



Powderhall Village Owners Association

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 17 March 2010

Present: Roddy Martine (Chair), Ian Corbett (Sec.), Kathryn Tomlinson and Joanna Bytheway

Apologies: Jane Chisholm, William Mackie, Gordon Chromka and Bill Scott

Agenda:

- Approval of Previous Minutes
- Actions from Previous Minutes
- Buildings Insurance
- Gardening Contract for 2010
- Any Other Business
- Date, Place and Minutes of next meeting

Approval of previous Minutes. The Minutes of 27 January 2010 were approved.

Actions from Previous Minutes

Lift maintenance charges **Action 27/1/10:** The committee had already agreed by e-mail to accept the reduced rate for the Gold Maintenance Contract negotiated by Sarah (saving of over £1000 per annum in nearly all cases), and this new rate has been implemented from 1 March. The reasons for the high number of call outs to 2 Rigg were a faulty auto dialler and misuse (thought to be caused by moving large items of furniture and keeping lift doors open for long periods during a removal). For 7 Rigg, there was a fault in the main drive unit that took time to find and clear, and misuse, and for 8 Rigg, misuse was again given as the reason.

Completed

Fire Windows **Action 02/12//09:** Gordon is still working on the production and fixing of suitable notices to the fire windows to discourage residents from opening them. **Ongoing**

Vent on roof of 5 Brae **Action 02/12/09:** Martin Burns could not source an identical replacement vent because the manufacturer has gone out of business. His advice was to cover the vent hole with roofing tiles (there are sufficient other vents on the same roof) and this has now been done. **Completed**

List of Preferred Contractors **Action 02/12/09** Gordon to add list of preferred suppliers received from Sarah to website. **Ongoing**

Water seepage into underground car park **Action 02/12/09:** Sarah has still not received any correspondence from NHBC, but has confirmed that an engineer from Miller Homes will be investigating the problem and that NHBC will await his report before deciding on any future action. **Ongoing**

Staining on gable end of 8 Brae **Action 02/12/09:** Sarah had been told by the contractor that this work had been done, but it had not. Sarah will chase and report back. **Ongoing**

Lights in bin store **Action 02/12/09:** Sarah has confirmed that the push light switches will be replaced with normal flick switches when a faulty switch needs attention – three have already been replaced. **Completed**

Rubbish Collection **Action 27/1/10:** Sarah met with David Bain of the Council and liaised with Councillor Louise Lang, and it has been agreed with the Council that collection of general rubbish will revert to two times a week, with each recycling bin being emptied once per week. Bill didn't think that either was happening yet, and Sarah will take the matter up again with David Bain. **Ongoing**

Fabric Fund **Action 27/1/10:** Ian had sent Sarah a ballot paper for inclusion with the March bill, asking owners to vote on two proposals - one regarding the payment of insurance excess and the other about whether we should set up a fabric fund. Sarah decided not to include the ballot on the setting up of a fabric fund because she had a more pressing decision to be decided about insurance excess (see next Agenda item). The ballot about the setting up of a fabric fund will be included with the June bill. **Ongoing**

Buildings Insurance Claim Form **Action 2/12/09** Gordon has received an e-copy of the form from Sarah, but it has not yet been added to the Powderhall website. **Ongoing**

Use of Bin Chutes **Action 27/1/10** Ian sent a notice about the proper use of bin chutes to stair reps. to attach to all the bin chute doors in their block at their discretion. **Completed**

Volunteers to organise social event. **Action 27/1/10:** Roddy has still to invite the four volunteers to meet with him to decide on a practical way forward. **Ongoing**

Refilling of grit bins **Action 27/1/10:** Sarah has requested that this is done ASAP. **Ongoing**

Levy for 2010 **Action 27/1/10:** This was included in the March bill, and a cheque has already been sent to the treasurer. **Completed**

Buildings Insurance

The committee was very unhappy about the fact that Charles White had distributed information from Deacon Insurance Brokers to owners without the committee having had a chance to study the information. In particular, it appears that a unilateral decision has been made to increase the insurance excess for water damage from £250 (it was £100 two years ago) to £1000. The committee felt that this was a very large amount, particularly if charged to an individual owner unaware that a leak was originating in his or her flat. It had always been the intention to ballot owners to decide whether the insurance excess for water damage should be shared among all flats covered by the buildings insurance policy, or charged to the owner of the flat where the water leak originated. This decision, however, was on the understanding that the insurance excess was £250.

