

Melton Park Management Company Ltd
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Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 22nd October 2024 at 5.30pm at
St Audry's Sports & Social Club, Lodge Farm Lane Melton Woodbridge

Present

Lin Homer – Chair

Richard Llewellyn – Director

David Kemp – Director

Jacqueline Cole – Director

Shareholders 63 residents of 194 households in attendance, plus 13 residents who replied with a Proxy vote.

Welcome

Lin Homer opened the meeting thanking everyone for attending. Lin also gave thanks to the present and past Directors for all the hard work and assistance this year, and to Jason and Robert our two main contractors.

Clare Burgess who was the Finance Director and did a lot of work as Company Secretary, for over ten years on the Board has now stepped down from this role, and Lin gave grateful thanks for all her hard work and diligence over the years and mentioned as with previous Directors who have served as volunteers and have served 10 years or more that we will be planting a tree as a gesture of grateful thanks.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Simon Isaac, Matt Mills, Mr & Mrs T Watling, Mr & Mrs N Wallis, Mr & Mrs Meadowcroft, Mr M Virr, Mr & Mrs Poole, Mr M Oldfield, Mr & Mrs E Burgess, Mr & Mrs G Lawrence, Ms P Hanton, Mr & Mrs P Clouting, Mrs G Newton, Mr & Mrs R Rickard, Ms H Marshall, Mr M Aldous, Ms J Fautley, Mrs J Bevan-Thomas, Mr & Mrs Rolfe, Mr & Mrs D Ross, Mr D Greenwood, Mrs L Sharman.

2. To approve the minutes of the 23rd meeting held on 17th October 2023

The Shareholders approved the minutes of 17 October 2023.

3. To receive and consider the Report of the Directors on A Woodlands and B Parklands.

Richard Llewellyn – Woodlands The triennial survey, of area C in the main Hospital Grove woodland area revealed we had a lot of Ash Dieback and Sooty Bark disease. A lot

of large mature trees have had work undertaken by Jason over the last 2 years as required by their condition. The good news is that this year the area surveyed behind Garrod Approach, adjacent to the former bowling green and the estate in general showed that there were far fewer trees that needed to be felled or have work done on them. This means that we can continue with the woodland management plan that was agreed in 2019. Next year we are due a five-year review of our woodland management plan. Questions have been asked by shareholders whether we are still adhering to this and categorically the answer is yes but, last year we had the wettest Autumn/Winter on record and access to the woods was difficult. In addition, we had many named storms throughout the area of East Anglia, and therefore a lot of our trees needed work to be undertaken on them. We are limited by budget constraints, and we have therefore been unable to carry on with the coppicing and clearance in the way we would have wanted to.

We have replanted some nice signature trees, and we have secured a free grant from the Woodland Trust of 210 saplings. These will be delivered in November and will be planted throughout the main woodland in the coming year. We have five trees that need replacing in the main parkland and Clare's name has been added to this list with a tree to be planted as a retiring director.

David Kemp - Parklands It had been a very interesting, and busy first year in the role, the remit covers many different areas from managing Robert Cuthberts work, and dealing with roads, streetlights, bollards, drainage, and various other things. David had three things to add to his report.

Firstly, the lantern replacements, will need a settling in period as to the on/off timings. He will send a report back to the contractors if these operating timings are incorrect. Issues have been raised that some lights are angled in such a way that they are reflecting in some resident's windows. The LED bulb can be altered/rotated to alleviate this. The lanterns were provided by our existing maintenance contractor and are fully guaranteed, so they will happily come back to remedy any problems at no extra charge. We have been able to cancel our regular maintenance contract saving approximately £800 per annum, all we need to pay for going forward is damage by accident or severe storms.

Parking was an ongoing problem, with parked cars, especially those who park near or close to the roundabout in St Audrys Park Road and Calder Road, by residents and visitors some of whom are attending the Social Club for football/cricket events. We are liaising with the Social Club management in the hope that we can stop this happening but, it is a difficult problem to manage.

We will continue to put polite notices on windscreens as we have always done in the past. Last winter we had a lot of verge damage on our roads due to the very wet weather. David asked shareholders to ensure that if they have any contractors, visitors, or care staff visiting that they are made aware of where they should park without causing obstruction or damage to the verges and bollards. Instances have been seen on both Garrod Approach and Calder Road recently, with repair work having to be undertaken afterwards. Requests were made for additional bollards of which five were put in place. Bollards are not the answer to parking problems more considerate parking and positioning vehicles in the first place is to be encouraged.

