

GCRA AGM 15 November 2021

Full list of attendees and is at the bottom of this document.

Committee members:

Chair:

Michelle O'Toole 9/2 Ettrickdale Place

Secretaries:

Carol Fraser 5/4 Ettrickdale Place

Patrick Honeybone 7/5 Liddesdale Place

Treasurers:

Anne McCarthy 7/6 Ettrickdale Place

Benham Balali 1/2 Liddesdale Place

Rachel Hinds 7/1 Ettrickdale Place

Website:

Joe Peach 5/5 Liddesdale Place

Other committee members:

Doreen Boyle 7/4 Ettrickdale Place

Mor Kandlik Eltanani 4/6 Liddesdale Place

Michelle (chair) : thank you everyone for joining. The agenda was emailed to everyone and we have received 4 proxy votes.

In general it has been a tough year. We had the lockdown at the end of the year, but I think it's fair to say that the committee has worked very hard with some great results. In particular, the treasury team have done amazing, hard work producing invoices and collecting funds. We also had to purchase a zoom license. The addition of new members to the committee last year has helped a lot and has been wonderful, thank you very much.

The committee's remit is largely just the upkeep of the ground, but I do have some other gentle reminders:

- A gentle reminder that all flats need to have interlinked smoke and heat alarms by February – this is the responsibility of every owner for their own property.
- Glass is not collected from the green recycling bins – but from the glass bins
- Please be mindful when driving in the estate – there are children and pets around
- Please be respectful of others in the visitor parking spaces as well as private spaces

Last year's minutes

Michelle: would anyone like to propose an amendment to these? In the absence of any issues the minutes are carried.

Joint secretaries report

Carol: We have had some good news this year – the potholes that have been identified in the parking areas have now been filled in.

A majority of the gardening tasks agreed in the past have been done now, though there are some outstanding issues. The dead shrubs that have been agreed to be lifted have been lifted, and the turfing in property fronts has been laid. As always, if you have any suggestions please email the secretary email. Unfortunately we aren't able to monitor this daily, but we do monitor it regularly.

Sadly we couldn't have the picnic again this year due to covid, and are hopeful to have it reinstated next year.

In lockdown we have established a whatsapp group, and it is now working alongside our Facebook group, they are both good ways to keep in contact with neighbours in the estate.

Please note: Gully cleaning dates have been circulated by the council.

Treasurers report

Balance sheet was shared.

Anne, Rachel, Benham have been joint treasurers for the past year. When we took over last year there were a few outstanding dues to be collected, and happily this has been a successful year and thanks to all residents who have caught up on payments. Our gardener costs us £848.88 each month, and the committee has approved further funds for potholes, for our website and a zoom license this year.

Questions for the treasurers:

Sandra: I noticed there is a decrease in arrears and I wondered if that is related to the referral to debt collector.

Michelle: yes, we have agreed as a committee we would refer to a debt collector if necessary.

Benham: because the committee allowed us to pay for legal action if necessary, we were able to send letters explaining to residents legal action would be taken if needed and that worked. The only legal fees spent were £19 – paid by the resident, so this was a successful operation.

Michelle: We all agree as a committee that this has been a successful way of work.

Benham: this might not work every year as we might need to wait until arrears build up before suggesting legal action would be needed.

Patrick: I wonder if fees would need to be changed for next year.

Anne: this would depend on what we decide to fund – with the bins being a main issue here. For the gardeners we do have enough money at the moment.

Sandra: in the longer term we might need more funds to deal with longer term problems, so nudging up the very low payment would be a good way to plan ahead for that. Things like the river bank and the trees in common areas would need funds in the future.

Action: An increase of £10 was put to a vote with support of over 20 members.

Website report

Joe: There is a neighbourhood website – glenoglecourt.com including the constitution and other useful information. In the last year we had to revamp the website and move it over to a new host. Looking after the website is very light work and Joe is happy to teach anyone who is interested to learn how to run a website to do so.

Appointment of the committee

Jill has stepped down and everyone else are happy to stay as committee members – there were no objections to the committee.

Would anyone like to join us? You can put yourself forward now or at any point by emailing the secretary email. No offers were made either before or during the AGM.

Privacy policy

We have to have a privacy policy on our website to be able to contact residents. It has been drafted by Benham and reviewed by others, it's a very simple policy to enable us to hold information and send invoices.

Minor changes to the constitution (action: edit constitution accordingly)

the constitution was shared on the screen. The following changes suggested:

1. We have a constitution from 1984 and a set of amendments from 1993, and we would like to incorporate the amendments into the constitution:
 - a. One auditors and not two
 - b. We are allowed to have a reserve fund – members can decide the maximum sum of this
 - c. The committee can spend up to £30 up from £15
 - d. A quorum changed from 25 to 20
 - i. A vote was taken – 23 for so the motion was carried

2. Minor changes to wording to make the reference to the chair gender neutral: from chairman to the chair and from he/him to they/them.
3. Benham – the due date for paying subscriptions was 28th of February, and we issue the invoice in October so we would like to change the due date to be by the due date on the invoice or 30 days after being billed.
 - a. This was again voted in favour by all
4. There is a restriction of no more than two new members in the general meeting – we suggest to remove this limitation
 - a. Passed in vote
5. We would like to remove the requirement that the committee meets at least 3 times a year
 - a. Passed in vote
6. Changing the constitution to reflect the possibility of having more than one treasurer
 - a. Not passed as already reflected elsewhere in the constitution
7. Distribution of documents prior to the AGM
 - a. Not passed since we do distribute these so there was no need of change
8. Use the term independent examiner and not auditor to avoid the need to pay for an especially trained and licenced auditor
 - a. Passed by majority vote

Gardening issues

Sam: The pulling of the shrubs was now done, some of the back of blocks haven't been turfed.

