



## **Powderhall Village Owners Association**

### **Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009**

**Present:** Roddy Martine (Chair), Gordon Chrumka, Bill Scott, Ian Corbett (acting Sec.), Jane Chisholm and Frans Kooy

**Apologies:** Joanna Bytheway, Stephanie Scott and Kathryn Tomlinson

#### **Agenda:**

- Approval of Previous Minutes
- Actions from previous meeting
- New Business
- Any Other Business
- Date, Place and Minutes of next meeting

2/ **Approval of previous Minutes.** The Minutes of 28th July were approved.

3/ **Actions from Previous Minutes**

#### Attendance at New Town & Broughton Community Council meetings. **Action 9/6/09**

Roddy has not as yet filled in the necessary forms, but it was thought a good idea for us to keep in touch with the NT&BCC for future dialogue. **Ongoing**

#### Parking information from Council; **Action 24/4/09**

Gordon has to date had no response from the Council to his request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. **Ongoing**

Dripping Overflows **Action 12/8/09** Sarah now has complete plans matching each overflow with its appropriate flat in all of the Rigg and Brae blocks. **Completed**

#### Trees at B & Q **Action undated**

With regard to the encroachment of trees from B&Q, William Mackie, an owner in 1 Brae, has pursued this topic. He contacted Steve Milne, the City Council's Arboricultural Officer, and was told by him that the Council has no powers where private trees affect another private property. However, he has also been visited by Councillor Louise Lang who agrees with him that the trees are dangerously high and close and she has asked him to forward photographs of the offending trees before she takes the matter up directly with B&Q. **Ongoing.**

#### Treatment of Fence Beside Water of Leith. **Action 8/6/09**

Although this work will not begin until after the Water of Leith Flood Prevention work has been completed, the committee requested copies of the quotes already received in Charles White for treating the fence. The quotes are with the Technical Manager, and Sarah will forward them when he returns from paternity leave.

**Ongoing**

Quarterly lift maintenance charges **Action 28/9/09:**

Sarah has been in touch with Schindlers and the only way we can reduce costs is to change from the gold contract to the silver or bronze contracts with a lower level of service and support. The gold contract charges appear unreasonably high. It was agreed that the cost of lift maintenance should be discussed at the AGM. In the meantime, Sarah is to be asked to provide specs on Gold, Silver and Bronze contracts. **Completed**

**Action 4/9/09 - Sarah to provide the committee with a summary of the cover provided by Schindlers gold, silver and bronze contracts, and the corresponding cost of each contract by November, so that the AGM can be asked to make an informed decision.**

Quarterly Communal Electricity Charges **Actions 28/7/09:**

Sarah has checked and confirms that we are definitely on a domestic tariff, and the cost per unit charged by Scottish Power is currently the lowest available. **Completed**

Removal of dead trees and tree ties. **Action 8/6/09 and 28/7/09.**

The three dead trees on the slope at the B&Q end of the development have been removed and the dead fir tree in front of 5-6 Rigg has been removed and replaced with a cherry tree. The cost for this work was £110 + VAT. Sarah will be on site with Brian Hunter in the w/b 7/9/09 and will advise Roddy of the date and time so that one or more members of the gardening sub-committee can join them. However, it seems unlikely that any of the gardening sub-committee will be available w/b 7/9/09. so this might have to be postponed until later in the month when it is convenient for one or more of the sub-committee to attend.

