



## **Powderhall Village Owners Association**

### **Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Present:** Roddy Martine (Chair), Gordon Chrumka, Jane Chisholm, Bill Scott (Treasurer), Ian Corbett (acting Sec.) Peyman Taheri and Katherine Tomlinson.

**Apologies:** Joanna Bytheway, Stephanie Scott

#### **Agenda:**

- Parking**
- Report from Sarah – ongoing actions**
- Report from Gardening sub-committee**
- AOB**

2/ The Minutes of the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> April were agreed.

#### 3/ **PARKING**

There has been no further contact with the Council since our last meeting, and we wait to hear from either Andrew McBride or Councillors Lang and Brock. Roddy has written to Stewart Stevenson, Minister for transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change, and has a response from Iain Gardiner on his behalf in which he says that this is a matter for the City of Edinburgh Council and that neither Scottish Ministers nor the Government are able to offer advice on the interpretation of legislation.. However, he adds that we may wish to seek independent legal advice.

Roddy has also contacted Ian Mowat, Chairman of the New Town and Broughton Community Council who once again was unable to offer legal advice, but has suggested that our Committee might wish to appoint a representative to attend their meetings.

**ACTION 9/6/09: It was agreed that we would fill in the necessary forms and that members of the PVOA Committee might attend by rotation.**

**ACTION 29/4/09: Gordon is to draft an enquiry to Edinburgh Council under the Freedom of Information Act relating to the interpretation of the Roads (Scotland) Act, the Council's attitude to private firms controlling parking in Edinburgh, and the parking issues of other housing developments in the City. Ongoing.**

#### 4/ **UPDATE ON ACTION FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Fence Panel at 18 Powderhall Road **Action 3/2/09** - Works on wall completed; further works to be completed by Friday 12th June. Charles White's joiner will re-attach fence panel early next week. **Ongoing**

Dripping Overflows - **Action 12/8/09** Acquisition of plans ongoing.

Trees at B & Q – **Action undated.** Tender for the tree works agreed and works will now go ahead within the next 7 days and will take 4 to 5 days to complete. **Ongoing**

Gardening – **Action 24/4/09** Hunters has been requested to edge the central area using an edging tool once per annum. Completed for this year. Also, Sarah has provided a copy of the current garden specification as a basis for the gardening sub-committee drafting a gardening maintenance specification for all future tenders. A new contract based on the revised specification can be put out to tender anytime the committee wishes. \*See **Gardening Below . Ongoing**

Replace Missing Cover on Wall at 7 Rigg **Action 11/3/09**- Still no action taken by owner and 2nd letter sent. ongoing

Treatment of Fence Beside Water of Leith **Action 11/3/09** - Specification has now been drawn up by ICI Dulux and this is out to tender via 3 of White's preferred contractors. **ACTION 8/6/09: As noted in the Minutes of the last meeting, the Committee felt that there is no point in progressing this any further until the Water of Leith Flood Defences are in place. Ongoing**

Rubbish Around Development – **Action 11/3/09** Annfield Cleaning Services will clear all litter once per month during the winter from November to March at a cost of £60 per month. **ACTION 8/6/09: The Committee is of the opinion that this will make a big difference and agreed to it going ahead, but at the same time it is important for Sarah to liaise with the gardeners so that the once a month winter gardening maintenance (that includes collecting rubbish) and the once a month winter rubbish collection by Annfield are two weeks apart. Ongoing**

Quarterly Bills **Action 11/3/09** - A new invoice of the last quarter has been sent out in the post today along with a newsletter and also a statement of account. The way in which owners are billed by Charles White has long been the subject of confusion, and there have been an increasing number of complaints as to the high level of charges. It is proposed that Committee Members bring along their bills to the next meeting for discussion. **ACTION 8/6/09: Ian is to prepare a pro-forma Spreadsheet to try to show the fixed charges for all the properties at Powderhall**

## 5/ GARDENING SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Joanna Bytheway, Jane Chisholm, Nicola Lowe, Roddy Martine, Emma McVicar made a tour of the village on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May to inspect and discuss the general appearance of the flower beds, grass areas and plantings. Nicola, who is a garden designer, observed that in general the gardens, compared to other similar developments, were in good condition.

