



Grove Park Resident's Association

Chair: Mr Alan Moss. No. 38
Telephone: 01945 584244

Sec: Mrs Lynn Mason No. 5
Telephone: 01945 583249

June 2016

Dear Member/Resident.

NEWS UPDATE

Since our last letter the Committee has been continuing to have dialogue with Countrywide, the Fire Service and the local Authority regarding issues on the Park.

WATER RATES

Despite letters from GPRA and individual home owners on the Park Countrywide have failed to respond to confirm that they have reviewed the water charge rate is correct. We will continue to press them on this matter, especially as the next water bill is due shortly.

BOUNDARY FENCES ADJACENT TO OVERGROWN ORCHARD

Some progress has been made in that several of the homes have had their fences strengthened by the addition of a stake fitted to the rear of the fence. However, there are several others that need attention due to rotting arris rails and gravel boards plus the overgrown trees and vegetation which encroaches the boundary fence.

FIRE ACCESS

The watch commander of Wisbech Fire Station made a visit with a colleague to check fire access and general fire precautions on the site. On the day he visited he was unable to bring the fire tender onto site due to the parked vehicles opposite the main entrance. He did confirm that access to the Park is difficult and that a tender would have a great deal of difficulty in pinch areas, i.e. the bends at both ends of the Park. His comments were that should there be an emergency the tender would damage or destroy street furniture, plants, pots, ornaments or anything else in its way whilst manoeuvring the bends, bearing in mind that the fire services first priority is the saving of lives and not property. He suggested that those properties adjacent to or on the bend should ensure that they do not put anything on or close to the road edge including cars. The properties most at risk from damage are No's 2, 3, 4 & 39 and No's 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 32 plus No.25.

He also highlighted the risk of fire in the event of a dry summer from the overgrown orchard, and emphasised that should home owners take advantage of the warm weather to have a bbq that they should take extra care to ensure that calor gas bottles are stored safely and that they are turned off fully after use. Should home owners use charcoal they should ensure that the embers are fully extinguished



before leaving them and that anyone backing onto the orchard should not throw embers over the fence or into a plastic dustbin whilst still warm, this includes cigarette butts which could ignite a fire if thrown over the fence into the orchard.

Another recommendation was that we contact the fire safety officer which the Chairman has done and continues to have dialogue in respect of safety measures which may need to be put in place. The Fire Service has no authority to enforce road width, however, under the licence issued by Fenland Council they do and it was the Watch Commander's recommendation that we bring the problem of the bends on the Park to the attention of the Council.

Homes which have oxygen cylinders in their homes should ensure that the Park owner and the Fire Service are aware of the cylinders in the event of a fire on the Park. Oxygen users are generally given an Oxygen users guide from their supplier and regular risk assessments carried out by the supplier. however, oxygen is a combustible substance so care should be taken to ensure that it is not stored or used where it could cause a fire risk to others on the Park.

The Watch Commander has confirmed that he will revisit the park in the future to see if any improvements to access have been made.

Countrywide have been made aware of his comments.

FENLAND COUNCIL

A representative from the Council has visited the park and carried out a brief survey of the Park and noted several items which did not comply with the site licence, i.e entrance board, notice box, non access of fire vehicles, no visitor parking as per site map, poor repair of boundary fences and overgrown hedges at front entrance and orchard. He also looked at the distance between properties and boundary fences. He has been in contract with Countrywide and has written to them regarding these issues and requested that they forward a copy of the fire risk assessment, fire certificate for fire boxes and IEE certificate for electrics, he has compared these documents which Countrywide sent him with the site licence and as a result he has now written to Countrywide to ask them to review their fire risk assessment, contact the owners of the orchard to arrange to cut back vegetation and overhanging trees and review where visitor parking can be made available, deal with the notice box and sign at entry of the Park. The Committee understand that he is awaiting a response and has also requested he meets with Countrywide on site; he also intends to possibly visit the Park with the fire safety officer to carry out a further inspection.