**Ongoing**

**Action 4/9/09 - Sarah to liaise with Roddy and agree a suitable date for a site meeting with Brian Hunter that gardening sub-committee members can attend.**

Brambles **Action 8/6/09**

Gillian Slorach of Bryants has confirmed to Sarah that Bryants will do nothing about the brambles growing between the fences on the Powderhall Road entrance to the development. Since we have no responsibility for this area outside the development, further action will be difficult so it was decided to leave the matter for the time being. **Completed**

Bed in front of 2 Brae **Action 8/6/09**

Sarah confirmed that Brian Hunter will replace any dead plants in this replanted bed free of charge. **Completed**

Dead trees behind Rigg **Action 8/6/09.**

The cost of removing these five dead trees, working and fertilising the ground, and replanting five new trees will be £65 + VAT per tree. It was decided that this should be left for the time being. **Ongoing**

Planting against bank opposite town houses **Action 8/6/09.**

Brian Hunter has inspected this bed and reports that all of the plants are alive. 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 spring. Sarah will discuss with Brian Hunter during their forthcoming site visit that some members of the gardening sub-committee may attend. **Ongoing**

New Garden Maintenance Specification **Action 28/7/09**

This has now been drawn up and will be finalised at a meeting of the gardening sub-committee to be called within the next three weeks. **Ongoing**

Fire Windows **Action 28/7/09**

Sarah reported that so far, only one of the five stair reps from 2-6 Rigg has requested a spare key for the cupboard and instructions on how to reset the smoke alarm. **Completed**

**Action 28/7/09.**

Sarah wants more guidance from the committee on what Type of warning notice should be printed and fixed to each fire window (wording?, plastic?, transparent?, size?, letter colour?, how fixed?). Following discussion, Gordon volunteered to organise this.

**Completed**

**Action 4/9/09 Gordon to organise the production and fixing of these notices to the fire windows.**

Vent on roof of 5 Brae **Action 28/7/09.**

Replacing the missing vent cover has not yet been done. **Ongoing**

Mould on wall of 18 Road **Action 28/7/09.** The mould has now been removed. **Completed**

Venue for AGM: **Action 24/4/09**

Bill reported that the cost of hiring the Lady Haig Hall would be between £75 and £100. Also Gordon correct a misconception that Broughton Primary School Hall would not be available for hire in the evenings in future - in fact, it is only Thursday nights that cannot be booked for public use. It was decided that we would continue to use Broughton Primary School Hall for future AGMs where possible. **Completed**

**Action 4/9/09 Ian to book Broughton Primary School Hall for our next AGM in the first week of January 2010**

Smell from Waste Disposal Plant **Action 8/6/09**

The following information has been received from Councillor Louise Lang:

“The increased problems with the smell coincides with the industrial action taken by refuse collection. The Powderhall plant is taking in less refuse which means that the holding pits are lower and the waste at the bottom of the pits has had time to decompose and can be odorous. The pits are lower at the weekends because Refuse collection has a ban on overtime and with no waste coming in waste from the bottom of the pits is being compacted.

The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) regularly visit the site and are happy with the procedures we have put in place to mask the smell, the most recent being the introduction of a vehicle fitted with a spray wash with added deodoriser which cleans and sprays the area at the tipping stalls. We have spoken to pedestrians using the near by path and have had positive feedback.

Noise assessments have been carried out by Analytical Services and they would be the best place to get technical information at what is deemed acceptable levels. The head of this service is Dr.A.Mackie at 4 Marine Esplanade tel. Number 555 7980.

The skip vehicles which create the most noise when tipping are now tipping in our enclosed shed, this causes double handling for the Disposal team but will reduce the noise. I will look into the possibility of planting trees in front of the tipping stalls.

The nearest viable landfill site to Edinburgh is Dunbar which is owned by Viridor and a long term contract has proven to have been the best option.

**Planning issues:**

In terms of the local plan, it seems that while the existing policy reads that there is an intention to relocate the Powderhall depot, a pre-inquiry modification was made which states that the site will be required throughout the lifetime of the plan. There is a reference to this potential move in the finalised Edinburgh City Local Plan (para 9.35) Therefore, it was probably fairly safe to assume that this would happen at some point in the future (and

was no doubt used by the house builder to reassure potential buyers) As the Powderhall depot existed before the housing was built then its potential environmental impact would have been taken into consideration when the planning application was determined. Therefore, the relocation plan which was put forward in the draft City Local Plan must have been known about in 2007 or before that. I'm not quite sure exactly when the housing was built but suspect it was before this.

