



Powderhall Village Owners Association
MINUTES from Committee ZOOM meeting
Wednesday 16th November 2022

Present. James Bowyer, Gordon Chrumka, Jane Garrett (Minutes), Gemma Halkett, Frans Kooy, William Laing, Roddy Martine (Chair and acting Secretary), Kevin Patch, Richard Ross, Kathryn Tomlinson, Craig Williams.

Apologies received: Marie Giatsi Clarsen, Ruth Evans, Sabine Goldhausen, Paschalis Kapsomenakis, Stuart McAlister, John Riley, Karen Shewan

In attendance: Sarah Wilson from Charles White Factors

1/ Approval of previous minutes September 6th, 2022. These were approved and seconded.

2/3 Review of Actions by Sarah Wilson

- The recent AGM was well attended, and useful issues were discussed, and matters raised. The Taxi club venue manager apologised for not giving us the hall we had requested. The room used for AGM was rather too small for the meeting's purpose. The venue is useful in being nearby and they provide free tea and coffee.
- Things on Powderhall have been relatively quiet. There has been, however, an issue with residents smoking and opening the smoke vent windows on block landings by pulling out the safety pin. The smoke vent windows are safety requirements in case of fire so residents are asked not to touch the windows in any way, and to keep the areas in front clear as these would be used as landing stages for the fire services if there was a fire in a building. The windows also need to be serviced regularly and access is required for that purpose. There are a few residents who are using the areas in front of the windows for storage purposes- this should not be happening and could put lives at risk. Roddy suggested the possibility of reminding residents with notices nearby.
- Internal Redecorating costs for Powderhall have been confirmed following the receipt of 3 quotes. The costs will vary among the blocks of flats due to size of the blocks. There will also be variations in costs between blocks as every block is different in some way. The details of costs will be circulated to residents. The redecorating process is a few months overdue but will be taking place in 2023.
- Lifts: The main drive has been replaced at 11 the Rigg. Sarah again reported that the lifts are maintained but are inevitably aging so there will be further issues with them. There are some issues with the lift ropes wearing at 5&7 The Rigg. Lifts continue to be maintained by Schindler at this time and independent inspections completed on a 6 monthly basis by British Engineering Services. Kevin Patch thanked Sarah for her vigilance in this matter. Sarah emphasized the importance of residents setting up a contingency fund which would help costs in situations such as this. Further details about setting up a contingency fund will be sent out in a newsletter soon.

- External doors. 1 The Brae has had a new door entry system fitted this week. Roddy reported that doors at 2-6 The Rigg are in a poor state. Sarah said she has a full spec for this to be dealt with soon with the other re-decoration works.
- The water tanks in the attics will have Legionnaire's risk assessment completed shortly.

4. Gardens, Replacement trees behind townhouses.

Frans has been taking a lead in trying to resolve the issues of the mature trees and shrubs that were cut down in error by the Hatters' Lane development. MBM Commercial, in responding to the claim from Powderhall residents, had made a poor offer, considerably less than was originally considered and insufficient to cover the amount of damage caused. Frans has not heard any more from the property manager for Hatters Lane and there has been no improvement on the derisory compensation offered. Hunters' Garden Services have estimated costs for replanting the area, but it looks as though we are going to have to find alternative and cheaper ways of greening the area.

5. Canonmills Gardens completion

Sarah reported that the Site Manager at Canonmills Gardens has been helpful. Director David Westwater from Artisan has said they will replace the border fence between Canonmills Gardens and Powderhall Village, that has been cut down in error.

Action: Sarah Wilson will continue to work with Artisan developers to remedy the fencing issues. A completion date of December 2022 is a possibility for the new development.

Other concerns, possibly relating to the Canonmills development, include the reporting of a mechanical high-pitched whining noise heard at various points of the day. Craig Gorman, Powderhall Development Inspector, has tried to find the source of the noise but he could not hear it. It has been shown that this is not due to the new central pumping system as had been proposed but it may be due to the ventilation system in the underground car park. The sound seems to be occurring at peak times for using the car park i.e. 6.30- 7am and from 5.30pm. Sarah said again that the Canonmills site manager will investigate the issue if there is a recording of the sound at these times or if residents have any further information.

