

## **Minutes of the Rams Residents' Group Meeting held at Churcher's College on 18 November 2014**

<b>Present:</b>	Dean Leverett	Chairman
	Rob Wirdnam	Committee Member
	Mike Lane	
	Spencer Nicholls	
	Jonathan Butt	
	Alan Punt	
	Mark Wheeler	
	Ivan Reed	
	Nicky Deakin	
	Louise Jones	Treasurer
	Kim Excell	
	Margaret Askam	
	E Halliday	
	Steve Newcombe	
	Clive Johnson	
	Pamela Fisher	
	Peter & Jane Scott	
	Gaile Gould	
	Danny Owens	Secretary
<b>Apologies:</b>	John Lees	Committee Member
<b>Additional Distribution:</b>	Vaughan Clarke	County Councillor
	Maurice Snell	

### **Adoption**

It is understood that adoption of the roadways by Hampshire County Council (HCC) is conditional upon the drains and sewers being adopted by Southern Water. The Chairman read out an e-mail from Nigel Phillips of Taylor Wimpey (TW) dated 18 Nov 14 which stated that he was still awaiting a response from Southern Water "despite providing them with their own letters saying they have approved the works". Nigel Phillips also suggested that he might engage with our MP if nothing had been forthcoming from Southern Water within a fortnight.

It was suggested that residents might wish to engage directly with Southern Water to ask why the estate had not yet been adopted after 10 years. Contact details can be found at the end of these minutes.

### **Skinners Lane**

The Secretary distributed copies of an e-mail from Lesley Wells, Planning and Compliance Manager at East Hampshire District Council (EHDC), which is attached to these minutes. This stated that TW, HCC and EHDC had been in regular contact and had been working with the owners of properties in

Hoggarth Close to develop a scheme for the Lane with an intention to implement it in accordance with the Breach of Condition Notice by 15 Feb 15. An update report was due before the Planning Committee on 20 Nov 14. **Post meeting note:** this report can be found on the EHDC website at this [link](#).

### **Esso Garage**

With Skinners Lane currently shut, residents wishing to walk into Petersfield have to pass the forecourt of the Esso Garage on Ramshill. The Secretary reported that following reports at last October's Meeting that 2 residents had been struck by cars exiting the garage, he had engaged with HCC regarding the safety of members of the public using the footpath, and that Councillor Vaughan Clarke had also engaged directly with the company who operate the garage. To date, HCC have undertaken works to repair the uneven footpath and have reported that they were drawing up plans to improve the entrance to the garage, however no further information had been forthcoming despite recent contact with them. Esso however, have responded by painting a large "STOP" sign at the exit to the garage, for which a vote of thanks was offered to Councillor Clarke for his efforts in achieving this.

The Secretary agreed to keep chasing HCC on this issue.

### **Green Areas**

Green areas of the estate are maintained by a private company called Greenbelt Energy Ltd and there is no intention for the Local Authority to adopt these areas and take responsibility for their maintenance. Residents reported various concerns regarding the quality and frequency of works undertaken by Greenbelt's subcontractors and a number had contacted Greenbelt to report their concerns.

Rob Wirdnam reported that he had corresponded with Greenbelt and had determined that TW had transferred a lump sum of money to them to maintain the green areas, with the intention of also transferring the title to the land, however it is understood that this has not yet been completed. There is no agreed schedule of work undertaken by Greenbelt, who view the requirement to be "at their discretion". It was noted that Greenbelt had suggested that residents might wish to assume some degree of responsibility for care of the green areas, however there was no consensus to take this issue forward. Correspondence from Alex Middleton of Greenbelt is attached to these minutes.

The general consensus was that the frequency and quality of services provided by Greenbelt and their subcontractors had responded to input from residents and that engagement should be continued by all concerned.

It was noted that no explanation had been determined as to the disappearance of the helicopter from the play area. Also it was believed that a survey had been conducted of the play area's perimeter fence and Louise Jones agreed to chase Greenbelt to determine when repairs might be undertaken.

### **Parking in Barentin Way**

It was noted that John Lees had written to the Chief Executive of Taylor Wimpey regarding the painting of yellow lines in Barentin Way (copy of correspondence attached to these minutes). To date no response has been received.

It was generally considered to be disappointing that it had taken local authorities over four weeks to remove a car that had been abandoned in Barentin Way.