**However,**

It was noted that there are three dead trees on the slope at the west end of the development and that they should be removed. Also it was pointed out that several of the tree tie-backs which the Committee had asked to be removed, had not been. Also, several supports are no longer required.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to Action Hunters.**

The brambles are starting to burst out of the space between the B&Q stone wall and the fence at the western entry to Powderhall, and something will have to be done about this very soon.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to action cost and consult with Bryant.**

Flower beds throughout the village were wood chipped in December, but it is patently clear that the contractor ran out of wood chip as there are a large number of beds that have not been treated. It was also noted that two beds on Beaverhall Road which do not belong to the PVOA had been wood chipped. It was further suggested that the addition of a compost-based earth might have been more suitable.

It was noted that while the clearance and re-planting of the long bed in front of No 2, Powderhall Brae, was an improvement (which will become especially noticeable when the perennials begin to grow), several of the plants have already died.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to be asked to investigate why we should pay for their replacement.**

It was suggested that we undertake a Spring bulb planting in all of the periphery beds throughout the village and encourage owners to take part in this. Stephanie had earlier commented that the planting of spring bulbs was problematic in that when they cease flowering their leaves had to be left on and allowed to die naturally. During this period they look untidy and messy. However, it was thought that along the back fences this would add a welcome splash of spring colour and would not be particularly noticeable when they died back. It has been suggested that grants might be available for this, and should be looked for into.

**ACTION 8/6/09: The garden committee to investigate.**

There are three dead trees high up behind the Rigg, and these should be removed and replaced.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to consult with Hunters over cost.**

There is one dead fir tree in front of 5-6, The Rigg, probably as a result of poor soil and lack of watering which is annoying. It will need to be replaced.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to consult with Hunters over cost.**

The planting against the bank opposite the Town Houses, which was intended to stretch the length of the wall, had been undertaken only 1 metre apart, which is far too close since some of the plants, with luck, will spread far beyond this. It was also noted that three of the new plantings were already dead. It was suggested that this area could do with more Clematis, Montana and Russian vine, and that all of these shrubs be re-planted in either Autumn or next Spring.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to consult with Hunters and to report back on costs.**

It was generally agreed that there is an unfortunate lack of communication between the Garden Contractor and the Gardening Committee. A bit more attention to detail and the occasional recommendation would not go amiss. It was, however, appreciated that the current Garden Specification is far from satisfactory.

**ACTION 8/6/09: The Garden Committee is to draw up a new Garden Specification to be discussed at the next PVOA Committee Meeting. It is then proposed that the work should be put out to tender to Hunters, Greenfingers and AN other. Emma McVicar's uncle is a garden contractor, and she is to find out if he might be interested. Similarly, Kathryn is to investigate another candidate.**

6/      **AOB**

**Action 24/4/09** Gordon had advised us that the Broughton School might not be available for our next AGM, and on that understanding, Bill has made contact with the Lady Haig Hall as a possible venue for our next AGM. The Company Secretary is to consult with her superiors and come back to him.  
ongoing

Peyman drew attention to the unpleasant smell that has been lingering over the village when an easterly wind blows.

**ACTION 8/6/09: It is proposed that we make a formal complaint to Environmental Health, and Peyman will draft a letter which Roddy will send.**

Peyman also remarked that there has been movement on the Beaverhall Road site with cleaning in progress. While there has been no indication that Rutterford's have a go-ahead for their development or are contemplating a change-of-use application, this is something we must monitor.

Kathryn mentioned that fire windows in her block of Powderhall Rigg are being opened from time to time, and she has discovered that there is a charge when somebody is called out to close them. In most of the blocks, the stair reps hold the keys, yet in her block they seem to have gone missing.

**ACTION 8/6/09: Sarah to be asked to provide Kathryn with replacement keys, and ensure that stair reps. know how to reset the alarm and close the fire windows.**

**ACTION 8/6/09: Ian to arrange meeting with Sarah Wilson prior to next committee meeting**  
**Next PVOA Committee meeting: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July at 7:30pm, at Ian's flat – 7/21 Powderhall Brae.**