

**GLENOGLE COURT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
8pm on WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2023
IN STOCKBRIDGE PARISH CHURCH, 7B SAXE COBURG STREET, EDINBURGH**

Minutes (draft – yet to be approved)

A full list of attendees at the AGM is at the end of this document.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2022-2023 (APPOINTED AT THE 2022 AGM)

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 member: Mor Kandlik Eltanani 4/6 Liddesdale Place

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1. Welcome

The GCRA chair (Michelle O'Toole) opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and confirmed that the meeting is quorate.

2. Apologies and proxy votes

Apologies were received from:

- Caroline Crawford, 6/2 Ettrickdale Place
- Jan McNee, 3/6 Ettrickdale Place

Proxy votes

- Kirsty Robertson, 2/6 Liddesdale to the chair
- Jane Norie and Colin Gilbert, 8/5 Ettrickdale Place to the chair
- Sandra and Thomas Smith, 3/3 Liddesdale Place to the chair
- Sarah Mattocks 9/2 ettrickdale place to the chair
- Geraldine Wooley, 3/5 Glenogle Road to Sam Rennie
- Gillian Bertram, 5/1 Glenogle Road to Sam Rennie
- Lindsay Kenrick-Smith, 2/4 Ettrickdale Place to Carole or Billy Shaw
- Zarina Muminova, 8/1 Ettrickdale Place to Behnam Balali

3. Approval of minutes of AGM of 29 November 2022 – available on the GCRA website: <https://www.glenoglecourt.com/minutes>

A member in the audience raised a number of items with the 2022 AGM minutes – some of them were to be addressed during the meeting, so were agreed to be dealt with then. It was recognised that trees on ground that is owned by blocks are not the responsibility of the GCRA, so the statement in the 2022 AGM minutes (under ‘Gardening issues’) about tree-trimming could/should not refer to actions that the GCRA is undertaking.

A member in the audience raised the issue of communication involving emails. An email that they had sent to the committee about the gardening had been forwarded to Greenscape (the gardeners) with the member’s email address and name attached. The member was unhappy that the gardeners had seen the contents of the email (with their name attached). The committee apologised to the member for this while also asking the member to be mindful that the committee were just trying to convey their message to the gardeners.

Otherwise, the minutes were approved.

4. Chair’s Report

Michelle reported that the GCRA had had a successful year, with the treasurers doing an extraordinary job in collecting all subscriptions from members. Michelle has been GCRA chair for two years (after 7 years on the committee in total) and will be stepping down once the new chair is appointed (at this AGM).

5. Secretary's Report

The GCRA shared-role-secretaries (Carol Fraser and Patrick Honeybone) reported to the meeting. Patrick reported that this was his 7th year on the committee (sharing the GCRA secretary role) and that he will need to step down at this meeting (for health reasons). Carol is happy to continue on the committee if the meeting agrees. The secretaries also reported the following:

- The committee had held 3 committee meetings this year, with minutes of the meetings published on the GCRA website. The committee kept in touch otherwise during the year by email.
- The secretaries organised the AGM – this is a reasonably-sized job because an important aim is to keep all members informed about the AGM. Of the 122 flats on the estate, approximately half are owner-occupied and half are rented out. The GCRA has an email address for the vast majority of members, so contact with them is easy. Where this is not the case, every effort is made to inform members: for flats that are owner-occupied, a hard copy of the information about the AGM was delivered; for flats that are rented out where we do not have a member's contact details but do have the details of a letting agency, the letting agency was contacted and asked to pass on the information; if the status of a flat is not certain and contact details are unclear, a hard copy of information was delivered, with a request to pass it on to the GCRA member if necessary. GCRA members decided this year to hold the meeting in person. The consultation on this had been combined with the gardening consultation (which was delivered to members online and in hard copy if necessary, as for the organisation of the AGM). 23 members had voted to meet in person and 18 had voted to meet online, so the committee booked a meeting room at Stockbridge Parish Church, as in the most recent years before the AGM went online (which happened due to COVID and, last year, due to a vote to hold it online).
- The committee has decided not to renew the GCRA Zoom licence for the coming year. A licence had been needed for the years when the AGM was held online (given that the free version would not be suitable for this), and the licence had also allowed the committee to meet easily even when committee members had been out of the country. The committee felt that it was likely that members would continue to want to hold the AGM in person from now on, and that the free version of Zoom would work if committee meetings need to be held online, so no licence would be needed.
- The committee organised the annual picnic on the riverbank on 2nd September – a good number of residents attended and the event was enjoyed by all.

