



OFFICIAL
Great Park
Neighbourhood Association

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GPNA

April 29th 2024
Chair Update

Top 5 Priorities - Summer 2024

Based on Survey Responses



- 1. Continued collaboration with the Consortium, Managing Agent and Consortium**
- 2. Transparency on service charge & finance**
- 3. Road & Path agreements / Adoption**
- 4. Improved GPMC communication with residents**
- 5. Lights - watch and report**

Achievements to Date

What have we done since Oct 2023



1. x14 GPNA members full committee
2. Residents Survey 500+ responses
3. Re-connection to the consortium and new managing agent
4. Residents questions posed with answers - although further clarification is being sought
5. More detailed map of the estate with better detailed information
6. Taylor Wimpey texting residents regarding works being completed - increased comms
7. NCC implementing an adoption manager (Yet to know who this is)
8. Developers appointing a works manager to address Taylor Wimpey / Persimmon concerns
9. Non Disclosure Agreements have been dropped after being highlighted nationally
10. Advertisement in local business
11. SEND sub committee (SC)
12. Accessed the local environmental group (IT)
13. Access to GPNA accounts
14. Significantly increased Social Media traffic, presence and given residents a voice (Reach 3920 / Engagement 1837)

Where are we now? Next Steps



- **Financial Transparency:** You raised concerns about income and expenditure figures. We are meeting with UNW Wednesday 1st May so we can get further clarification.
- **Open Space Plan:** We've received a draft plan outlining open space details (measurements, bins, streetlights, local spaces). We'll review it and share it with residents for feedback soon.
- **Fair Service Charges:** The Consortium have told us that they are reviewing service charges across Cells to ensure everyone with similar properties pays the same amount.
- **Landscape Maintenance:** Resident concerns about landscape maintenance will be investigated by the Consortium. (Sig increase in funding despite lack of new land being adopted)
- **Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs):** We have been informed these are no longer needed to be signed. Our goal is to receive all invoices for resident review.
- **Improved Concern Reporting:** The Consortium, Management company, and developers are working on clearer instructions for reporting concerns about specific areas of the estate. They are also considering new reporting methods for faster resolution after we have spoken with them about this issue.
- **Consortium update on future work:** Now that we have answers to residents questions the Consortium will be focusing on updating us about the future works, deadlines and plans for the Great Park in their meeting with us on the 29th May. We will share this with you as soon as we have it.

GPMC NDA - Hits the national headlines

New-build owners told to sign NDAs to see details of soaring estate charges

EXCLUSIVE

Homeowners tell i they don't know where their money is going as they face soaring mandatory charges for services such as grass cutting

<https://inews.co.uk/news/housing/new-build-homeowners-nda-soaring-estate-charges-2970515>



We are seeking to highlight our issues more widely both with the BBC and the Chronicle

Questions to UNW



A meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 1st May 4pm - 6pm to look at invoices without the need for an NDA. We have emailed asking for a written response to the following questions:

Understanding the scope of the Audit: (Top Priority)

1. **What level of service are you providing? Are you performing a full audit, preparing detailed accounts, or simply validating the Income & Expenditure (I&E) statements?**
2. What are you engaged to do – can we see your engagement letter or set of agreed procedures?

Knowing this clarifies who can answer detailed financial questions and the level of scrutiny applied to the accounts.

Questions to UNW



Service Charge Accuracy: (High Priority)

3. If residents suspect incorrect costs, could you explain the process for examining invoices to third parties and the methodology used for recharging management time?

This helps residents understand how costs are calculated and ensures they're paying accurate amounts.

Breakdown of Costs: (High Priority)

4. Can you explain the allocation process of total costs between the different cells (A, D, E, etc.)?

5. How do you know when land is handed from the developers to the management company and how are you then sure that all invoices all relate to the management company and not the developers?

6. Why do yearly costs balance to the pound with the yearly estimate?

Transparency in cost allocation is crucial for residents to understand why their cell is charged a specific amount.



Legal Structure and Related Costs

7. What is the role of TW Developments and Persimmon Homes beyond being 50/50 shareholders in NGP Estates?

8. Do these entities incur costs and recharge them to the cells, or take any income from the development?

Understanding the broader legal structure helps residents identify potential conflicts of interest and ensure all costs charged are legitimate.