It was also noted that unwanted parking associated with Churcher's College had improved and the college's efforts to actively manage this nuisance were welcomed.

### **Post of Chairman**

Dean Leverett formally announced his resignation as Chairman following the sale of his property and impending move away from the estate. A vote of thanks was offered for all of Dean's hard work in support of residents during his tenure and he was wished every good fortune in his new home.

Volunteers for the post of Chairman were invited to contact any member of the Residents' Group Committee listed above.

### **Any Other Business**

There was no other business, not covered above.

### **Useful Contacts:**

Taylor Wimpey	All Enquiries	<a href="mailto:chris.hill@taylorwimpey.com">chris.hill@taylorwimpey.com</a> 01256 760606 <a href="mailto:nigel.phillips@taylorwimpey.com">nigel.phillips@taylorwimpey.com</a>
Southern Water	Development Enquiries	<a href="https://www.southernwater.co.uk/development-enquiries">https://www.southernwater.co.uk/development-enquiries</a>
Greenbelt	General Enquiries	<a href="mailto:gelenquiries@greenbeltgroup.co.uk">gelenquiries@greenbeltgroup.co.uk</a>
EHDC	Skidders Lane	<a href="mailto:Lesley.Wells@easthants.gov.uk">Lesley.Wells@easthants.gov.uk</a> 01730 234223 <a href="mailto:Julia.Mansi@easthants.gov.uk">Julia.Mansi@easthants.gov.uk</a> 01730 234236

### **Danny Owens**

#### **Secretary**

Attachments:

1. Correspondence from EHDC RE: Skidders Lane Access to Ramshill Estate, Petersfield.
2. Correspondence from Greenbelt.
3. Letter from John Lees to the Chief Executive of Taylor Wimpey.

**Correspondence from EHDC RE: Skinners Lane Access to Ramshill Estate, Petersfield**

Lesley Wells (Lesley.Wells@easthants.gov.uk) Add to contacts 29/10/2014 Keep this message at the top of your inbox

To: 'dtowens@hotmail.co.uk'

Cc: Tom Horwood, Chris Murray, Julia Mansi

Lesley.Wells@easthants.gov.uk

Dear Mr Owens

Thank you for your email.

For your information there has been significant work going on in the background to secure the footpath link. Taylor-Wimpey (TW) have been in discussion with the County Highways Authority (CHA), the neighbours in Hogarth Close and ourselves, with regular up-date meetings. The aim is for TW to design and implement a scheme that resolves the issue of the unstable retaining walls to 3 properties in Hogarth Close and provide a scheme that can be adopted by the CHA. As the retaining walls are in the ownership of properties in Hogarth Close, this has taken a significant amount of time, but so far has avoided any other action being taken by TW in respect of this matter.

Soil structure tests have been carried out and a scheme has been designed. TW met with the CHA last week to discuss the scheme and updated us today on the current position. Once the CHA has approved the scheme, and subject to the owners of the land permitting TW to carry out the works, it is intended that it is completed in the timescale set out in the Breach of Condition Notice (i.e. by 15 Feb 2015). However, this will be dependent on the CHA approving the scheme and the landowners voluntarily permitting the works to their walls, the latter of which in particular, is an unknown factor at this stage.

An update report to Members should be going to the Planning Committee on 20 November 2014.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Wells

Planning & Compliance Manager

East Hampshire District Council

Penns Place Petersfield GU31 4EX

Direct Tel: 01730 234223 Direct Fax: 01730 234348

Email address: lesley.wells@easthants.gov.uk

General email address: planningdev@easthants.gov.uk

## Correspondence from Greenbelt

**From:** Alex Middleton [<mailto:Alex.Middleton@greenbelt.co.uk>]

**Sent:** 22 May 2014 17:01

**To:** Robert Wirdnam

**Subject:** RE: Ramshill Estate

Further to recent enquiry.

The arrangement with TW (Wilcon) was prompted back in 2004. The open spaces included green space, suds and play area. Wilcon were owners of the open spaces and undertook any maintenance at their discretion. Normal/traditional aftercare arrangements for open spaces on such/new developments would have been to transfer through "adoption process" to LA, or to set up Residents Management Company or to pass to Property Manager to act on behalf of residents. I am not sure but none of these arrangements were applied leaving Wilcon with the land after completion of the development. Greenbelt were approached by Wilcon in 2004 and were asked if we would take ownership responsibility for the land. Whilst not core to our business, which focusses on greenspace service arrangement [www.greenbelt.co.uk](http://www.greenbelt.co.uk) we agreed to take ownership of this land for a transfer fee ie without obligations in title contract but obviously with ownership responsibility.