- The old three-seater bench by the picnic table, which was broken, had been replaced during the year with a new wooden three-seater bench (as agreed at the 2022 AGM) and the old bench was uplifted by the council. One of the old benches on the riverbank had been excellently refurbished by GCRA member Neil Campbell, who was thanked by the Association for this work.
- The secretaries had also organised and run the GCRA gardening consultation this year and thanked all those who had completed this. This was to be discussed further later in the meeting, but the mention of it in the report caused some discussion of gardening, including about the trees and the extra work that was commissioned just before COVID and the payment for it. The point was made that the Association should not normally pay for extra work on areas that are not communally owned – the discussion was in part about a list of extra jobs that had been put together with the agreement of the last in-person AGM, and while many tasks had been done, COVID intervened, after which the price would have increased, so a price was settled with Greenscape and paid.

6. Treasurer's Report

The GCRA shared-role-treasurers (Anne McCarthy, Benham Balali and Rachel Hinds) reported to the meeting. All members paid the subscription fee in the past year, raising £13,400. The financial report was distributed prior to the AGM, and the treasurers discussed it. Michael Sharp, a professional accountant and member of GCRA checked the accounts, for which many thanks.

The Association has had a current account with Bank of Scotland and a separate deposit account, which has been difficult to deal with, so the deposit account has been closed with all remaining money going into the current account. The prediction/plan for the future is to maintain around £11-12,000 in the account.

The treasurers reported that they did not think it would be necessary to raise the GCRA subscription this year (in order to cover regular maintenance and some extra work if needed), given that it had been raised quite substantially last year and there is sufficient money in the bank. It was proposed by GCRA members from the floor that the the subscription should nonetheless be raised. It was proposed that the subscription should be raised by £20. A vote was taken and this proposal was not carried:

- for 13
- against 16

7. Website report

Joe Peach had been appointed as GCRA committee member with responsibility for the GCRA website at the last AGM, but he stepped down from the committee during the year because he moved away for work (although he still co-owns his flat on the estate). He has continued to upload minutes and other matters to the GCRA website, and would be willing to continue with that if no other member volunteers to take on the job.

8. Appointment of Committee

A call had gone out with the notice of the AGM asking for new committee members, given that a few had either stood down during the year (Joe Peach and Mor Kandlik Eltanani, who had needed to stand down due to extra commitments elsewhere) or who needed to stand down now (at the AGM - Michelle O'Toole and Patrick Honeybone). No member had volunteered before the AGM, apart from Sam Rennie, who volunteered to do the Secretary role by herself. The meeting expressed its thanks and Sam was appointed as GCRA Secretary for 2023-2024. No member volunteered to run the website, so we will ask if Joe Peach can continue to upload minutes to the GCRA website.

Two members volunteered to take on the role of GCRA Chair at the AGM: Colin Dempster and Carol Fraser. A vote was taken:

- for Colin Dempster: 13
- for Carol Fraser: 15
- abstention: 1
- Carol Fraser was thus elected as GCRA Chair for 2023-2024

Colin Dempster was asked if he might serve on the committee, and he agreed. Another member also volunteered to serve on the committee (Gillian Lawson). Both were approved as appointed by the meeting. The three shared-role-treasurers (Anne McCarthy, Benham Balali and Rachel Hinds) confirmed that they would be okay to carry on with the role. The meeting expressed its thanks and they were appointed as GCRA Treasurer for 2023-2024.

