

Melton Park Management Company

Winter Newsletter February 2020

Annual General Meeting October 2019

The AGM was held on the evening of 22nd October at St Audry's Sports and Social Club. Sixty-seven residents attended, representing 53 properties. They received the directors' report on the financial year 2018-19 and the budget for the forthcoming year 2020-21, both of which were proposed and carried without amendment. No nominations for new directors had been received and as all current directors had agreed to stand again, all were re-elected. A presentation was given by Andrew Falcon, a professional in forestry management, on the possible future management of the Melton Park woodlands. This was followed by a discussion surrounding the extensive ash population, much of which shows "ash die-back disease", the need for safety for walkers and the importance of biodiversity for all present species. The Board indicated that it awaited a detailed report written by Andrew Falcon and approved by the Forestry Commission and following which, further communication with residents will be made. A discussion on the Board's response to the currently withdrawn Hopkins Homes Bowls Green site planning application then followed. The Board detailed and reiterated its stance of informing all residents, and indicating to all the relevant authorities and councillors, the presence of the Section 106

Agreement. The Board continued to maintain its intention not to involve itself in either supporting or opposing planning applications on the estate. Discussion followed indicating alternative points of view from various residents, including the founding of a Community Scheme Association. It was mooted that MPMC funds should be spent to secure the site but neither the Board or the apparent feeling of the meeting supported this. "Any Other Business" followed and covered numerous topics including Cycling in the woods (see below), Parking on Thomas Churchyard Close approach bend (see below), Footpath "right of way" adjacent the bowling green site, perceived car speeding and possible signage (see below) and perceived nuisance from children playing and covenant restrictions.

Roads Resurfacing

A number of tar and shingle road surfaces on the development are in need of redressing. These are situated in Scott Lane, Clements Road and Cages Way. After seeking a number of quotes, our preferred contractor will now undertake the work in the early Spring. The exercise will require cooperation with immediate residents to ensure private vehicles do not obstruct the operation and contact with householders will be made ahead of the work. Plainly where possible, as in Clements Road, access will be temporarily opened

by removing the currently placed bollards at the junction with Garrod Approach and Scott Lane.

Road Safety signage

At the AGM a number of residents raised concerns of a road safety nature at some locations on the development. The number and speed of vehicle movements in Garrod Approach/Scott Lane, close to Hopkins Offices, was particularly identified, together with recent increases in young children playing and cycling in this area and elsewhere. Discussion recognised that most locations were unadopted roads, owned by MPMCL, and therefore might benefit from the erection of advisory signage such as Twenty's Plenty, to remind drivers on the estate of the residential nature of their environment. The placing of some new signage is being considered. It is important to restate that MPMC does not have a policing role on the estate on behalf of resident shareholders and that parents, whether owners or tenants, must remain responsible for minors and supervise them appropriately.

Parking - Thomas Churchyard Close

At the AGM there was concern expressed as to the regular parking of cars, possibly owned by dog-walkers, in the passing bay situated on the bend of Thomas Churchyard Close, causing a potentially dangerous obstruction. New signage here is also being considered.

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Local Planning Applications

The Board has no new information of any intentions regarding development of the old Notcutts Nursery site adjacent to Hospital Wood or adjacent sites in Yarmouth Road or Woods Lane. At the date of printing, there is no new information regarding the bowls green site.

Woodlands

At the AGM Andrew Falcon from New Woods Forestry gave a presentation on his initial findings from surveying our woods. The purpose of this work is to produce a Management Plan which is approved by the Forestry Commission and will provide us with a long term plan for looking after the woods over the next 20 years. The Plan is currently with the Forestry Commission awaiting their approval. but we expect to see it shortly. At this point we will be able to produce a more detailed plan of action covering the next few years, and we will be consulting residents about this short term action plan.

Maintenance

Winter is the time we do most of the felling and trimming work, either in response to the annual health and safety survey carried out by Elite Tree Services, or from the fortnightly checks carried out by our woodsman Jason Roberts. Where dead or dying trees are away from the footpaths we generally leave them as habitat for insects and birds, but where they are close to footpaths we have to prune or fell them. Many of you will have noticed the

recent felling of the large cedar tree between the road and the golf club. Unfortunately the tree was diseased and the recommendation from the East Suffolk Council Tree Officer was that it must come down. We will be replacing it either with a stand of smaller trees or a single large tree.

Woodland Paths

We try to keep as many of the paths as possible open to walkers through the winter which means putting down large quantities of chippings. Sometimes these are bought in, sometimes we hire a chipper and make our own. Surprisingly the costs are about the same.

Signage

We currently have 2 signboards on entry to the woods - one at the end of Cages Way, the other off the bridleway leading to Yarmouth Road. These are out of date as there are more paths than there used to be. We will soon be updating them to include the well-used paths and adding more red-topped indicator posts. It is important to remember that staying on these designated paths is essential in preserving the flora and fauna. There are already places where beds of bluebells have been lost from walkers taking shortcuts between existing paths. Also remember that it only these established paths which are regularly checked for health and safety purposes.

Volunteer Working parties

Our policy on maintaining the woods has always been to use professional surveyors and

woodsmen. Whilst this has worked well we are aware that there is always more which could be done to improve the habitat. Much of this is unskilled and time consuming, such as clearing brambles, building eco-piles or thinning out self-seeded sycamores. We are proposing an experiment, forming a small working party of residents to carry out some of this work. Volunteers will be supervised by our woodsman Jason and will only be using hand tools. The first working party will be in February so please contact me directly if you would be interested in joining. (rogerharrison523@btinternet.com)

Spring Bulbs

Residents may recall the discussion at the 2018 AGM as to additional planting of spring bulbs, especially along the upper end of St Audry's Park Road and the "oak tree" roundabout. This was undertaken by our contractor this autumn and we look forward to an attractive display this coming Spring.

Website

The mpmcl.co.uk website has had its content and design amended for speedier usage. It gives general information about the estate and contact details of directors. Importantly it gives details for buyers, sellers and their conveyancers, together with the contact details of the MPMCL solicitors - Blocks.

Make sure we have your latest email contact details - email alanmurraympmc@gmail.com