

## **Fairway Court Ochre Yards 3 (OY3) Directors Meeting – 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011.**

**Present:** Michael H (2); Kevin B (33); Dave & Anne O’N (45); David A (46); Alf C (taking minutes) & Linda WM (23)

**Apologies:** Stephen D (18); Mark G (8); apologies later received from William W (36); Jon B (17) and Russell C (landlord for 32)

**Welcome & Introductions:** Linda welcomed everyone to the meeting. As this was the first meeting for a number of people, everyone introduced themselves and gave some background information. Recognition was given to the expertise and skills that each and every one of the Directors bring to OY3. It was also recognised that *partners* of Directors who also act as volunteers are welcome to OY3 meetings. It was agreed that we would not pursue the appointment of another Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator (as Michael would not be able to continue in this role due to his reappointment within the Police). It was agreed that currently everything was quiet at Fairway Court but everyone needed to be vigilant and report suspicious behaviour to both Gentoo and the Police. Michael was thanked for his Neighbourhood Watch role in the past.

Linda explained the background and the structures of the Fairway Court Owner Residents Management Board (OY3) and the Fairway Court Community Association (FCCA) and how the two groups related to each other and Gentoo.

Key differences being that OY3 Directors are owners, and FCCA Trustees are both owners and tenants. OY3 works on day to day management issues but is not constituted, although there is an appointed company secretary, FCCA works alongside OY3 but also deals with the wider social and environmental issues affecting Fairway Court, FCCA is a formally constituted group with a bank account and funds, FCCA can consequently apply for funding (hence the Lottery and funding successes in previous years).

Discussion took place regarding the relationship between OY3 and Gentoo, the leasehold managing agent for Fairway Court, and between OY3 and Rosleb, the freeholders of the site.

It was agreed that there was a need for Resident Directors to organise themselves into a unified group so that they could take much more of an active and directive role in relation to the management of Fairway Court rather than remain in the somewhat passive role.

### **Agenda Items:**

<b>1</b>	<b>The recent lift repair</b> Concern was expressed at the acceptance by Gentoo of the figure of £1645 for the recent lift repair. While no-one wished to compromise on issues of safety, it was felt that further discussion perhaps should have taken place between Gentoo and Shindler, as to whether the repair was really necessary. The question was asked by Directors <i>'as well as the lift cable being replaced, has the issue of where the water has come from which damaged the cable in the first instance been explored?'</i>  It was felt that if this issue has not been resolved, the replacement of the cable was only a temporary measure and the expenditure of £1645 was false economy.  It was agreed that Gentoo should be asked to confirm that the water ingress issue has been resolved/explored and that we will not have to pay for another cable in the short term future. Kevin B agreed to act on	<b>ACTION</b>  <b>Linda to report back at November meeting.</b>
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	any future similar issues to ensure that we were getting value for money.	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Gulley Cleaning</b></p> <p>A quote of around £500 had recently been received for the cleaning of the rain gullies, the concrete flags and the steps along the rear patio area. It had been discovered that cleaning of the gullies in both the car park area and the front areas which are also blocked were not included in this quote.</p> <p>A new quote which will include the cleaning of all the gullies and patio areas is still awaited.</p>	<b>Linda to report back at November meeting</b>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>The Cleaning contract</b></p> <p>A number of concerns were expressed about the standard of cleaning in Fairway Court. Numerous examples were given of where it was felt the cleaning was not undertaken to a satisfactory standard. Discussion took place regarding the possibility of an alternative company taking over the cleaning contract. Linda explained that she had in the past mentioned the dissatisfaction with the Cleaners to Gentoo and further agreed to contact Gentoo again to see how this issue is progressing.</p>	<b>Linda to report back to November meeting.</b>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Bin Store issues</b></p> <p>There was general dissatisfaction with the state of the bin stores generally and following refuse collection. It was felt that there are insufficient general waste bins for the number of apartments and because of this, people have to use the recycling bins when the general rubbish bins are full. Whilst most residents and tenants would like to recycle their rubbish it is just not possible. There is also a continuing 'rat problem' due to the amount of rubbish which spills over onto the floor because of the overloading of the bins.</p> <p>It was reported that numerous discussions have taken place with the Gateshead Council/Environmental Health, but there have been no satisfactory outcomes. The insistence by the refuse collectors that they will only take what is placed in the bins and their refusal to approach collection with any degree of flexibility suggests that this will continue to be a problem. It was suggested that Fairway Court needs more general rubbish bins and would have to do without recycling bins. David A agreed to take action on this issue and contact the Council with a view to reaching a mutually satisfactory solution.</p>	<b>David A to report back at November meeting</b>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Carpeting in the communal areas</b></p> <p>While this relates to the above Cleaning Contract issue (Item No 3) particular concern was expressed as the state of the carpets in the communal hallways and on the stairs. It was stated that it is now some considerable time since the carpets were steam-cleaned. Linda reported that discussion had taken place with Gentoo regarding the awarding of a specific one-off contract for the steam cleaning of all communal carpets to Atlas Cleaning, who had visited Fairway Court and had provided an excellent demonstration of how their specialised equipment could deal with such dirty conditions.</p> <p>A report back from Gentoo was awaited re. progress on a date for the work to be completed. Linda agreed to follow this issue up with Gentoo to resolve the issue as soon as possible.</p>	<b>Linda to action and report back at next meeting</b>