GENERAL RISK & FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Committee having now seen a copy of the risk assessment carried out on behalf of Countrywide and having reviewed it, found several points which were of concern and which are not covered by the site licence. The committee have therefore asked one of the members who is a competent person (NVQ 3 Diplomas and NEBOSH Previously member of IOSH Grade TechIOSH (Retired H&S Advisor) and proprietor of DEVROSAFE) to produce a basic risk assessment sheet and then to carry out a



full fire and risk assessment on the Park, (this member is retired and will carry out this assessment voluntarily) which they will submit to Countrywide for their consideration. The Committee has also asked him to produce a general fact sheet of things home owners should consider in terms of risk to themselves and others on the park this will be posted on the web site.

WEB SITE

Just a reminder that if you wish to see any of the documents, Site Licence, Fire Certificate, IEE Certificate, Fire Risk Assessment, General Risk & Fire Risk Assessment Fact Sheet, you can view them on www.gprass.co.uk. If you have any problems in logging into the site please contact Roger at rsoutram@gmail.com who will be able to assist you.

5 MPH

Some home owners and unfortunately their visitors, as well as delivery drivers are still not driving carefully around the park. Whilst it is appreciated that 5mph is not always possible with modern cars, it is important that drivers reduce speed as much as possible and emphasise to their visitors and delivery people the speed limit on the park.

PARKING ON DRIVES

Having reviewed the site licence it states that only one vehicle per home is permitted to park on the drive of the home. We assume that this refers to one car per home and not visitors for those who have sufficient length of drive to accommodate more than one vehicle. The committee will endeavour to have this clarified. However, it is important that whether it be one or two cars on the drive that the vehicles do not protrude into the road, even if the back or front wheels are on the drive, not only does it make it difficult for cars to drive past, or reverse out of a drive, in the event of a fire then they are likely to get damaged, because the fire tender would not be able to move over to miss them, especially on the corners. Cars should at all times be parked in the driveway well back from the road. There were several cars parked at angles or not on the home owners drive the days when the Watch Commander and the Council officer visited the Park.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Chairman continues to be the Local Liaison Office for this and you will find the latest information from them on the web site. However, we would remind everyone to be vigilant and challenge anyone on the Park who you might think is acting strangely, and to ensure that you check all ids of tradesmen etc

RUMOURS

It has come to the attention of the Committee that there appears to be rumours going around the Park that a home is going to have to be removed and that gardens may be possibly lost. Both of these comments we believe relate to finding a suitable place for visitor parking (i.e moving a home or taking away the flower beds at each end of



the park). The Chairman will check with IPHAS what the legal position is regarding this, but it has to be remembered that the Council have overall authority on the Park as per the site licence and it is a condition of that licence that the Park Owner adheres to it, and one of the conditions laid down by the Park Homes Act is that every Residential Park Home site must have visitors parking and access for Fire Tenders both of which Countrywide are in breach of. We are sure that with consultation with Countrywide, Fenland Council and Wisbech Fire Services a sensible solution to both these problems can be solved to everyone's satisfaction. The final decision as to what happens on the site remains with Fenland Council. Until such time as the Council has full and meaningful discussions with Countrywide speculation and rumours about what might happen is not very productive.

It appears that questions have been asked about minutes, minutes of meetings etc these will not be issued to non members of the association as they are confidential to the association member's only and that includes Countrywide not being entitled to see copies, this is covered in the rules in law for associations. All members of the association received a copy of the minutes which were hand delivered by the Chairman and myself, and there is also a copy on the web site under the member's page should anyone who has lost their hard copy might wish to read, but again these are for access by member's only.

If people have any queries or comments then please speak to a Committee member

We will continue to update you on progress of issues raised at the Inaugural meeting when it was agreed that the Committee would deal with them on behalf of the members and these updates will now be posted on our web site, this is in order to save money on printing and use of ink jets and paper

Regards

Lynn Mason

Lynn Mason

GPRA Secretary