To date TW have not completed the transfer of land, which does cause some issue with us, specifically with regard to insurance and matters related to ownership v occupation.

However, in terms of maintenance, Greenbelt hold a small number of these sites or legacy/historic sites as we call them, as no aftercare solution was ever implemented and ultimately the developer wants to divest its ownership. So, basically we have agreed to take these sites on but look after them at our discretion. There is no fixed schedule but there are health and safety requirements alongside keeping the "asset" in reasonable order. The residents **do not contribute annually** to any works so any works are funded by Greenbelt.

I trust this provides the background.

Regards

Alex Middleton

**From:** Alex Middleton [<mailto:Alex.Middleton@greenbelt.co.uk>]

**Sent:** 04 June 2014 15:41

**To:** Robert Wirdnam

**Cc:** gelenquiries mailbox

**Subject:** RE: Ramshill Estate

Dear Mr Wirdham

Thank you for your e mail.

It seems that you are aware of the arrangements and the general responsibilities all round, which leaves you with concern.

I am satisfied that GEL (Greenbelt Energy Ltd), which is not GGL (Greenbelt Group Ltd), is managing the open space in line with obligation. I mention the difference in two Greenbelt companies as GEL has a small non-core portfolio of legacy sites of which this is one and GGL owns and manages some 500 sites which are serviced to high level and which homeowners contribute to this service annually.

In the past I have offered the opportunity for residents on the legacy sites to undertake either additional works or whole season works at their own cost, to meet their expectations.

Perhaps this may be the solution?

Regards

Alex Middleton

## **Letter from John Lees to the Chief Executive of Taylor Wimpey**

22 November 2018

Mr P Redfern  
Chief Executive  
Taylor Wimpey Ltd  
Gate House  
Turnpike Road  
High Wycombe  
Bucks HP12 3NR

Dear Mr Redfern,

### **Ref: Ramshill Estate, Petersfield, Hampshire**

As a resident of the Ramshill Estate which was built by Taylor Wimpey some 11 years ago and still serviced by your management team I am writing to you following a specific problem that has arisen on our estate over the last few weeks. However I will also mention further difficulties we have experienced, some issues going back to the completion of our homes.

My house is a well designed property in an attractive courtyard area with one problem; in common with neighbours properties I do not have parking for visitors in front of my house. When purchasing the property this was raised by my solicitor during searches and they confirmed that I (and I have ascertained other residents in Barentin Way) have the legal right to park vehicles in the designated "visitor" & "casual" parking area, which is just opposite my house. This system has worked well for many years until a few weeks ago when double yellow lines appeared in the allocated parking area.

On investigation I spoke to Taylor Wimpey's site manager (Chris Hill) who claimed he had been contacted by one of the residents in Barentin Way concerning parking, and without reference to other residents or discussion authorised the yellow lines. The resident who was identified by Chris Hill has denied any contact or discussion with your management team and shares the consensus that the lines must be removed, they are an eyesore and inflammatory.

The introduction of these lines has now caused dissension between neighbours (which we warned TW was possible but we have been ignored). Most importantly it has raised a legal nightmare for residents of Barentin Way as we understand from conveyancing documents we hold, plus searches by our solicitors when purchasing our properties including Land Registry documents that we have the legal right to use this parking space for "visitors" and "casual" parking.

Following extensive correspondence with your management team we finally wrote to Nigel Philips on 2<sup>nd</sup> October (copy attached) requesting that the lines should be removed by 16<sup>th</sup> October or we would have to take our concerns elsewhere, i.e. to you. You will see from this e-mail the following:

- The assertion that Taylor Wimpey were asked to apply the yellow lines by the resident of No.1 Barentin Way was a lie and your manager has admitted as such.
- No other residents were consulted even though the application of the lines has had a serious impact on all our properties. This is despite TW's Corporate Statement on your

website stating you will be “a good neighbour and engage with communities and other stakeholder groups through **consultation**”.