	Further discussion took place regarding the desirability of replacing the carpet with good quality porcelain tiles as per the top floor of 20-34 sometime in the future.	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Rabbits Bank Trees.</b></p> <p>General discussion took place regarding the Council's inability to manage the trees and the open space along the Rabbits Bank area. It was agreed that the Council had declared the area to be a 'wildlife park' only because they apparently had no money to properly manage the area. Directors declared their dissatisfaction with the Council's position on this. David A and Kevin B agreed to take this issue up with the appropriate Council officials.</p>	<b>David and Kevin to report back at November meeting</b>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Winter preparation.</b></p> <p>The need for road salt for the garage approach slope was discussed. During last winter a number of residents were unable to get their cars up the slope from the underground garage. The Council will not provide salt as the area that we are concerned about is private land. It was agreed that Gentoo should be asked to purchase some bags of salt which could be stored in the garage and used as necessary when the winter sets in. This of course we presume would be added to our service charge. If further salt is required for the Fletcher Road areas we would need to contact the Council.</p>	<b>Dave O'N to discuss this with Gentoo/Council</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Litter.</b></p> <p>The problem of litter in the immediate area of Fairway Court and along Fletcher Road was discussed. It was stated that there is a complete absence of litter bins in the area. David A agreed to contact the Council.</p>	<b>David A to report back at next meeting</b>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Access systems on the front doors.</b></p> <p>Due to a number of apartments now being used as alternative hotel accommodation (3 to date), it was felt this could compromise Fairway Court's security in the future. Consequently, Linda reported that enquiries had been undertaken to assess how much it would cost to change the access procedures from the current number/key pad system to a more secure fob system. The outcome was that the cost would be at least £6000. While the idea in principle was seen as desirable, there had actually been no evidence of illegal incursion into the building resulting in any criminal activity. It was agreed that this issue could be shelved until it became more relevant to revisit sometime in the future.</p>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Pets in Apartments</b></p> <p>It has been brought to our attention that a couple of apartment tenants have pets. Dogs have been heard barking and cats have been heard meowing. It is apparent that these pets are not just visiting dogs or cats/kittens but are pets that being kept at the apartment/s.</p> <p>Following much discussion, Directors agreed that there is not an issue with visiting animals that are kept under control and not annoying other owners. It was also agreed that apartments of this type are not suitable for pets as there are few close-by walking areas and as such there could be the additional problem of having to deal with dog excrement on the paths as well as noise abuse.</p> <p>Gentoo have therefore been instructed to contact the offending owners of the apartments in question to advise them that this is in breach of the tenancy</p>	

	<p><i>' Not to keep on the demised premises a bird, dog or other animal without the prior consent of the Management Company'.</i></p> <p>....and that Ochre Yards 3 have agreed that the ruling of no pets should be recognised as a non-negotiable part of the lease with the exception of service dogs (guide dogs, hearing dogs etc).</p>	
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>No specific A.O.B. items were raised. It was agreed that future meetings would be more issue-related as the need arose, and that interim business issues would be dealt with via e-mail wherever possible.</p>	
<b>12</b>	<p><b>Date of next Meeting:</b> End of November, actual time and date to be decided. The meeting will take place at David A's (No 46)</p>	

The Meeting closed at 8.40pm.