Carol: There are new shrubs for these areas which haven't been delivered yet. Turf is quite expensive, so shrubs were agreed to be planted at the backs of buildings. We are chasing this and have not paid for the work that hasn't been done

Sam: some turfed areas have been cut into again

Carol: the area in question is under the window of the block and it belongs to the block, so we don't have any control over that.

Picnic table

Michelle: a request from a member to buy a new picnic table. We don't have the funds for this and some members are against having a table because it encourages antisocial behaviour.

Carol: another member who opposes the idea of buying a new picnic table says that if we do buy one we should also consider benches for the riverbank area.

Mor: the picnic table is used quite a lot and is broken, so I would like to discuss it when the time comes.

Michelle: We can discuss this in the spring as that would be a more suitable time for these purchases.

Action: to discuss further in spring

Parking spaces

Michelle: another topic is the parking spaces – members have asked for these to be painted.

Anne: this is something the committee has done in the past

Jill: to my memory this wasn't a very expensive exercise in the past

Vote on the car park painting: over 20 in favour so the motion was carried, we will investigate and go ahead with that if this is not too expensive

Ysabel asked to not be painted on the 13th of December

Action: to research costs and go ahead if reasonable.

Damaged bin areas

Michelle: Regarding the damage done by the bin men in the estate. Most of these brick walls belong to the buildings and not to the estate. However, this would be much cheaper to be organised collectively.

Carol: This might be something that would be appropriate to take into a vote for all owners by email. Some people feel that brickwork should be covered overall in the estate as it pertains to the overall look of the estate.

Doreen: If we do talk about this, we have to talk to the bin men as well because this will keep happening even if we do fix the current problem.

Jill: I think that this would be a dangerous precedence of fixing private areas.

Julia: if they keep being knocked over, fixing them might not be the right way to go and it might be better to knock part of them down.

Benham: this might be a matter of an email to the council and trying to get them to take responsibility

Geraldine: I think this is clearly beyond the responsibility of the committee. However if one block finds a way of doing this, I think it would be worth sharing with the other blocks with the others.

Annie and Christopher: If the committee is responsible for the look of the estate we do think there is a cause for it to take responsibility for this

Mor: support Benham's suggestion

Michelle: the committee has very clear areas and boundaries of responsibility, and we would not want to spend other people's money without proper mandate for this. The bin stores are private

property. I think contacting the council is one good suggestion (Patrick: directly to the councillors) and the second issue is an issue of design – if we patch things up the same issue would happen again.

Annie and Christopher: if one block gets it right it would be good if we could act as a support system for each other.

Joe: I think the bins count as permitted development so we wouldn't need special permission to change their structure

Carol: For bin design, we need to look forward to the future, as the large bins would be replaced with smaller recycling bins. We need to be forward thinking on this and it would be good to contact the council to discuss this

Action: Michelle will contact the council to discuss this, if any block does get together to solve this issue please share the word.

AOB:

Benham: I would like to thank Michael Sharp who helped with the annual report and the finance.

Carol: a member asked to raise the issue that trees are the responsibility of blocks, and that tree stumps remaining are their responsibility as well, and they could be liable if these cause accidents.

James: thank you to all of the committee from all members and residents.

Date for next meeting: by the end of November 2022

Attendees

Ysabel Collyer 4/1 EP
James Gamgee 8/6 EP
Joe Peach 5/5 LP
Anne McCarthy 7/6 EP
Rachel Hinds 7/1 EP
Jill Andrew 7/3 LP
Sam Rennie 5/2 GR
Michelle O'Toole 9/2 EP
Joyce Capek 4/2 LP
Jane Norie 8/5 EP
Graham & Jackie Sutherland 7/6 LP
Carol Fraser 5/4 EP
Patrick Honeybone 7/5 LP
Carl Barry 2/5 LP
Jan McNee 3/6 EP
Benham Balali 1/2 LP
Anne Lyden & Christopher Muniz 5/6 LP
Mor Kandlik 4/6 LP
Irena Loughton 6/1 GR
Geraldine Wooley 5/3 GR
Robert Williamson 1/3 EP
Sandra Smith 3/3 LP
Doreen Boyle 7/4 EP
Julia Mullinger 7/5 EP

Proxies submitted by:
Michael Sharp 10/2 EP
Lindsay Kenrick-Smith 2/4 EP
Cadien Reid 10/4 EP
Jane Norie 8/5 EP (for a part of the meeting)