9. Items of Business

– Parking and carparks (including: use of visitors spaces)

A member had asked that it should be raised at the AGM that two visitor parking spaces in Ettrickdale are being used by GCRA members as their regular parking space. It was noted at the meeting that many visitor spaces are sometimes used by members and it was agreed to mention this in the minutes and, in that way, to ask members not to use visitors parking spaces regularly.

– Benches (including: maintenance of benches and other furniture)

A member mentioned that the picnic table may need varnishing.

– Meetings

It was considered whether regular GCRA members might be invited to committee meetings.

– General maintenance of the estate

A member mentioned that the gate at the riverbank could do with a coat of paint.

– Signage to riverbank

It was agreed that it should be investigated if another sign could be put up by the riverbank noting that this is private space.

– Gardening

Patrick (as one of the GCRA shared-role-secretaries) summarised the results of the GCRA gardening consultation. It had been agreed at the 2022 AGM to hold a consultation among members about the gardening in time for the current AGM, in part to consider if the GCRA should investigate using a different gardener. The consultation was carried out using a Google Form – all members were invited to fill in the form by email, unless the committee did not have an email address for them, in which case a hard copy was delivered to their flat. 43 members (= flats) returned the survey (42 through the Google Form and 1 in hard copy). A summary report of the results was distributed at the meeting, and is attached as an appendix to these minutes. The key finding is that there

are considerably differing opinions among GCRA members about the gardening. Most members are happy with the current arrangements: for overall satisfaction, on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 = the worst possible rating, and 10 = the best possible rating), the mean was 6.12, the median was 7, and the mode was 8 (with 9 votes). A number of members think the gardening 'very good' (with 16 members giving it a satisfaction score of 8, 9 or 10), while half that number think the gardening is 'very bad' (with 8 members giving it a satisfaction score of 1, 2 or 3). Many useful comments were included in the survey, which are summarised in the report.

These results were considered by the meeting, and possible courses of action were discussed. Benham mentioned that there is not a clear contract for the gardening, and that it can be difficult to chase them up if an issue arises. It was agreed that a gardening sub-committee would be considered to be set up during the year, to be run by volunteer members of the GCRA, who could draft a precise specification for the gardening and investigate quotes for it. A member also put forward as an idea, that the committee keep a running spreadsheet to record all suggestions received from residents going forward. It was also requested that any additional work suggestions (over and above the general maintenance) be circulated to all owners to agree on before commencement.

10.Any Other Business: dogs on the estate, speeding, tree trimming

A member asked whether it might be possible to ban dogs from the riverbank and/or other areas. Another member reported that they had been verbally abused in connection with dogs on the estate. It was recognised that it would not be possible for the GCRA to enforce a ban on dogs. On tree trimming, it was acknowledged that trees are the responsibility of block owners, unless on common ground.

11.Date of Next Meeting

The next GCRA AGM is to be arranged before the end of November 2024 (in line with the GCRA constitution).

Attendance list

3	5	Ettrickdale	Brannan	M. Brannan [signature]
5	4	Ettrickdale	Fraser	Carol Fraser
4	2	Ettrickdale	Lawson	G. Lawson
9	2	Ettrickdale	O'Toole	Michelle O'Toole
10	6	Ettrickdale	Campbell / Milne	Neil Campbell / Kim Milne
7	1	Ettrickdale	Hinds	Rachel Hinds
1	3	Ettrickdale	Williamson	Robert Williamson
4	4	Glenogle	Westwood	[signature]
6	1	Glenogle	Hill / Boyle	D. Boyle [signature]
6	3	Glenogle	Shaw	Carol & Billy [signature]
3	4	Glenogle	Ogilvie	H. Ogilvie
5	5	Glenogle	Taylor	M. Taylor
5	2	Glenogle	Rennie	Sam Rennie
1	2	Liddesdale	Balali	Behnam Balali
1	5	Liddesdale	Pearson	Brenda & John Pearson
5	3	Liddesdale	Dempster	Colin & Fiona Demspter
5	6	Liddesdale	Muniz / Lyden	Cristopher Muniz & Anne Lyden
4	5	Liddesdale	Waterson	Deborah Waterson
7	6	Liddesdale	Sutherland	Jackie Sutherland
3	1	Liddesdale	Cannon	JRW & C Wagner
7	5	Liddesdale	Honeybone	Patrick Honeybone

Appendix: report on gardening consultation

GCRA Gardening Consultation – for the 2023 AGM

43 members (= flats) returned the survey, out of 122

(this is a good turnout: it is many more than have attended an AGM in recent years)

How satisfied are you with the gardening?