Discrepancies in Ownership and Accounting

9. Why does Persimmon own Cell C 100%, while other cells are owned by NGP Estates?

10. Does NGP Estates incur all service provider costs and receive all income? Their accounts show significant cash but no profit, suggesting income matches expenses. Can we see their full accounts or a profit & loss statement?

These questions address potential inconsistencies in ownership structure and accounting practices.



Terminology and Transparency:

11. Why are the I&E statements referred to as "audited statements of account"? Who has audited them, and why is there no independent audit opinion attached?

This clarifies the terminology used and ensures residents are not misled into believing the statements are more rigorously reviewed than they actually are.

NGP Nature Conservation Steering Group Update - Key Points



Wildlife Surveys:

- 2023 bird survey results available (contact James Streets for trends).
- Red squirrel surveys in Havannah not useful due to low numbers (consider focusing on Dark Plantation sightings reported by Cathy Sharp).

Habitat Management:

- Dead wood in Dark Plantation will be assessed and managed according to a plan.
- New planting planned around Dark Plantation perimeter.
- Grassland management in Cell C may be adjusted to improve wildflower growth.
- Swift brick boxes being installed (locations to be mapped by James Streets).

NGP Nature Conservation Steering Group Update - Key Points



Development and Access:

- No access planned from Brunton Quarry into Cell C.
- Development will include a dark corridor buffer zone.

Action Items:

- Invite Urban Green to discuss wildlife management plan for Havannah.
- Update interpretation board maps with NGP development changes.
- Inform residents about potential wildflower meadow creation through harrowing.

Other Discussions:

- No current funding available for Himalayan Balsam control.
- NGP remains supportive of Ouseburn Catchment partnership projects.
- Street lighting on Havannah and B1 strategic routes to be assessed for BAP impact.
- Mitigation planting planned for scrub and hedgerow loss.
- Concerns raised about long-term viability of Brunton Wetlands and Havannah Three Hills LWS.

Streetlights



Vice Chair has again pushed for new contractors to be appointed 26th April.

At the NGP meeting on 25 March, repairs to the lights that have not worked for 9 months was raised. I believe that the instruction was that if nothing was forthcoming in terms of timetable that another Contractor was to be instructed to complete this? What is the latest please? This is one of the easiest items to actually fix yet we are still getting seemingly nowhere?

Managing Agent Response:

Developer have recently had a meeting with the electricians and agreed timescales etc so I just need an update on the lights that they already have to repair.

*The GPNA have asked for the timescales to be provided.



Planning issues: Permission and obligations (Link with roads)

To build new housing, planning permission from the local planning authority (LPA) is required. Planning permission expires within three years in England. Once construction has started, however, there is little an LPA can do to force it to be completed.

Powers available to local planning authorities

There are certain powers at LPA's disposal, however, that they can use to encourage developers to finish building developments. LPAs can:

- issue a [completion notice threatening to revoke](#) planning permission.
- [attach conditions to planning permission](#), such as a time limit on when construction must start. LPAs cannot attach conditions requiring a development to be carried out in its entirety and to be completed.
- require a landowner to [carry out clean-up works](#) if the condition of an unfinished housing development is affecting the amenity of an area.
- as a last resort, use [compulsory purchase powers](#) to buy a development. There must be a compelling case in the public interest, and these powers must be confirmed by the relevant Secretary of State.

It is up to the LPA whether to use these powers; constituents cannot compel them to use them.

We feel that the council would not use any of these.

Delivering infrastructure

To mitigate concern about the potential impact of a proposed development on local infrastructure, an LPA can negotiate an agreement with a developer (called a “[section 106 agreement](#)” in England). A developer will agree to deliver certain obligations, such as building a new road or paying the LPA money to do so. If a developer does not deliver the infrastructure or payments they agreed to deliver, an LPA can:

- carry out the works itself and recover the costs from the developer.
- seek a court injunction to require the developer to comply with their agreement (in England and Northern Ireland).

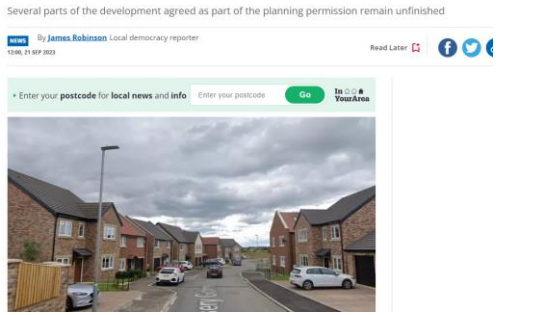
Politics

Call for tougher sanctions for developers after petition over unfinished work at Crofton Grange estate in Blyth

Councillors in Northumberland have called for tougher sanctions to be imposed on developers who flout planning restrictions.