The third item is Box Hedge replacement due to infestation by Box Moth caterpillar which defoliates the hedges. We were advised to replace these with Ilex Crenata – Japanese Holly because it looks very similar grows slowly, and trims well. Unfortunately, the Royal Horticultural Society, state on their website that although this is the most widely used replacement for the box it has shown to be least successful due to being fussy with the conditions of growth. We still have other box hedges in Melton Park we will look at the

other options rather than Ilex Crenata. and we are now considering other options for replacement of the Ilex Crenata.

A popular choice is Lonicera which is known as 'box leaf honeysuckle' which is vigorous and healthy.

Georgie Webb – Spoke and explained that in the beginning of replanting the Ilex in Garrod Approach it also looked very sickly, but with consistent watering have now survived, Georgie said that unless any new planting of this shrub is regularly watered it will not survive, and therefore we should not waste further funds being used for this purpose.

Peter Dixie - Parking on public roads – St Audrys Park Road 'Yellow Lines' suggested.

This subject has been mentioned before but as this road is a 'public road,' we have no jurisdiction to who parks on the road. Geoff Munns reiterated that during his time on the board he spoke with SCC at length and unless a councillor was to get heavily involved in this debate there would not be a chance of enforcement at all. David Pearce manager of the club reiterated that they did not encourage the visitors to use Melton Park for any parking.

Lin said that inconsiderate or inappropriate parking will remain a matter of concern. She suggested that we approach people if we see badly parked vehicles on the park, to encourage improved behaviour.

Lin also stated that people should keep in touch with us and take photos of offending parking and we will look into this further as we do now.

Linda Burton – Mentioned the regular pollarding of trees. Richard explained that regular pollarding encourages growth in some of our large trees but allows disease to get into the tree. The Lime trees in Cages Way are pollarded on a regular basis because of the nature of the tree. If anyone sees a problem with overhanging trees on the parkland contact us.

4. To receive and consider the reports of the Directors Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st January 2024.

Lin explained the statement of accounts in brief and pointed out that we have used some of the reserves on undertaking the road works, there will be a similar reduction next year with the replacement of the streetlights. The shareholders approved the accounts.

5. To approve the proposed Budget and Service Charge as from 1st February 2025 to 31st January 2026 of £400.00 per annum.

Lin explained the budget in detail and produced a pie chart showing the relative proportions of current spend, some small increases are planned to woodland and parkland areas and decreases in postage and legal fees a planned. We have a break-even budget forecast.

6. To consider and approve the proposal to create a Road and Infrastructure Fund and to agree an initial £50.00 per annum contribution to the fund.

Lin explained the reasons for establishing a road and Infrastructure fund for the long term benefits of all who live on Melton Park. Lin recognises that not all shareholders will agree with our proposal, but the annual service charge has remained at £400.00 for the last three years without any increase. We can either agree on the plan for going forward or delay the decision but, we may then have more unplanned costs through the

deterioration of our roads.

Andy Etherington – Whilst he is not averse to the increase in the service charge asked for an understanding of how we are going to progress with this, and where will it be started, and what takes priority. He accepted that some roads need repairs although not the whole of the roads in general. He also said that he would like to see some financial modelling – which roads will be repaired, when will it take place, and how much will this all cost.

Lin replied that we are not planning on patch repairs to roads. The proposition is that we have regular routine maintenance by resurfacing rather than patching. We will get competitive quotations for areas of road, to achieve good value for money. We do not envisage coming back to our shareholders and asking for more funding on this after the two years of increase.

Geoff Munns – My understanding of roads is that we either redress or resurface, redressing this is a cheaper option and it may give us 10 years of life, but it depends on the surface at the time as to how successful and long term this might be. Resurfacing is called planing which takes 30ml from the top surface of the road and then resurfacing the whole road, this is a much more expensive option. Geoff would like an independent engineer's report done to consider, what we actually need and where we most require the works here on Melton Park.

Lin replied that: We will take advice in a professional way when we start the works with proper quotations from companies that specialise in this field and take advice from them as to where and how we start this process.