ACTION: Powderhall residents please report issues such as this directly to Charles White rather than on Facebook where it may not be picked up in time to action. Please record the sound if possible.

Gordon reported that the cabins on the Canonmills Gardens site are reducing in number and that landscaping is taking place.

Sarah told the meeting that P4 Parking, the company who manage Powderhall's parking has been informed of the new development.

6. Parking: Allocation of disabled parking spaces

There has been a long delay on the provision of parking spaces for disabled people and renewal of markings across all car parks. This matter will now be dealt with in the Spring, together with other additional yellow line marking. Roddy asked if this could include the ramp outside The Rigg so that bin lorries can have easier access.

(Government guidelines recommend that 6% of parking should be allocated to disabled people)

7 AOB:

- a. Following up an item from the AGM where council planning representatives shared plans for the former waste management site next to Powderhall, an issue raised was the

possibility of access from the new site onto Powderhall Road/ Dunedin Street. Planner Dave Robertson wants to meet committee representatives on site to discuss this matter. Franz, Gordon, and Kevin agreed to attend.

Issues raised by the committee:

- i. the possibility for pedestrian access only between sites; if cyclist access was given then there would have to be a safety barrier erected;
- ii. cyclists already have access to St Mark's Park; how could this proposed access affect Powderhall residents/ what is in it for us?;
- iii. the area under question is a sloping green area so this vegetation would be destroyed if a foot/cycle path was created;
 1. can the council put a compulsory order on the area?
 2. Kathryn raised a point brought up by residents at the AGM i.e., that access to Powderhall parking facilities is already compromised, people do not always respond to the threat of getting a parking ticket, and if a new development has easy access to and from Powderhall this situation may worsen. Residents at Powderhall are worried about over-access from the new developments that surround us. Roddy commented that it is unfortunate that councillors will no longer attend our meetings as they used to do so that we could discuss such issues.
- b. William raised an issue re stair lighting at 6 The Rigg where there are no lights in the bike or bin store. Sarah apologised and will ensure this will be done asap.
- c. Question re the external doors which are looking scruffy. Sarah said that originally, they were made of treated wood. The doors will now be rubbed down as far as is possible before finishing.
- d. The doors at 6 The Rigg are a mess due to being bumped etc. Is there a way of fitting extra protection e.g., a metal panel that could extend from the lock down? Sarah commented that where doors have matting on, they are better protected, but she will get the locksmith to look at possibilities when the repainting of the external doors takes place.
- e. Gordon met with Bumblebee EV Chargers to discuss the possibility of fitting EV car charging points on Powderhall. Costs would vary according to various factors.

In our case, the underground car park may present the best option and no permission would be required from the council. There will be a new grant scheme from April 23- the committee will examine this then. Sarah said that any ground works required could be expensive.

There is also a bit of a waiting time for charging points- up to 2 years- for properties other than work or industry. She felt that a secure area for charging was preferable, and that CCTV may be necessary.

Sarah suggested that we look at other companies and how they are administered.

- f. James asked a question re types and numbers of recycling bins, and did we have any control over this? Kevin said the council work to a formula and that Powderhall have had a good relationship with Ron Brown at the council on the recycling issue. Kevin has regularly been in touch with the Waste department, and they have always been helpful. He recommended that residents work with the department to make things happen.
- g. Richard asked Sarah about the possibility of carrying out an energy audit at Powderhall with a view to improving energy consumption and possibly considering the feasibility of fitting solar panels on roofs at some point. Sarah replied that good funding for solar panels

is not yet available.

- h. Buildings at Powderhall may not be well insulated and grants may be available to help improve this at some point. Sarah agreed that Charles White would support this process as much as possible and that they have already started by fitting LED lights.
- i. The committee discussed the possibility of fitting heat pumps. Kevin said these were not yet cost- effective. There may also be issues around roof space in the attics as a commercial heat pump would be massive.
- j. Gordon mentioned the possibility of a hydro- electric system on the river.
- k. All these issues will be discussed further by the committee and will form part of an energy action plan Powderhall.

Date of next meeting: 11th January 2023 at 7pm (via Zoom)