- TW’s Chris Hill stated in one e-mail that the complainant had been bullied by her neighbours. This is a scurrilous accusation and Chris Hill has admitted that he has no evidence to support it.
- TW’s Nigel Phillips undertook in an e-mail as recently as last December to the Chairman of our Residents Group not to apply line marking on our estate until formal adoption by the local authority. We ask why he has reneged on this undertaking?
- Legally the application of these yellow lines has left Barentin Way residents in a very difficult situation. TW’s management team are refuting the legal evidence we have clearly showing we have the right to park in the disputed area. If TW continue to hold this position we are advised that only a judicial review can resolve this disagreement, something none of us welcome or can afford. We trust it is not TW’s policy to sell the homes they build and then leave their customers with a legal legacy that prevents us re-selling our properties?

The above has raised serious concerns with all residents. If we now try to sell our properties a potential buyer could be dissuaded by their solicitor from completing on the basis that there is an unresolved legal dispute between the owners and Taylor Wimpey and possibly a neighbour.

We are therefore hoping you can please intervene in this unnecessary dispute with your management team? We have asked that the yellow lines should first of all be removed, and then discussion should be entered into by all interested parties both to resolve the serious legal implications raised plus an amicable agreement for all residents concerning the parking area.

However this is not the only problem we have experienced and I will briefly detail the other unresolved site management issues some of which go back over 10 years:

- The roads on our estate have still not been adopted by the local authority, East Hants District Council. This is due to ongoing legal wrangles involving TW concerning the surface water system and others. As a consequence some solicitors advise potential purchasers not to proceed to completion and some current owners are losing sales as a consequence.
- One of the access paths and cycle routes into and out of the estate has been closed off to residents as Taylor Wimpey has not completed the pathway and lighting as was required. TW now have a legal injunction set by the local authority to complete work that should have been finished when the estate was first built. We have been told by your management team that they will probably do the minimum necessary to meet your legal commitments but then close the lane to residents on “health & safety” grounds. This is surely unacceptable to both TW and us, your clients?
- Recently we have had problems with the grounds maintenance with this summer the extensive grass areas within the estate either not being cut or only once a month and no maintenance of the shrub and flower borders. We are told by your management team that the contract to maintain the landscaped areas was handed to a company called Greenbelt Ltd together with a substantial sum of money. TW’s site manager Chris Hill stated that Taylor Wimpey has mislaid their copy of the maintenance contract so are unsure what legal and contractual commitments Greenbelt are committed to. In addition Greenbelt’s sub-contractors who cut the grass have been in dispute about the frequency of cutting and their payments. All this risks the whole estate becoming an eyesore rather



than the well designed and attractive layout intended by the architects and expected by us the residents.

- In addition we had an attractive play area for our children. Recently one of the games has been removed (we don't know by whom) and damage to the perimeter fence is not being repaired despite frequent complaints by our Residents Group. In addition street lighting has not been maintained and surface guttering covers have broken and not been replaced despite requests from residents.

In conclusion we hope you will investigate the ongoing issues relating to the adoption of the estate, access path problem, grounds maintenance, play area repairs and general maintenance and help to resolve them?

However we do ask you to intervene in the double yellow line and parking dispute as a matter of urgency? They are causing serious concerns over the disputed legal rights; they are an eyesore and are causing conflict amongst neighbours, problems which was not there before TW's management teams decision to interfere. I, my neighbours in Barentin Way plus the Chairman of our Ramshill Residents Group have all written to both Nigel Phillips and Chris Hill and have been met with an apparent refusal to resolve this disagreement amicably.,

We all hope you can now intervene as the Chief Executive of Taylor Wimpey and bring an end to this unnecessary dispute? And if you have time you would be most welcome to visit our estate and see at first hand the problem legacies left by Taylor Wimpey.

Yours sincerely,

**John Lees** – for and behalf of the Ramshill Residents Group and six Barentin Way residents.

**Also signed by:**

Mrs Maureen Burnell, No 2 Barentin Way

Mr Jon Butt, No 4 Barentin Way

Mr Spencer Nicholls, No 7 Barentin Way

Dr Peter & Mrs Katherine Bowen-Simkins, No 10 Barentin Way

Mrs Sam Hughes, No 12 Barentin Way

**In Addition the following members of the Ramshill Residents Group:**

Mr Dean Leverett, Chairman

Mrs Louise Jones

Mr Danny Owen

Mr Rob Wirdnam