

Minutes of the Brentry Park Development Management Company Ltd (BPDMCL) Residents Meeting held at St Peter's Hospice on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at 6.30 pm

Directors: Mark Canwell (MC), Mark Deans (MD), Andrew Aitken (AA) and Gill Brooks (GB).

GB welcomed residents to the second annual meeting and introduced her fellow directors. She explained that the company who manage the amenity land chose the name Brentry Park Development Management Company to reflect all the different parts of the estate, including Repton Hall.

### **Financial Summary.**

MD explained that we formed a company as a vehicle to take over the management of the amenity land on the estate, from a previous management company whose charges escalated every year.

Any money not spent in the year is put into the reserves. The TP1 is the legal document which sets out the relationship between the Freeholders and the owner of the amenity lands and includes the payment and collecting of rent charges, managing the amenity land and observing the covenants.

15 months ago, when ownership of the land changed, funds should have been transferred from the previous management company, however there were no funds available. Over this time, from having no money in the pot, we now have reserves of £4500, which we are using as a reserve to maintain trees and other future works on the estate. We also managed to lower the rentcharges in 2012 by 20%.

Of all rentcharge invoices issued, including historical disputes that started prior to BPDMCL taking over, only 3 have not been paid.

One property has been repossessed, and £1900 of rent charges, CCJ costs and legal fees will be repaid to BPDMCL upon the sale. A house cannot be sold without BPDMCL issuing a certificate that all covenants have been observed and rent charges paid. This enables the new owner to register title with the Land Registry.

Our budget for 2013 is £8950. We assume there will be no overspend, having renewed the gardening contract at the same value as the previous year. We carry insurance too, for example to repair the long metal fence along John Repton Gardens.

*Q Regarding the path where the new flats being built: could we repair it. MC said that we have been aiming for financial stability first, before doing improvements. However, if there was a way of achieving this through the goodwill of the builders we would try to do it.*

### **The Future**

2014 is based on a solid financial position, a solid reserve position. Our costs are under control so long as we don't undertake too many enhancements.

Invoices for the rent charges are issued in December, as required by TPI, but do not have to be paid until April. Now annual invoicing has been introduced, rather than bi annual invoicing, it has reduced the administration burden and costs.

*Q A resident raised an issue about a tree planted by a neighbour which is growing very tall. We advised her to raise her concerns with the neighbour first, but we would look at any restrictions on the height of trees.*

### **Update on Activities**

The gardening company Green Fingers have planted three silver birch trees in the roundabout at the beginning of John Repton Gardens, to mark the Queens Jubilee as discussed at last years Residents Meeting.

We have been pro-active with debt collection, with only three outstanding.

We hope to manage covenant breaches in an amicable way, to argue out the reasons for upholding them and to reach a positive solution. Covenants were designed to maintain the look and feel of the estate, and we have no wish to be a nuisance. However if we are aware of a breach or receive a formal complaint we have to investigate. We prefer a live and let live approach, but have an obligation to react.

Examples of this are that after ten years, front doors on the David Wilson estate, which were originally white, may be painted a different colour provided it is one of the approved colours that feature on our website. Also, the positioning of satellite dishes are not allowed on the front or principal elevation of properties-so need to go on the rear or in the garden. All the covenant details are published on our website.

We have two boundary issues to deal with, one where a previous owner moved a fence out onto amenity land and one where the fence to the side of the new flats has been moved. In both cases we know where the boundary is and who has title to it.

*Q A resident raised concerns about cars being parked in the fire break on John Repton Gardens, that leads to Royal Victoria Park, because emergency services wouldn't be able to get through to either part of the estate. Also dog walkers find it hard to get through. Possibly people aren't aware that it isn't a parking space. We will investigate this.*

The previous management company provided us with a huge collection of documents relating to the estate and have finally paid us just over £800 in final settlement of monies between us. We have requested, but will have to accept that it is unlikely, that we will receive a copy of the 2011 accounts from this company.

The gardening services contract was awarded through receiving five tenders, narrowed down to two, and we then chose Green Fingers. They are a local company, we are pleased with their results and have had good feedback from residents. The contract spec and their annual works timetable (they normally work on Fridays) is published on our website.

*Q A resident asked if BPDML were responsible for the trees over the railing on John Repton Gardens. This land, including the park area beside Repton Hall is owned by a company called Bridgfield Ltd. We have asked them to clear land near the houses, which has become overgrown. Bridgfield have promised to do this by the end of April but at the time of writing these minutes have still failed to do this. We will get in touch with them to try and get some action.*

## **Constitution**

MC said that BPDML was only a means to an end to take legal ownership of the amenity land. We need to look at the ownership structure and look for the right way forward. There are limitations to the current structure. Our aim is to achieve continuity of the administration we have established for the benefit of those on the estate and to prevent another agency from being able to revert back to spiralling costs. We are in the process of taking pro bono advice on this to work out the most appropriate way of protecting things for the benefit of all. We need the Directors to live on site and legal ownership should not carry a disproportionate interest.

## **Ongoing Administrative**

The previous management company charged c.£10,000 a year for administration, we do not currently take payment. MD explained how his work over the first year has made the processes clear, as we had no hand over, and he thinks we are now 99% there in our understanding of the tasks

involved.

We now need help with the day to day administration, and will advertise for help on our web site. The work equates to about 30 minutes a day – or the equivalent of two days a month. There will be a variety of tasks including running the accounts, responding to incoming requests and concerns, and managing the covenant paperwork and the house sale paperwork.

### **Residents Open Forum**

*Will the reserve go up ?* 2014 charges may go down to reflect the amount we have in reserve, as we believe we have enough if needed to do work on trees, and we think we have the budget covered. The trees were inspected two years ago.

*Concern was raised about the overgrowth of trees and shrubs at a property on a road corner, making visibility difficult.* We will monitor this and approach the household if it increases.

*Concerns were raised about the additional cars that will need parking when the new flats are built.* We were able to confirm there will be 8 parking spaces provided and we will approach any parking problems as robustly as we have already dealt with discouraging trade vehicles from being parked on site.

*Children are playing football on the grass on Strathearn Drive.* We think we know the parents of some, so will have an advisory word about noise and avoiding damage to young trees.

*A new resident has placed a TV aerial in their chimney, which is contra to covenants.* A resident raised it as a complaint so we will investigate this.

*There a lots of unsightly Estate agents for sale signs on the estate.* We can remove those on the estate but not on public land. We will build a working relationship with local estate agents to achieve this.

The meeting closed at 7:50 pm