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Great Park

Neighbourhood Association

Great Park Community Centre
Roseden Way
Great Park
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE13 9BD

Email: secretary@gpna.uk

Agenda for the Great Park Neighbourhood Association (GPNA) Committee with NCC, & the Great Park Consortium

Date: 29.04.2024

Time: 7:00 PM - 8.00 PM

Venue: Plaza Cafe Bistro, Bowmont House, Wagonway Dr, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 9BL

Present	Apologies	Absences
Jamie Robinson Sophie Cox Steven Mason Claire Khan Neil Collington Caitlin Smithson Donna Rawling Paul Cross Imran Mohammed Micky Young	Michael Ian Tew Chris Clarke Chris Dawson Sam Walton Michael Forster	

1. Welcome and Introductions

The chair welcomed all members.



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2. Resignations and members wishing to join

3 resignations from the committee Sam Walton, Chris Dawson and Peter Monaghan have had to resign due to other commitments.

2 residents put themselves forward.

Micky Young, first and seconded by committee members.

Imran Mohammed, first and seconded by committee members.

They were welcomed to the team.

3. GPNA 'Top 5' Priorities following residents survey and meetings with the consortium

1. Continue collaboration with the consortium, managing agent and consortium.
2. Transparency on service charge and finance.
3. Road and path agreements/adoption
4. Improved communication with residents
5. Lights - watching and reporting.

5 main areas that came through on the survey.

Reflect on October to now; the achievements of the committee to date.

1. X14 GPNA members - full committee
2. Residents Survey
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 (Andrew McGarvy)
8. Developers appointing a works manager to address Taylor Wimpey / Persimmon concerns



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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)

4. Update on meetings with the consortium and 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. We have found it is similar to the plan that have been on the website for many years.

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.

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. Have asked for clarification is it for committee members or all residents. Kingston Open spaces have a no NDA policy, awaiting response on this.

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 28th May. We will share this with you as soon as we have it. We want accountability.

Shared news report where NDA was front page news - the next day we received an email to say that an NDA was no longer necessary the very next day.



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5. UNW Meeting & questions posed

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.

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? For example the road toppings - who is a Persimmon



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customer, is it Taylor Wimpey? Joint?

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



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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.

6. SEND group update

Request on Facebook for Volunteers. 7 people offered their expertise while others shared their business and support.

Team met on 8th April - Sue, James (planning), Rachel (resident) and secretary of GPNA.

Discussion

Apologies given by Sophie for other interested parents who couldn't attend.

1. The play parks on the NGP have been built to approved plans but can be changed.
2. The park at the Alan Shearer Centre would be good to visit at Lemington.
3. Brunton First school have had a piece of play equipment designed for all children, so worth a visit. Sue to speak to Bev Armstrong the Head Teacher about the group having a look at this.
4. Northern Counties School have SEND play equipment Rachel To check if the group can visit.
5. In the short term, Newcastle Council have a small amount of S106 funding that could be used to purchase an accessible roundabout and possibly a picnic table for example which would be accessible for children with wheelchairs. It was discussed whether the play park across the road from community centre would be a good place to put this equipment. If parents agree with the location Newcastle Council officers will approach the developers to see if they will make the play park accessible.
6. In future it would be worth considering play equipment that can be touch and turn sensitive, Rachel showed an example. - wood workers/volunteers on the estate?
7. Another meeting will be arranged at an appropriate time for everyone to discuss developing a report that includes the following:
 - Priority locations for park improvements. Parents and children can help with the reviews.
 - Equipment that would make a difference.



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- Type of play area that would be ideal.

This information will help planners when considering future play parks and can be used to help with funding applications.

8. The group to look at a funding strategy for more SEND play equipment. Scott from the group has sent us lots of options he has used previously,
9. Sensory rooms were discussed and the potential of having one at Morrisons. Mark at the NGP community centre is also considering developing one as well.

Next meeting planned 14th May, 5.30pm, Morrisons community room (TBC)

In this meeting we will assess current play parks to produce a report.

Morrisons have agreed to utilise their community room if viable and funds are raised
Fundraising being considered

Future planning can be altered to include necessary play equipment for both children and parents.

Please contact the GPNA to get involved

Stuart noted that the parks need to be accessible and as a resident who has great experience of SEND over 20 years, good knowledge of equality act he has offered his support. The team expressed their thanks for this and look forward to working together on this.

7. Environmental group update

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).

Development and Access:



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- 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

See link for detailed notes.

Susan attended and encouraged other members to join, 12th November, community centre 7.30-9pm. Developers, Cathy from wildlife trust, other organisations attend. Neil and Ian to attend next meeting.

Streetlights issue - Ian has been chasing up via email:

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.



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*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 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.

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 - we can negotiate with developers with 106. They are in place. If a developer doesn't deliver the LPA can carry out the works itself and recover the costs from the developer. Council disagreed with this. However this is legislation that has been read by GPNA.

Examples shared from Blyth and Stannington new build estates, who have been handed notices to improve. The development in Blyth was Taylor Wimpey and Persimmon and were told to improve and completed after notice given.