We have not got funds to do this yet, not even to regularly patch any of the roads at present. This is why we must start the fund as proposed before the roads do deteriorate any further which will in the long-term cost more to us as shareholders.

David Bell – Stated that his was less of a question, but more as an observation that getting professional advice and understanding, using experience is what is required when looking at something that is not broken, but needing maintenance going forward is exactly what you have outlined. To look at costs, and to build up a fund, and then to say to people who you might want to employ to carry out the work and explore the guarantees that they offer on this work. David wants to support the board on what we are proposing and believes we are doing this in exactly the correct way.

Howard Revell - Voiced a question on what would happen if our roads needed to be dug up for a technology issue, or something else that would require this happening on the estate after we have had the road works done. Are there any other problems known that we should be aware of that might need more funding in the future.

Lin replied that we are not able to see in the future and we could not say that works might be needed to be carried out by a utility company or highways department in the future, but they must have licence from us to do so and they must always put right any damage done to a suitable standard. As to the issue of other risks we have a number of heritage walls covered by the listing which may need repairing and will be expensive, and our drains, although some are modern and in good condition others go back to the Victorian era. There is always a possibility of drainage repairs being necessary. Storm may bring down trees in the woodlands, we could face unexpected costs, but we believe the work we do

with our regular reviews minimises these risks.

Cynthia Robinson – Questioned whether those living in a private road should also have their own 'sink fund' as well as paying into the fund being discussed.

Lin agreed that many residents also have private road responsibilities. If a road was being resurfaced residents might want to pay extra to have their part upgraded at the same time. This could be decided when work is being done by the management committee. It might be better value for residents.

Clive Kerr – Asked why some roads are private, and some are 'private 'private' why is this? Why can't it be considered that the Management Company accept everybody's agreement to include all the roads on the development in the road fund.

Lin replied that unfortunately that is the way that Hopkins Homes did the conveyancing and when they transferred the properties, they took the decision to put the last bit in the shared ownership of that group. Usually what they did was to put the freehold in one property and obliged everyone else to share. We all signed up to those obligations and could not change that without total agreement of every landholder. It is not clear in any event what the benefits would be once legal costs were taken into account.

Rowland Anderson – You mentioned earlier about other Hopkins Homes sites here now being sold Is there an opportunity to secure some funds for our infrastructure in Calder Road as lorries from contractors and other traffic using the road will cause more wear and tear.

Lin agreed that we would not start any resurfacing of a road that could be subject to development. We are going to talk about Hopkins Homes under AOB.

There is a procedure by which you can get contributions to the community as the S106, but we all know that these are not always kept too. If for instance, the developers were to redevelop the offices as residential homes and they wanted our support, this could include the adjacent road. Conversations have already taken place with Hopkins Homes on this subject. Calder Road and the Church might prove more difficult because it is so contentious for the sale and development. Hopkins Homes are shareholders with 13 shares, and they have right of access in Calder Road just like the rest of us. They cannot damage it in any way, but we could not stop them from using it and accessing their site.

Abby Haywood – One thing to note is that Hopkins Homes are building in the surrounding areas, and they have exactly the same remit as we have here with the private roads, and owners being fully responsible, and obviously this is acceptable.

Lin replied that the reason they do this is because if you want to include every section of road you cannot set up the management company until the last house is finished.

Paul Rozier – Of Rixon Crescent said that the owners in this road which is private recently spent just over £4000.00 in resurfacing a small part of the road. He asked if conveyancing the roads would be a more cost effective, thing to do in the long term. He did not feel that they got value for money on this project.

Lin - We can talk about this further but, you would need to persuade all 200 residents to

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agree to this. It is not a conversation we shouldn't have but it is complex.

Linda Munns – Revisited the subject on how the whole principal of the road resurfacing programme would be prioritised. Linda would support an independent surveyor looking at which roads should be done first and said that she had been told that Cages Way and Clements Road will not be high on the priority list, Linda would like to know that this is based on an independent assessment and not based on the fact that there has been money spent on these in the past because, that seems the wrong way round. Linda suggested that we should look at each road in turn with an independent person telling us which road should be done in what order.

Lin – Once we start collecting money for Roads and Infrastructure we can get costings for a review. We are not ruling that out, but this could be expensive. On priorities, we certainly have not said anything about Cages Way. We have tried to be honest with Clements Road to say that this is a perfectly serviceable surface after the work was done and we should not go back to do anything else there immediately. We should trial some of the other alternatives which maybe more successful, than rolling gravel into surface dressing.