The 850 home development, built by [Taylor Wimpey](#) and Persimmon, was granted planning permission on appeal after being refused by the now-defunct Blyth Valley Borough Council.

Willow Homes handed breach of conditions notice Northumberland County Council over Stanningto development



The petition calls on the developers to finish road resurfacing works, address missing and damaged kerb stones, complete pathways, and erect a play area included in original plans.

Roads



Highway Adoption (1980 Highways Act) [Advice Note - Highways Adoption - GOV.UK](#)

[Unfinished housing developments](#)

Powers available to local authorities

Councils are not obliged to adopt an 'unfinished' road, or to bring it up to adoptable standard, unless a developer makes certain agreements and has paid financial bonds to the council. However, councils in England and Wales can:

- make a voluntary advance agreement with a developer to adopt a prospective road, once built, under [section 38 of the Highways Act 1980](#) (potentially including a bond).
- require a developer to pay a mandatory Advanced Payment Code (APC) bond (which can be used to make up roads if a developer defaults on the building work) under [sections 205 to 218 of the 1980 Act](#).

The government has published a [guidance document on road adoption](#) for use by councils, developers and house-buyers in England. It advises house-buyers to check if a section 38 agreement is in place when purchasing a new-build home. It also provides advice on what to do in case of a dispute.

Roads



Frontager liability to bring roads up to standard - THAT IS YOU THE RESIDENT!

If there is no section 38 agreement or APC in place, a council can bring a road up to adoptable standard in agreement with the frontagers (the people who own property ‘fronting’ the road), under [sections 205 to 218 of the 1980 Act](#). This means that the road is adopted by the council.

However, the frontagers would be required to pay for and agree to such works, making this “[an unpopular and potentially complex process](#)”.

Under the Freedom of Information Act we have discovered that there is NO Section 38 Agreement in place for roads on the estate....

This needs to be addressed or it could affect your house price.

Residents Check Your Cladding!

If you notice any wet patches in your house, it's crucial to investigate them promptly. Similarly, if you observe cracks in the rendering on the exterior walls or dark staining, it's essential to address these issues promptly.

If your property is still under warranty, the first step is to log a call with the warranty company for a thorough investigation. However, if you're out of warranty, consider reaching out to your insurance company to file a claim. Be sure to mention any damp issues you've noticed, but avoid discussing anything related to windows to ensure clarity.

If neither warranty nor insurance options apply, you might want to explore seeking assistance from a rendering specialist. They can provide insight into the extent of the issue and offer solutions to rectify it.

Remember, addressing these issues promptly and professionally is key to maintaining the integrity and safety of your home.



Leather Jackets

The larvae of some crane flies (Daddy longlegs) (leatherjackets) can damage lawns, small plants in garden borders and vegetable plots by eating roots. They are often more numerous after a wet autumn, as damp conditions favour survival of eggs and larvae.



Nemasys Leatherjacket Killer nematode treatment (100 sqm)

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Amazon's Choice

2K+ bought in past month

-18% £17⁹⁴

RRP: £21.99

Available at a lower price from other sellers that may not offer free Prime delivery.

- Control leatherjackets naturally by treating with Nemasys Leatherjacket Killer containing millions of natural nematodes.
- It is easy to apply - mix with water and apply the nematodes (*Steinernema Feltiae*) to the infected lawn with a watering can, EasyNem Applicator or Nematode Applicator. Nemasys Leatherjacket Killer is a natural product and is totally safe for children, pets and wildlife and the lawn can be used immediately after application.
- It is best to treat in the Autumn i.e. Sept/Oct/Nov as this is when the leatherjackets are newly hatched, the soil is warm (needs a daytime soil temp of 10c) and are at the most susceptible to the nematodes. You can treat at other times of the year i.e. in the spring and summer, but you must treat at DOUBLE STRENGTH as the mature leatherjackets are much harder to kill.
- Nemasys Leatherjacket Killer is a perishable product, which will keep for up to 2 weeks in the fridge, so please order when you are ready to apply.



Melbury Fencing A1