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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, Wales and Northern Ireland).

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](#)".

The residents buying on this estate need to check if they have a section 38 agreement. No one is told about this when purchasing.

Chair checked this and found no section 38 agreement in place for Great Park.

8. Issue arising - Cladding check up

10 year NHBC, resident paid thousands of pounds to fix as this has run out.

Mention it isn't the window and focus on cladding.

Video from resident which showed damaged wooden frame below cladding shown - significant damage.

Leather jackets - discussion over how to solve with nematodes. No use until September as they are breeding now. All residents should be made aware.



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9. Melbury fencing on A1

Update from Donna.



Fencing is broken and children/pets/deer can get across the 3 lane motorway.

Pointed out on image that one area is actually a signposted footpath despite several sections that aren't fenced.

Several instances of dead deer and dead dogs, children have been witnessed in the central reservation by a resident in December 2023. Fencing down from Brunswick to Seaton burn - due to children crossing the road. Sue has tried to push for this; council and developers saying it isn't each other.

Thom is adamant it is consortium land, consortium say it is partly highways and partly them. Neil suggested get fence put in now, keep invoice and they can fight it out later as safety is the issue here.

Resident asked who took the fence down, the response was that it had fallen down over time. Residents asked where hedgerows went - highways cut them down when upgrading A1.

Chair stipulated the seriousness of this issue - does it take a child to be killed before anything is done?

10. GPNA Accounts update and opportunity to now also fund raise

Now have control of the accounts, only current outgoing is website at £84.



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Steven to produce statement each meeting for transparency.

Neil can organise insurance for GPNA if needed and will get in touch.

Sue stated we needed permission from the consortium to run any events. Chair questioned why they would be against this. Sue said we would need risk assessment etc and will support where needs be.

Councillors have a ward budget - inauguration in May and find their budget for the year. Sue will be involved with that. Colleague Adam manages the budgets and can put a bid in to top up the money if needed.

11. AOB

Football pitch opposite community centre - who does that belong to? Technically the council but Mark has a lease but still needs permission. They sometimes need to ask permission from a landlord. Can be proposed. Mickey suggested a fete there. Sue reiterated that we would need to ask permission but it depends.

Claire is already able to run events - happy to support.

Residents brought up Q3 - the fact that it is already serviced by the 35 and now takes 45 minutes at best to get into town. It used to take 20. Plenty of options for those who want to go to Jesmond. Want to use the bus - don't want to take the car. Park and ride - what a waste as it takes so long to get into town. Discussion about CiL funding £818k to turn into a car park into car park FOI requests asking for a breakdown, they couldn't reply. Couldn't give contractors.

Someone asked who owned it, Sue stated it was City Council owned but Consortium land.

Park and ride is consortium land but put in place to ensure planning permission granted from what the chair understands from S106 requirements.

Consortium stated to previous residents that the NHS was paying them for the use of this during covid, and it would benefit residents. Where is this money? How much was it? Where has it been spent to benefit residents?



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Transport was brought up again. Surveys completed, pushed from a residents and councillor perspective. Nexus said they would change Q3 back to direct to Newcastle. This was updated as such and the news was shared. Nothing has happened since.

Resident has spoken to bus drivers - they aren't happy to drive the bus from Jesmond Dene road into Osbourne Road due to narrow roads, queueing at traffic lights.

One resident on the Great Park Facebook page had received an individual response from Nexus when they had asked about the Q3 changes, who stated the changes weren't going ahead at all.

The quote below is from the nexus website:

The Q3 bus route, which is operated by Go North East, will continue to use Osborne Road in Jesmond for the time being. Go North East is still planning to move the Q3 to serve the Great North Road (with the 35 effectively taking its place in Jesmond) to reduce journey times from Great Park into Newcastle city centre, however, they are yet to confirm a date for this.

(See <https://www.nexus.org.uk/consultation/item/planned-changes-services-35-and-q3>)

Sir Bobby Robson way meant to have cameras - no entry signs, cars driving through too quickly. Children playing. Someone might get hurt.

Mentioned bollards to consortium - it can't happen for some legal reason, consortium. Previous chair mentioned that bollards near Morrisons - who owns it? Who's in charge? Who approved this?

Stairs at the side of Morrisons - not visible, 2 residents have fallen, one has broken cheek. Again no one knows who is responsible for what? Resident who works at Morrisons to ask. Member of the committee would ask them to make a statement.

Chair mentioned equality act and visible stairs.

Owner of Kwai Feh mentioned Gyros van causing issues with reduced custom. Morrisons also not happy about it. Nothing can be done as it isn't their land.

12. Adjournment

- The Chair will confirm a date for the next meeting (Monday 29th July) to update on actions sighted.



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- Chair confirmed the next meeting with the consortium Tuesday 28th May 2024.

Notes:

- The agenda should be circulated to all committee members in advance to facilitate preparation.
- Ensuring inclusive participation and fair discussion among all members will be prioritised.
- Detailed minutes of the meeting will be recorded and circulated afterwards.