The issue of waste is under review. Apparently Scottish Government now appear to be getting involved in the issue of waste policy but nothing has as yet been prepared. The future of Powderhall depends on the future solution for residual waste treatment and our requirements for recycling facilities. Powderhall currently provides us with rail transfer facilities for our waste which is sent to Viridor at Dunbar under our disposal contract. It is unlikely that we will have any alternative treatment facilities until at least 2014. Powderhall is therefore likely to be required until then at a minimum. Its future after that depends on future contract solutions and the sites that are chosen for those facilities. It will be several years before we know whether the successful bids will necessitate the continued use of Powderhall or an alternative transfer facility.”

The committee decided, given this information, that little more could be done. **Completed**

List of preferred contractors **Action 28/7/09**

Sarah will send a list of Charles White preferred residential contractors (plumbers, electricians, painters and decorators and joiners) directly to Gordon so that he can add them to the appropriate page on the Powderhall website. **Ongoing**

Display list of lift numbers **Action 28/7/09**

Ian sent the list by e-mail to stair reps. For display on their notice boards. **Completed**

Volunteers to organise social event **Action 28/7/09**

Ian sent a note asking for volunteers by e-mail to stair reps. for display on notice boards. Nil response to date. The committee would still like to try to promote such an event during the summer of 2010 so anyone who might be interested in helping to organize it should get in touch, or should make themselves known at the AGM in January. **Ongoing**

Dripping overflows at 8 Brae and 2 Brae **Action 28/7/09.**

Sarah reported that these overflows were no longer dripping. **Completed**

Staining on wall above 3 Brae **Action 28/7/09**

Sarah reported that this will be cleaned within the next three weeks. **Ongoing**

#### 4/ New Business

Water seepage into Underground Car Park

Roddy had drawn attention to the fact that water was still seeping into the underground car park from the roof near the entrance. Sarah will deal with this but needs an HNBC number, Build Mark Policy Number and the date on the policy document from a Miller resident before she can progress this matter. Sarah should have an HNBC number (supplied by Sharon when last problem concerning garage arose). Otherwise, Roddy will try to unearth his one.

**Action 4/9/09 Sarah to check whether she has the necessary information from the last NHBC claim in Rigg, and if not, to ask Roddy to supply his details.**

Occupied caravan on site

Sarah reported that there are three people apparently living in a caravan displaying a PVOA Visitor Permit parked at the Broughton Road end of the development. Sarah has been in contact with Simon Daley and with the Council's Environmental Wardens to see what steps can be taken to have the caravan removed. This is in defiance of the Deeds & Conditions,

and Frans Kooy will contact Sarah with the Visitor Permit number.

**Action 4/9/09**

**Franz to forward the visitor permit number displayed on the caravan to Sarah who will then write to the owner of the flat to whom the permit belongs.**

A letter from Charles White will be coming soon advising owners that the next 6-monthly check of the emergency lighting and the smoke alarms will be due soon. The cost will be £250 per block having these features. This seems excessive and Ian will check original quote.

**Action 4/9/09**

**Ian to check original quotes since this work started in 2007 to see if the current cost is excessive, and liaise with Sarah if necessary.**

Buildings Insurance

Sarah has had a meeting with Deacon Insurance Brokers and has been told that the loss ratio at Powderhall is continuing to rise due primarily to flood damage. The committee needs to raise awareness of the need to inspect and renew seals round shower trays, baths, etc. or the buildings insurance premiums will continue to rise.

**Action 4/9/09**

**All Owners and Tenants are asked to inspect the seals round baths, showers and sinks, and to have any faulty seals replaced.**

**5/Next Committee Meeting**

The next Committee Meeting will be in Ian's flat ( 7/21 Brae) on Tuesday 6th October at 7.30pm. In the absence of any other volunteers, Ian has agreed to produce the Minutes of the next meeting.