



Powderhall Village Owners Association
Committee Meeting Minutes
Held on Zoom
18 January 2022

Present. Gordon Chrumka (Minutes), (Minutes), Sabine Goldhausen, Roddy Martine (Chair and acting Secretary), John Riley, Kevin Patch, Richard Ross, Kathryn Tomlinson, Mark Chie

Apologies Received: Jane Garrett, Frans Kooy, Stuart McAlister, Karen Shewan, Dorothy Weenink

In attendance: Sarah Wilson from Charles White Factors

1. Approval of previous minutes (27 October 2021).

- a. **These were approved.**

2. Review of Actions by Sarah Wilson

a. **Parking:**

P4 Parking has reported that the parking attendants have received abuse from members of the public. These appear to be non-residents. Such abuse will not be tolerated.

b. **Fibre Optic systems:**

Sarah reported that the take-up of the new fibre optic system from Hyperoptic has been lower than expected so far based on the number who expressed interest prior to installation. The reason for this is not known.

c. **Lighting:**

The issue with the lighting at 5 The Brae and a further issue at 1 The Brae have both been resolved.

d. **Paintwork:**

- i. Quotes have been received from 3 different companies. All of these quotes provide 2 options for the stairs with wallpaper:
 1. Strip wallpaper (due to damage), put up lining paper and paint.
 2. Replace wallpaper and paint lower walls.
- ii. The committee will need to decide which approach to take for the Bryant-built blocks to maintain conformity across the estate as per the Deed and Conditions.
- iii. CW is currently reviewing the quotes and then will sent them to the committee for a decision as to which approach to take. Once that has been decided, CW will the write to all of the owners about the costs for the works.

e. **Flooring:**

- i. 8 The Rigg – 2 quotes has been received for replacement of the damaged flooring on the ground floor. CW to send out a letter to the owners in the block

f. **Bin Stores:**

- i. Repairs to the externals of bin store doors have been completed after being delayed due to worker illness. However, more repairs have been notified.
- ii. Problems have been reported of excessive odours from one of the bin stores by a new resident. So far, the issue remains unresolved.
- iii. There have also been several reports of excessively cold walls on internal walls that border the bin stores. Also, some walls that border communal areas near external doors. These are essentially private issues as they affect the interior of the properties and not the communal areas themselves. However, CW is looking at possible solutions, especially around bin stores.

It was suggested to contact Home Energy Scotland for suggestions and possible grants for energy savings.

- iv. It has been noted that external doors to bin stores are increasingly getting damaged. It was noted that they may need to be replaced with something more robust during the next cycle of external works.

g. **Christmas/New Years Period**

- i. CW reports that this period was relatively quiet with few issues reported.

3. **Buildings Insurance**

- a. One of the owners attended the meeting to ask about issues related to the Buildings Insurance in particular about how to recover costs when the repairs fall below the excess for the block policy when the owner of the flat causing the damage does not take responsibility.
 - i. In the past, these costs would have been split amongst all of the owners in the same block as is done with the excess when a claim is made. However, after a vote at an AGM and now due to legislation restricting this practice, this can no longer be done. It is expected that the owner of the flat that caused the damage would pay for these repairs that fall under the excess level. However, if that owner fails to take responsibility then the owner of the damaged flat.

While the committee empathised and felt that this is unfair, this is essentially a private matter between the owners involved unless a communal area is affected. Several options were suggested. The owner is now looking for legal advice as to how to proceed.

- ii. The following details were reiterated during the discussion:
 1. The Deeds and Conditions for all of the flatted properties in the development require that communal block buildings insurance policies are mandatory.

2. The high cost of the buildings insurance is due to the number of claims over the previous 3 years. Some insurance companies have refused to quote due to the high number of claims. These details are distributed to all owners every year as part of the renewal process.
3. A big part of the difference between the cost of the block policies and the individual quotes obtained by many owners is because the individual policies generally only pay for the cost of rebuilding the individual property and not the communal areas, such as stairs, lifts, roofs, etc.

4. **Dog Fouling:**

- a. No significant change in the level of dog fouling has been observed. The problem is expected to get worse as new developments in the area become occupied and the number of dogs in the area increases.

5. **Gardens**

- a. Sabine advised that we were successful in the bid to the Queen's Jubilee fund for 15 trees.
 - i. These will be delivered on 28 February 2022.
 - ii. Sabine advised that she has had a chat with Brian Hunter and the other members of the gardening committee as to where the trees should be planted to avoid obstruction.
 - iii. There will be a mix of trees with 5 each of the following species.
 1. Rowan
 2. Crab-apple
 3. Hazelnut
 - iv. The locations will be in communal areas at each end of the estate and/or near the Water of Leith.
 - v. Details will be communicated via Facebook Group.
 - vi. Brian Hunter will plant the trees on arrival.

6. **Annual General Meeting** (matters pertaining to):

- a. It is proving difficult to find a venue for an in-person AGM. This is mainly due to the lack of suitable venues in the area and restrictions in the lets of the remaining venues due to COVID.
- b. Consideration is being given to holding the AGM on-line and options for format as a standard on-line meeting would be difficult with the numbers involved.

Action: GC to check on on-line meeting options.

7. **AOB:**

a. **Powderhall Village Owners Ltd (PVOL):**

- i. No updates this month

b. **Amazon Van**

- i. An Amazon van found to its peril that the clearance at one end of the pend is lower than the other as it managed to get stuck causing a loud bang. It managed to get unstuck by letting the air out of the tyres.

- ii. The pend was checked for damage and there doesn't appear to be any serious damage.
- iii. CW is arranging for height restriction signs to be installed.

c. Lifts

- i. There were reports of a number of lifts being turned off just prior to a weekend supposedly on the orders of the buildings insurance company.
- ii. SW clarified that it was actually after one of the mandatory twice yearly inspections by British Engineering Services, an independent inspector.
- iii. The inspector could get some lifts running again after the inspection and a report was submitted as per procedure. Unfortunately, the fact that the inspections were done late on a Friday contributed to the delay in getting the lifts restarted.
- iv. Schindler was advised and sent out engineers to restart the lifts but there were further delays due to confusion as to what blocks were involved and what the issues were with some of the lifts.
- v. It is expected that communication should be better in the future with the hope that such issues will be avoided.

d. New Town and Broughton Community Council:

Stuart is resigning from the New Town and Broughton Community Council. There is therefore an opportunity for a member of the Powderhall Owners Committee to join the Council. The committee discussed the possibility of sharing the role. It was felt it would be useful to have a presence on the Community Council.

This has been carried over as the committee is awaiting information from Stuart.

8. Date of next meeting: 8th March 2022 (via Zoom)