

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Sandown Lodge Estate (Epsom) Limited

25th July 2024 - St Martin's School

The meeting opened at 7.30pm

Present

Directors: Joan Gabbett (22), Richard Grace (10) Tony Green (47), Paul Stokes (41) - plus Juan Antelo from managing agents Bartholomews.

Director apologies: Terry Davey (53).

Also: Neil and Faris Petros (2), Chitra Ray (6), Mike Roe (8), Maria Wadham (9), Mike and Joan Thompson (11), John Wylie (17), Vic and Rosalind Dyer (18), Lilian Barrett (19), Patrick Gabbett (22), Andrew Humphreys (26), Judith Patterson (28), Philip and Angela Clifford (31), Ron and Carol Thorley (34), Didge Miller and Ron (35), Dave Clark (36), Alan and Margaret Bates (37), Mike Drain (38), Allison Stokes (41), Khalid Ansari and Adeeba Anwar (42), Matthew Ryan and Hong Zhan (45), Rosemary Bann (46), Mary Green (47), Sinikka Dada (55), Marianne Frawley (64), Kathy Belcher (66), Luke Dickson (69), Mick Youens (73), Miriam dos Santos Laranjeira (74), Helen Fraser (76), Sean Redahan (78).

Apologies

Proxy votes with apologies were received from: Keith and Maria Blackmore (4), Lesley Lewis (15), Jamshid and Persis Zack (24), David and Pauline Faulkner (33), Anne Cracknell (48), Liz Hicks (52), Kevin and Lynn Phillips (79), Mike and Lousie Chatterton (82).

Apologies for absence were received from: Jennifer Akram (1), Tony and Tracy Doyle (2), Mark Noad (14), Lorenzo Menichino and Jolanda Patella (16), Guida de Abreu (29), Lys Drain (38), Tess Duffell (50), James Cameron (51), Luke and Joanna Farrell (52), Nabil Dada (55), Mark Field (56), Dagmar Wilkinson (62), Audrey Cleeve (80), Nicky Berry (caretaker), Chris Osment (gardener).

And a post-meeting apology from Richard to Harry Corben (61), his esteemed predecessor as chairman. At 97, Harry is slightly less spritely than in the past, so Richard offered to drive him to the meeting, then completely forgot. Unforgiveable. Sorry Harry, it would never have happened in your day.

Chairman's Introduction

Richard welcomed all, thanked Ros and Vic Dyer for managing the door registrations and thanked Maria Wadham for taking the minutes.

Before the meeting, agenda briefing notes had been circulated. Richard asked whether these were helpful and worth adopting for future years. The meeting agreed these were useful.

The minutes of the last AGM meeting along with the directors' report and financial update for the year to 31 March had also been circulated beforehand. Angela Clifford (31) asked about the spending gap on projects for 2024. Richard explained that we needed to rebuild reserves.

Mike Drain proposed, Sinikka Dada seconded and the meeting approved acceptance of the 2023 minutes, directors' report and financial update.

Reappointment of directors: Richard advised that all directors bar Joan Gabbett were willing to continue in office and the meeting approved their reappointment. Joan needed to step down for family reasons after six years of service, and Richard offered a personal tribute along with thanks on behalf of all for her contribution.

Feedback – fibre broadband

Tony Green highlighted the introduction of fibre broadband infrastructure in March. Fourteen flats had adopted this already and the board wanted to hear how it was going. Khalid (42) was happy with the installation. Vic (18) felt that putting the connection box within the flat was better than having it outside. Mike (11) had experienced installation issues, now resolved. Luke (69) hadn't yet connected but was interested to hear from others. Angela (31) highlighted that on installation fibre replaced copper landlines and rendered community alarms unworkable.

Richard thanked all for the useful feedback, reminded everyone that board consent was needed before connection to ensure correct cabling, and promised the board would endeavour to find solutions to the community alarm issue.

Feedback – ANPR parking controls

Tony then asked for feedback about the new parking arrangements that had arrived in April/May. This had been a big change, and the board were grateful for the estate's patience and support. Judith (28) asked about delivery vans. Richard explained that these, where clearly marked, were now being excluded via visual checks. Marianne (64) asked about the 10-minute allowance. Richard explained that this was a difficult balance: the parking contractor had suggested 15 minutes, but we had asked for 10 because of school drop-off/pick-ups.