The standards we are sharing with you are standards widely used. The order in which we do things will be determined by visible deterioration and need. Cages Way had some serious issues last year when the leaf and gully sweeping people took the gravel away from the top. The preference of some residents in Cages Way would be for the whole road to be the same surface. Those are the kind of things we would talk to people about. We can have that arbitrated for us by a professional at a cost but, we can do quite a lot of that on our own as well. We could not say which roads we would do first right now as there are a lot of roads showing deterioration Calder Road and Burrows Road are showing a lot of wear, some parts of Cages Way too. Thomas Churchyard has only little signs of deterioration as this was the last road to be finished.

Nigel Brown – Nigel wanted to make a couple of observations, the first one being that its pretty obvious that we need to start saving this money for the road fund and the proposals seem reasonable to increase the annual charge in order to do that, irrespective of the arguments about private roads and other roads Secondly, with regards to the issue of private' private' roads and the point that you made about in order' to change' we would require a rather massive legal exercise involving agreement by everybody. Could we have a secret poll with everybody to sound them out, on whether they would be prepared to take that step, you can see the argument that collectively we would all be in this together. This would then answer the argument once and for all if the response is a resounding no.

Lin replied that a poll sounded like an idea, and we think about this. Lin will also talk to Birketts who deal with all of our sales and covenants to see what the complexities of a significant change would mean and how this might be.

David Bell – Said that having spent his life as a consultant working on various construction projects his view would be independent advice is only required where there is no expertise in those making decisions. He feels that we have a certain amount of that expertise on the board, and his view is that we have an element of that in place, but further expertise is expensive and what would you get other than a possible change of decision. If it is self-evident to you that one road is worse than another road then that is surely where the money is worth spending first.

Lin Replied that If we can get a view that answers the question of how much it would cost

us to have more professional input we can consider and we can share that. It does not cost us anything in terms of time if we are proceeding to collect the money while we do it.

Geoff Munns – Further question on the proposal, he is confused as to what the paper is suggesting with the increase proposed. He asked whether this was sufficient funds.

Lin The proposal is to raise the fee over two years to £500. We believe that it is our starting view it is not our plan to come back again asking for further increases in the Road and Infrastructure fund. The board thought that asking for £100 in one go was too much, because people have to budget, and times are much harder for all of us. We decided that if we made those two £50 increments that will give us another bit of the pie chart to play with.

Andy Etherington – He finds the lack of financial modelling gives difficulties in the analysis of it. Is it the right number? should it be less? should it be more? He had a slightly different suggestion in that it probably would be a good idea to get some external advice.

Lin Our advice is we should start creating a fund. We couldn't guarantee that it would be enough, but we have done a lot of work to be confident that it would allow us to start some regular high quality work on our roads in a way that would at least hold our current position over the next 15 to 20 years rather than see it worsen. If we get to the point where evidence suggests it is not enough, we would, of course do the respectful thing in telling you as soon as we felt that rather than wait for a meeting.

Lin asked for the shareholders to vote. The count was 63 in favour and therefore the Road and Infrastructure motion was carried. Lin asked everyone to keep talking to us as a board and explained that this is a long-term plan. Lin also mentioned that we could consider a bigger group being involved in the planning going forward. The general service charge will remain at £400.

To consider an application received from Mrs Bee Holles-Perkes to stand as a director and to consider re-election of the Directors of the Company.

Re-election en bloc of the current board was supported.

Mrs Bee Holles-Perkes was elected as a board member.

Lin once again asked if anyone was interested in becoming a board member, or to help out without becoming a full member, to get in touch with the board at any time.

7. AOB

Horses using the footpaths and Dogs off the leash in the woodlands and on the estate.

We regularly write to people when we know who the people are. We have now found out who is horse riding, and we will pursue the issue as they should not be riding through our woodlands and narrow pathways within the houses. We cannot police the woods all of the time. We all signed up to the rules, and we should all comply with them.

