but reduce their height. They will be trimmed to a slightly higher height than the Leylandii and in a more jagged profile.

4/ They stressed that both the Leylandii and the Poplars have a limited lifespan and are likely to have to be taken down within the next 5-10 years. In the meantime they will be planting new trees behind the hedge on the Canonmills site to gradually replace the old trees when they are eventually removed. New trees planted will be more appropriate native species: Birch, Oak and Pine.

5/ To replace the fence on the strip of land they are purchasing from us, they will be planting a 1.5m high Hornbeam hedge. This will continue on their side of the fence up to where the Leylandii begin (ie behind our fence where we had the new bushes planted). They will also be planting more trees at the side, between the new building and this new hedge.

6/ The residents in Block 2 the Brae expressed concern about the reduced height of the hedge as their windows are closer to the new build and they will lose privacy which the current Leylandii height provides. The Artisan chap agreed to look at the possibility of keeping it slightly higher at that end.

7/ Karen asked that when the contractors start cutting back the trees they be asked to try avoid damaging the fence. When they cut the two Poplars down, they kept climbing back and forth over the fence and it weakened the section that eventually came down.

4/ Canonmills Gardens/ PVO Ltd. Sale of strip of land

As agreed by the Committee at previous PVOA meetings, and by letter to the Powderhall Owners, the change in ownership of the narrow strip of land that adjoins Powderhall Road with the new Canonmills Garden development has been initiated. The developer of Canonmills Garden, Artisan, has made an offer of £50,000 for the purchase (plus the costs for conveyancing).

MBM Commercial is acting on behalf of PVO Ltd to successfully complete the transaction, and the funds will be placed in a separate Powderhall Village Owners Ltd Bank Account to be administered by PVO Ltd (which now owns the Parking Spaces and Common Land) on behalf of the Powderhall Village Owners Association for the future exclusive benefit of all Powderhall Village home owners.

5/ Powderhall Gate development

Commencement of building has been delayed until 2021 at the earliest. The PVOA Committee discussed the possibility of resisting access to Powderhall from particular points on the new development. The issue of compulsory acquisition was mentioned in relation to this.

6/ Review of Parking Spaces. Signposting

Roddy reported that the issues around conveyancing of parking spaces and common land are now all approved. Painting of spaces, including disabled parking spaces, will take place from April. New, bigger signs are to be installed by P4Parking at the three main entrances/exits. All areas are being patrolled.

7/ Garden Committee. There was nothing to report currently other than that we are all looking forward to the growth of the many bulbs that have been planted by the Garden Committee!

8/ Children and dogs. Dog fouling continues to be an issue particularly in the area around the children's playground. This clearly presents a risk to young children. There are more dogs and dog walkers around it seems and this is likely to increase further when the new developments are completed. Dogs should be kept on a lead in this area. Residents are asked to remain vigilant about this issue.

9/ Boilers. The gas boilers that were originally fitted across Powderhall may be coming to the end of their lives and parts are becoming difficult to find. Boiler replacements are the responsibility of the property owners. The Committee discussed possible future replacements with non- fossil fuel systems but currently alternatives to gas seem inefficient. Replacement could perhaps be looked at collectively in the future. Discussion regarding the possible use of solar panels and electric car points ensued.

10/ AOB.

* Some outdoor lighting is not coming on soon enough. Sarah will action this

*Following a ROSPA inspection of the playground it seems that the chute will need to be re- painted. Sarah will action this.

*The grit bins, for use by residents in icy conditions across Powderhall, need to be cleaned and filled. Sarah Wilson will action this.

*A company register is required for the PVO Ltd Sarah Wilson will action and store this. This will need to be approved at the next AGM.

11/ Date and time of next meeting.

* **PVOA AGM: This will take place in March 2020. Details to be confirmed**

Next PVOA Meeting: 7.30 pm on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at Roddy's flat (4/6, Powderhall Rigg).