1 (= worst) to 10 (= best)

Mean: 6.12 Median: 7 Mode: 8 (9 votes)

“Very bad” (1 or 2 or 3) = 8 votes

“Very good” (8 or 9 or 10) = 16 votes

Would you be prepared to pay more to get more done in terms of gardening?

Yes - 22, if it improves the service

No - 14

Feedback on gardeners

21 positive comments, 7 negative comments

Do you have any specific gardening suggestions? (Summary)

- shrubs, employ different staff, grass borders, moss, weeding, additional turfing, riverside, ivy, let grounds grow wilder/more natural, new plants

Do you have any specific gardening suggestions? All comments + some from ‘additional comments’

- 2 Liddesdale Place - remove ivy from building
- 3/4 Glenogle Road front and back garden trees are too big and suggest they are trimmed.
- 6 Ettrickdale Place needs ivy removed as its growing through the windows into the stair well and up the side of the back door.
- Block 1 Liddesdale Place- back court The trees have been cut since their roots were giving harm to the foundation of the building. Any suggestions or contributions by GCRA to make the back yard of our building looking better, turfing etc.? Thank you very much 😊
- Block 5, Ettrickdale was one of those missed as part of the last additional garden tidy up when they had to stop part way through due to covid. It was never then picked up after the restrictions. Both front and back require some additional attention as promised last.
- Can there be a direct contact email so that if there is an issue, they can be advised and this addressed at the next visit. E.g. i had a massive overgrowth on a plant so i chopped it myself, but i dont have a gardening bin nor the correct equipment. It would have been great to ask if this could have been done on a scheduled visit.
- I do feel that we are paying a lot of money, if not over the odds for gardeners who aren't doing a great job, don't take care in their work and just being a bit robotic about it.
- In moderation, localised self planting of small shrubs, plants and herbs paid for by owners/renters is ok. However planting larger shrubs and trees should not be encouraged and only done under profession supervision as these may impact the structure and long term maintenance aspects of the estate
- Looking after the flower beds.
- Overall maintenance of estate is very poor.
- Personally I would like it if some of the grounds could be left a bit "wilder" in terms of attracting wildlife, particularly along the riverbank.
- If a block has paid the cost to remove a tree, can the GCRA then fix the lawns - ie. meet halfway. Eg. Rear of 1 LP; More spraying of moss during Winter;
- River bed: Cut down long weeds so river is visible. If they can't do it all, at least do some sections in front of benches.
- Tidy area at 4 Liddesdale by car park
- A proper tidy of the communal area at the end of of the parking in Liddesdale Place
- Maybe leaving the first cut after winter to a little later in the spring.
- Pruning and replacement of shrubs in common areas
- Shrub maintenance - some shrubs get overgrown before they cut them back. Would be good if they removed the moss and weeded more often. They could pay more attention to the corners of the estate that get missed. They could pay a bit more attention to the riverbank.
- Tend to beds and add plantings to improve areas annually
- There needs to be more thought from them with regard to pruning, cutting back, trimming hedges. This isn't done often enough. Not enough generally tidying of the landscape.
- Not butcher the grass - if it's wet, use hand-mowers; b) Don't hack with the pruning, take some care; c) When edging, don't cut existing plants; d) When edging, don't trim too much, creating more garden space; e) Weeding?; f) Planting as promised a few years ago; g) Laying turf over nominated areas as per request a few years ago; h) Weed-and-feed of existing lawns; etc etc