

## **VPE Residents Committee Meeting.**

### **Minutes:**

Tuesday 12/07/23 at 20.00

Held at 18 Combe Mews

### **Present**

Will Egan – Joint Secretary

Alex Wheeler - Chair

Mick Cooke - Maintenance

Alberte Lauridsen – Special Projects

Clare Barry - Fundraising

Laura Cade – Joint Secretary

Virginia Clements - Treasurer

Gill Fairbanks

**Apologies** were received from Lisa Turner

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved

### **Estate Management**

#### **Westcombe Court Refurbishment**

In the absence of Lisa Turner and Billy Taggart there was little new information on the refurbishment of Westcombe Court. RBG is already taking payments from residents who have taken out loans with them but there is, to our knowledge:

- no start date for the works
- no confirmed contractor
- no further consultation with residents

AW will contact Roger Irwin to see if he has any further updates.

Representatives from the C20th Society were given a tour of the estate and they recommended engaging with the RBG conservation officer (*Google search Tarana Choudhury*) who may help with ensuring that the refurbishment is done sympathetically with due regard to the architectural importance of the estate.

#### **General Maintenance:**

Following the start of some maintenance and repair works on the estate – notably the partial cleaning of the undercroft and the survey of the drains CB will draft an email to Richard Parkin (*Senior Assistant Director of Repairs and Investment*) and Pat Slattery (Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Homelessness) to clarify current situation this will be sent from the hello@vanbrugh email account signed by AW.

GF will contact Leo Fletcher (ward councillor) to seek his support.

AI will ask Danielle (caretaker) for access to the undercroft to see the sheds with a view to asking for residents to have access to park bikes. LC will contact the active travel people again to try and get them to support this.

WE will create the digital maintenance list so that we are able to track progress on jobs. (add to this the condition of metal railings around the estate) would be useful to clarify exactly what constitutes maintenance and what is a repair.

CB will follow up with RBG the wholly inadequate and inaccurate letter of apology sent to residents about raw sewage backing up into their shower. MC reminded the committee that RBG are obliged to flush out all the drains on the estate every 6 months. [Who will action this?] ask the very simple question 'when was this last done and when is it due to be done again' should be put to Carey Gay (Caretaking & Estate Services Manager) Richard Parkin and Pat Slattery

**Service Charge Anomalies:** - the 10-day period allowed for reply from RBG has passed and some residents are withholding payments until RBG addresses issues. Doug Harrison (resident) is leading on this and AL will ask for an update from him.

## **Events**

### **Summer Party:**

Event was a great success and stalls worked well financially and in terms of people joining in. Discussed having more entertainment for children next time although the jenga, duck fishing etc. brought by LT were great. Discussed extending the summer party into the evening for adults. Some feedback that people were unaware that it was going to be on.

**BBQ** – MC had had to spend a lot of time cleaning the BBQ after it was returned by the foodbank. MC will do repairs. Agreed to start a deposit scheme – charge £100 of which £25 would be retained for gas and £75 returned if the BBQ is in good condition, retained if it is not.

### **Next events:**

**Open House:** 16/09/23 – estate picnic to coincide with this, explore production and sale of VPE merchandise – cards, calendar, T shirts- GF to look at designs and printing.

**Halloween:** 29/10/23 – usual tour of households who will do trick or treat.

**Xmas:** 17/12/23 – Disco in the laundry area, activities (Santa etc) for children. Agreed to explore possibility of having a bar – WE offered to talk to the Green Goddess licensees and MC will talk to his neighbour Ed who works in the trade.

**2024 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VPE** – 1960s theme for the summer part in 2024 date tbc.

## **Finance**

VC reported that the grant has been received from RBG (£350 including extra £100)

Summer Party income – far smaller cost to the committee for this compared to previous years because of income from stalls.

Card machine – more people need to be able to use this AW will start by ensuring he can then pass on to other committee members.

## **Greening**

Planting day 9/07/23 very successful – 50 lavender bushes, 7 hawthorn trees, 4 vines planted. Lots of people came out to work and particular thanks are due to those who worked so hard to lift pavers and plant the vines.

More vines will be added to create a vine-covered area.

RBG will provide bulbs (LC to chase Carey Gay and Tony Bigwood).

RBG have promised to plant an extensive wildflower meadow in front of Combe Mews facing the heath.

Gardening club meets again on 25/07/23.

**Anti-Social behaviour**

CB raised the issue of ASB on the estate and how distressing people find it. The police are unable to help with disputes between neighbours but GF suggested exploring whether RBG have a mediation officer. CB to look into this and report back.

**Balconies**

People affected by this issue will be kept up to date verbally by AL.

**Website**

New pages with local clubs, societies amenities VC will explore.

**Future Meeting dates**

08/08/23 – 8.00 – 86 Combe Avenue

05/09/23 – 8.00. All residents Meeting, Mycenae House (AW to book room)