Luke (69) felt 10 minutes was uncomfortably short for taxis collecting/delivering elderly residents. Mary (47) felt 15 minutes was too long. Matthew (45) asked whether it could be varied, e.g. shorter for school times and longer elsewhere. Richard said that unfortunately this wasn't possible. Vic (18) wondered whether the system would allow blacklists. This too wasn't available, after 10 minutes unauthorised vehicles simply got tickets.

Mary (47) and Khalid (42) asked about the signage indicating a maximum stay of 2 days. Richard explained that this was standard signage used by UKPC for their sites nationwide. It needed to be there for them to charge unauthorised vehicles but did not apply to authorised. There was no length of stay restriction for our visitors.

Vic (18) felt the new system was simple and effective. In general, the meeting felt it had solved the problem of unauthorised parking. This had been a long-running issue, and Richard thanked those like Andrew (26), Tony (47) and Juan who had given time to manning barriers before ANPR arrived.

Richard then advised that next steps were to give residents direct access to add their own visitor permits, and to systemise regular visitor lists. These both needed extra work on the part of the estate. In return, the briefing sheet had proposed a community parking scheme that encouraged garage use.

Ros (18) asked whether ANPR could record excessive parking by residents. Richard advised that it didn't because the system was covered by tight data protection restrictions. Vic (18) asked whether a contractor coming and going throughout the day gave problems. Richard said this wasn't a problem, permits were all-day. Marianne (64) asked about residents with more than one car. Richard said the proposed scheme sought to balance these with residents who didn't have a car. Luke (69) asked whether residents without a car but who wanted to keep their bay would be denied access to the proposed scheme. Richard confirmed that this was part of the proposal but that special cases would always be looked at separately. Sean (78) suggested that even outside the community scheme, residents would still have easy access to notify visitors via Barts.

The proposal to trial a community parking scheme that included a requirement for regular garage use was put to the meeting and carried almost unanimously, with one vote against.

Common parts refurbishment

Juan Antelo introduced this item on behalf of Terry, who had been heavily involved in preparing the briefing notes for this item but was unable to attend the meeting. Juan explained that new regulations applied to our flat front doors, and we needed to clarify how best to proceed.

First, the meeting was asked whether uniformity was a priority for the front doors of flats. The vote to prioritise uniformity was overwhelmingly carried.

To comply with the new regulations, we needed to carry out a door-by-door survey and deal with whatever the results revealed. The second question put to the meeting was whether this should be tackled as a collective project or placed in the hands of individual flat owners. The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of managing this as a collective project, funded via the service charge.

Covers for stairways to garage

Paul Stokes introduced a proposal to erect coverings for the stairways into the garage. Briefing notes circulated before the meeting explained that these could help keep the stairways free from tree debris, at an estimated cost of £10,000.

The proposal was an interesting one but overall found little support. Vic (18) spoke for several in suggesting that perhaps this was something to revisit in future rather than for now. On a show of hands, the meeting agreed not to proceed with the proposal.

Residents' committee

Joan Gabbett introduced this item, explaining that block representation was something she had long championed for the estate. Angela (31) asked what would happen if no volunteer came forward within a block. Joan explained that the default would be direct reliance on Barts and Juan. Andrew (26) asked if block reps would report to directors. Richard said that this would be a formal role. Details needed to be resolved, hence the proposed 12-month trial period, but directors would stay close to reps and give them whatever support was needed. Rose (46) asked whether tenants could serve as block reps or was this restricted to owners. Richard hoped that tenants, many of whom have lived here longer than owners, could play an important part.

Richard said that early conversations about how a residents' committee might work had been held with block G, and Miriam (74) had been involved. Miriam felt such a committee could be helpful in resolving problems and encouraging wider engagement on the estate.

The meeting voted in favour of a 12-month trial.

Other business

Angela (31) proposed a vote of thanks for the directors, and this was supported by the meeting.

In conclusion

The meeting closed at 8.45pm. Richard thanked all present for their attendance and input and declared the wine and refreshments open.

Acknowledgments

Arrival registrations: Ros and Vic Dyer. Minutes: Maria Wadham. Food organized by Joan Gabbett and Allison Stokes. Wine organized by Richard Grace and Maria Wadham.

Cost of refreshments by kind sponsorship of Bartholomews Property Managers, Michael Everett & Company Estate Agents and TLR Plumbing & Heating Contractors.

Hall facilities including seating plan and table layout organized by Paul Webb, caretaker, St. Martin's School.

Thanks to each of the above, and to all our attendees for making it such an enjoyable and valuable meeting.