We have done quite a lot of covenant work in this last year, where we have encouraged people to have hedges trimmed, parking notices have been put on badly parked vehicles some in prohibited areas on the estate and ensuring that late payers of the service charge are taken to task by issuing a County Court Summons after our reminder letters were sent

in the usual way. We have also had money paid by a delivery company for damaging one of our bollards which was caught on a dashcam camera by a vigilant resident. You are our eyes and ears, and the more information you give us the more we can do. We cannot be in all places all of the time and neighbourly discussion is to be encouraged.

Hopkins Homes

Jon Lloyd and **Bryony Abbott** have been progressing the ACV on the Bowling Green and **Stephen Longbottom** is similarly progressing the ACV on the Sports Club.

Jon Lloyd – Is one of the named people who has taken on the CSA scheme. He thanked everybody who was involved and groundwork behind the scenes. The ACV is up for renewal, and we should hear about this in a few weeks' time. We should have another 5 years' worth of ACV following on which is important with what has recently happened. At the moment people involved want to remain anonymous but, we have raised a substantial amount of money and have put that offer to Hopkins Homes to buy the land. We have had good meetings with Hopkins Homes we are trying to be proactive and keep on good terms. The situation at present is that they are happy with the bid we put forward and have said on numerous occasions they would prefer to get rid of the Bowling Green and fully understand the S106 and ACV and because of all the major work done we are the preferred people to give it to. We have had conversations with the Board and the land would be given over to the management committee and to become part of the woodlands as a community garden for use for all residents if we were to be successful. It is on the market with Savills, they are trying to work out what the market value is, as of today, unofficially nobody else is bidding on that piece of ground. We have until March for bids to be finalised and matching if other bids do come in. The thinking is around Christmas if other things go as Hopkins Homes want it to, if things go according to plan then we will have a response to our offer early in January if there are other offers in, the process will go on until March. If you want to be kept informed contact us at:

csameltonpark@yahoo.com

Stephen Longbottom – He reiterated a lot of what Jon Lloyd said and the Club have a similar set of circumstances. We have the S106 that protects us to some degree and the club is an ACV, and we do not need to renew this until the end of April next year. Hopkins Homes basically indicated their intention to sell and with our ACV we gave them our intention to bid. This triggers a six-month interim period to enable us to put a bid together which would hopefully be successful, and the Club would continue to exist pretty much as it does today.

Hopkins Homes do not seem to have a figure for valuation or if they do, they have not disclosed this. We are in the process of trying to understand what the value is and what should we bid. We have been in touch with the local council, its great to have the interaction between the interested parties. We are gathering ourselves now to try and offer a bid and we have 5 months to do this, I would personally prefer it if we could get a figure from Hopkins Homes before that time end agree a figure so that we could fund raise against it.

Bryony Abbott – Update on the Church There has some really good teamwork here on all the sites. The site on which the Church stands has a massive graveyard and burial ground. If Hopkins Homes are looking at converting and selling it, there would not be a lot of point in objecting to that, as long as the internal features were rescued. She has written to the conservation officer about that. We do not want those graves disturbed. Jennifer Hall added her vision of what we could do with it.

She believes that the graveyard site belongs to the community and should not be sold as part of the entire site as people still visit the graves and should be protected and open to the public. MPMCL would not be expected to be involved in any fundraising, in a wider community sense.

Jennifer Hall – Is payment of the Service Charge in instalments possible.

It is challenging for us in two respects, the first is we are all volunteers and to manage this would increase our workload by having to send out more reminders if payments were not made in the time given. Work would fall onto our bookkeeper who charges us or Jacqui who deals with the administration of this. The second is if we were to offer instalments we would have to move to payments in advance, and not arrears because it affects our financial sustainability if we effectively get the money in stages and later in the year. This would mean that residents would pay £450 in February and then start to pay instalments of one or two payments on account.

The Chair agreed to continue to investigate but it is not an easy solution to make.

Stephanie Wells – Mentioned that according to the financial conduct authority if we offer instalments, we may have to be licenced by the FCA.

Nigel Brown – Neighbourhood Plan

Nigel Brown of Melton Parish Council reminded everyone that Melton is beginning the refresh of it's Neighbourhood Plan. The first step is a survey allowing any and all Melton residents to have their say. Details of how to complete the survey by 30 November 2024 will be included in the next Melton Messenger.

Residents were asked for feedback on the change of timings for this meeting. Also, should we move the meeting to an earlier time in the year as we have light evenings which might encourage more people to attend.

Meeting Closed at 7.25pm