

Fortescue Park Residents' Association

You are reminded of the restrictive covenants which attach to all houses on the estate. No extensions, conservatories or other external alterations are permitted without the prior written consent of the Residents Association.

MINUTES OF THE 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FORTESCUE PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (FPRA) HELD ON MAY 16TH 2022 AT PRINCE OF WALES

1. Welcome

- Warm welcome to a “live” meeting after 2 years of Zoom meetings – good to be back face to face. 19 Residents joined us for this meeting plus 8 Committee members

2. Introductions

Giles Norman – Chair

Clare Marsden – Secretary

Christine Ryan – Leads Gardens

Charles Owens – Most experienced member here

Lloyd Reynolds – Maintenance issues

Mike Dennis – Treasurer & Financial Whizz

Paul Butler – Gardens & Communications

Vanessa Cozens – Gardens & Communications

Madeleine O’Keefe – Newest member of the team (joined after the last AGM) – apologies for not being able to attend

3. Acceptance of 2021 AGM Minutes – available on the website

4. Treasurer’s Report – Mike had prepared a comparison of year end 2020 and year end 2021 for the meeting (see attached). No arrears in receipt of fees for 2022 at this moment. Other receipts relate to shareholder certificates and the fees we now charge for preparation of other sale documents. There were a lot of house sales during 2021.

Expenses increased by circa £6k for tree works (safety and appearance)/ sleeper beds to protect the borders and help retain the soil/fence repairs. Insurance cover has increased. Approximately £6.5k has been used from our reserve fund and it is clear that as expenses stand we will be eating into our reserve fund year on year.

The treasurer recommends an increase in the fees of £30 for 2023 and may have to relook at a further increase for 2024. There has been no increase in fees since 2017 (a £60 increase at the time). Our gardening team Thorburn have held fees for 2021 and 2022 but we have no idea as yet what kind of increase we may expect for 2023.

Q: Is £30 sufficient? The treasurer confirmed that it is not but on the other side we are actively looking at cost savings across the estate.

Q: Should we increase the cost of the share certificates and other associated selling costs? We can look at this but it will not bring in much additional income

Q: *We have never had any large costs on the estate over past 17 years and in 2004 we only had reserves of £20k – we have had emergency funds requested from all home- owners in the past in addition to the fees so it was decided that a cap on reserves at two times the expected fee income was our basis. The situation some years ago when the wall with St James’s was compromised was in fact a lucky escape for FP since the contractors at St James’s set a precedent by installing not one but two fences in the aftermath of the wall damage.*

It was agreed we would publish the reserve fund and cap each year so all owners are informed.

- The Accounts & Treasurer’s Report were formally approved by those attending
 - The Maintenance Fees for next 2023 were formally approved as follows:
 - Currently £330 (less early payment discount
 - New for 2023 - £360 (less early payment discount)
5. **Gardens Report (Christine)** – Monies have been spent during the year on three tree removals and replacements including a silver birch. These typically last 40-50 years and they are inspected frequently by our experts at The Tree Company. Cost to remove trees can be approx. £350 - £500. Replacement trees include cherry trees and Malus trees

Two Holly trees came down during the recent storms and there will be a replacement hedge at the back of the houses facing onto Stanley Road. Grass has not been mown for two weeks- part of the national ‘no mow May’ campaign. This gives insects a chance/ strengthens grass and saves money. We are also experimenting with cultivated wild areas around the estate. We no longer plant annuals – only bulbs and perennials. We have installed edging around some planted areas to prevent soil and compost run loss. Our compost bins are now producing good quality compost and we may try to extend these bins if possible. A lot of appreciation goes to the Thorburn team – Leah and Sam and also to Vanessa, Paul and Chris who assist with the gardens and plant bulbs.

Q: *Silver birches around estate* – these trees die quite quickly when they reach the end of their lifespan. Christine generally walks around the estate with Bill (from The Tree Company) annually with no formal report but we can ask for a report to be prepared each time the trees are assessed and post it on our website. Ad hoc inspections are also carried out when there is a cause for concern. We have an insurance policy to protect homes, cars and people from falling trees or branches. It was mentioned that in the past 40 years very few cars have reported any damage from falling trees or branches.

One resident thanked the Committee for their work and appreciated the idea of having some wild areas on the estate.

Q: *can residents help keep an eye on the birdbath on the top lawn and refill when it is empty?* Yes

Q: *if trees come down in private gardens is this down to the FPRA* – the answer is no.

6. Fortescue Park Neighbourhood Watch

- No report as Charles stood down two years ago.
- Important to note that having an active Neighbourhood Watch can help reduce our insurance premiums
- Position is still open – please talk to Charles.

Charles did add the following – South Twickenham Police Liaison Group meetings are quarterly and it is worth attending both for updates and to represent FPRA. He also commented that FP is considered a crime hot spot over past two years based on some car thefts (cars left open) and bicycle thefts from garages (left open). However, we have the lowest crime rate in the borough but we should remain vigilant. Some fly tipping has been identified and reported. Our WhatsApp group is a useful tool to alert residents to potential crime.

7. Strawberry Hill Residents Association Contribution

- FPRA stopped making an active contribution last year – We would encourage everyone to join (£5 minimum) and will receive electronic newsletter. (Sam & Charles)

8. Community Events (Paul / Vanessa / Madeleine)

- Summer Picnic & BBQ and a Jubilee celebration – Scheduled for 26th June on the bank at the top of our estate from 14.00 to 16.30. More details in our newsletter. Bunting will go up
- Flowering Doorstep Competition (Paul / Vanessa) – just three winners this year but everyone encouraged to support

9. Re-appointments

- Re-appoint the members of Committee - Approved
- If anyone would like to consider joining the Committee – please contact Clare

Any Other Business

- Loch Fyne Gate** – repaired inhouse by Giles and Clare after a breakage (possibly by someone using the handle as a step to climb over). Keys cannot be copied and are available from Clare @ No.91 if you struggle with the keypad
- Solar Panels** – We are aware that only a few residents have bought into the Richmond Solar panel scheme with Green Energy Together. Reminder that this was the only pre-approved scheme. Please contact the Committee for approval if you wish to go ahead with other solar panel designs or before making any other external changes to your property as per the covenants. It was mentioned that the price offered was good but communication has not been great.

Q: Any estimate on impact on fuel bills? 35-40% not reliant on National Grid

Q: Are road surface issues a council problem? Yes