The committee was also concerned that in the table comparing the cover that would have been provided by the three companies asked to tender (Zurich, Allianz and AXA), there is no mention of an excess, so it is unclear whether the comparisons are on a like-for-like basis. Also, the committee understood that there were four separate buildings insurance policies at Powderhall (Brae, Bryant Rigg, Miller Rigg and Road), but the information provided seems to refer to premiums for the whole of Powderhall. It was noted that if the excess of £1000 had been in force in 2009, owners would have paid £23,000 of the £34,000 total claims for water damage at Powderhall. The committee agreed that Sarah should ask Deacon to provide, in a clear and

unambiguous manner, like-for-like quotes for each buildings insurance policy at Powderhall for different levels of insurance excess.

Action 17/3/10: Sarah to ask Deacon to provide the committee with like-for-like quotes for each of the buildings insurance policies in force at Powderhall and with different levels of insurance excess.

Gardening Tenders

Sarah had fulfilled her action by distributing copies of the three tenders for the Powderhall Gardening Contract to committee members two weeks ago, but Roddy had been unable to organise a meeting of the Gardening Club to study the tenders and make a recommendation. Of the three quotes submitted, that from Keith Lawson Landscaping was rejected on cost grounds. Of the remaining two – one from the current contractor Hunters Garden Services and the other from Greenfingers and Civic Trees, the quote from Greenfingers was £2,500 less than Hunters. There was a lively discussion, but in the end, because of reports of other developments' dissatisfaction with Greenfingers and eventually replacing them coupled with the perceived improvement of Hunters (albeit with some pushing) over the past year, it was decided to stick with Hunters for the coming year provided Brian Hunter was prepared, if invited, to attend the first half-hour of a maximum of two committee meetings during the year to discuss gardening issues.

Action 17/3/10: Sarah to check that Brian Hunter would, if invited, be prepared to attend the first half-hour of a maximum of two committee meetings during the year, and if he agrees, to award him the gardening contract for 2010.

The Gardening Club are organising a walk around the site on the afternoon of Friday 26 March to see where improvements to the appearance of the site could be made. Anyone wanting to take part would be very welcome and should assemble outside 4 Rigg at 2:30pm.

Any Other Business

Offer of help with website An owner, with expertise in the development and maintenance of websites, has expressed his willingness to help with the running of the Powderhall website if required. In Gordon's absence, Ian agreed to forward this offer of help to him.

Action 17/3/10: Ian to forward offer of help to Gordon and co-ordinate his response.

Caravans and Commercial Vehicles The Deed of Conditions clearly states that parking at Powderhall is for cars only, and Sarah's attention has been drawn by a number of residents to large commercial vehicles being parked at Powderhall, and a caravan that seems to move about the development but is continuously occupying a parking space. Sarah is continuing to try to identify the owners, and write to them pointing out that they are in breach of the Deed of Conditions that they signed up to.

Action 17/3/10: Sarah to keep the committee informed of her progress.

Staining on gable end of 18 Road Sarah will arrange for this to be cleaned at the same time as 8 Brae

Action 17/3/10: Sarah to arrange for this brickwork to be cleaned.

Estate agent signs A number of estate agents' signs have appeared recently erected on communal ground. Sarah is aware and will ask the agents involved to relocate the signs on the premises for sale.

Action 17/2/10: Sarah to keep committee informed of her progress

Next Committee Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be in Ian's flat (7/21 Brae) on Wednesday 5 May 2010 at 7.30pm.