

Bertha Park Residents Community Group

Notes and updates from the Bertha Park Residents Community Group (BPRCG) Meeting held on Wednesday, 10th January 2024 at The Hub, 15 Adamson Avenue, Bertha Park, Perth.

In attendance:

Chairperson, Gordon Davidson (GD); Vice-Chairperson, David Walters (DW) and Secretary, Gemma Crawley (GC) plus 15 members of the public.

Apologies:

Michele Osborne (Treasurer) and Grant Laing (Chairman of Perth & Kinross Council)

Welcome from Chairperson

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of Minutes from the Last Meeting

Proposed by Alice Davidson and seconded by Kate Croft. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by the Group.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

No matters were raised from the minutes of the last meeting.

Chairperson Report

GD stated that the items included in his report will be covered within other agenda items.

Vice-Chairperson Report

DW gave an update on contact with the two housing associations, Kingdom and Simple Life regarding feedback on the factor. Both Kingdom and Simple Life hold a block vote on behalf of their residents, and obtaining their support is crucial if the formal complaint results in the BPRCG voting to remove the factor.

DW has received a response from Kingdom, who are also extremely unhappy with the work being conducted by Screen Autumn. Kingdom are on-board with the proposal to replace the factor and will support the BPRCG if the formal process progresses to replacing the factor. Simple Life have yet to respond and have been contacted again.

Treasurer's Report

MO was unable to attend the meeting and her report will be circulated following the meeting.

Funding / Initiatives Update

GD provided an update on current funding initiatives.

Bertha Blethers

Bertha Blethers continues to take place every Thursday from 12.00-2.00 pm in The Hub. Soup and sandwiches are provided. Feedback will be sought as to the type of activities that could be included. The age range of attendees covers those in their early-20's to older residents. BPRCG's current funding allows Bertha Blethers to continue until end-March / early-April 2024.

Youth Group

Four taster sessions took place throughout November and December 2023. Feedback will be sought from attendees and the youth group will be modified to suit their needs in the future.

Parent and Pre-School Group

A survey has been circulated via social media and email to those residents who attend the Parent and Pre-School Group. As of the date of this meeting, 22 responses have been received.

Warm Welcome Items

The warm welcome items were well received. BPRCG distributed 48 items to 17 residents. The most popular items were the cosy blankets, flasks and socks.

£577 of the £952 budgeted for has been spent, leaving £394 still to be spent. GD sought agreement from the Group regarding using the remaining amount to purchase additional items to keep in stock for future initiatives.

Update on Issues

Factor

Many members of the Group attended the Screen Autumn AGM on Wednesday, 1st December. The Committee has written to the factor expressing members dis-satisfaction with the minutes from the AGM and encouraging the factor to re-examine their notes regarding their verbal promise to waive all fees due to the factor for October, not just fees relating to groundwork's.

GD has suggested that residents refuse to adopt the minutes from the November 2023 AGM at the 2024 AGM, as it is felt that they do not represent an accurate record of the meeting.

The Committee has received the budget for 2024 from the factor. The Committee has requested a more detailed and transparent budget, that includes income vs expenditure and the inclusion of the fees due to the factor.

The Committee has requested that during their Nurtures next scheduled maintenance visit, that they concentrate on the areas surrounding the car park to the rear of the flats at the junction of Mercer Street and Geddes Avenue. They have also requested that the hedges facing the flats on Bertha Way are also included in the next scheduled visit.

GD is meeting with Screen Autumn on Tuesday, 16th January 2024 to discuss outstanding issues, such as the Screen Autumn website and specific portal for Bertha Park residents to be able to obtain updates, raise concerns/complaints, etc. To date, no response has been received from a Screen Autumn Director following the formal Stage 1 complaint being submitted. It was also felt that the BPRCG demand a response from a Director at Screen Autumn to respond to the formal Stage 1 complaint as soon as possible. GD suggested extending the period to mid-summer to allow the new manager to rectify issues relating to the conduct of the factor before escalating to a formal Stage 2 complaint.

It was also suggested that the Committee obtain a copy of the original tender document relating to the initial contract being given to Screen Autumn. This will allow for identification of any breaches in the contract, specifically relating to the significant delay in holding an AGM.

Screen Autumn invoices for November / December 2023 are due to be sent week commencing 15th January 2024. It is hoped that these invoices have been simplified as requested by the Committee and will be easier to understand.

Update from discussions with PKC

GD has sent a list of updated actions from the BPRCG to Grant Laing, the Leader of PKC, and our elected councillors.

530 leaflets relating to the Safer Communities initiative have been distributed throughout the development. These leaflets contain useful contact numbers on who to contact if assistance is required.

Road Adoption

The BPRCG have received a spreadsheet from Springfield highlighting the current position of PKC relating to road adoption across the development, plus a colour-coded map clarifying the areas under discussion.

Update following Latest Meeting with Springfield

Surfacing of pavements on Mercer Avenue, Draper Road and Consul Road have been completed. Preliminary surfacing of the roads has begun with Iron works have been raised to accommodate additional layers.

The Christmas tree that was erected by Nurture on 1st December 2023 fell over shortly after it was installed. Springfield were contacted regarding re-erecting the Christmas tree to an upright position, but this didn't occur. The Committee has suggested that a living Christmas tree be planted instead, as this would provide a budget and environmentally friendly alternative.

A Springfield Santa visited the development on 13th December 2023 and this was felt to be great success.

Additional bins have been requested for a new bin at the junction of Draper Road and Calico Way. Approval for this additional bin has not yet been received. Springfield will absorb associated costs until handed over to Screen Autumn.

Springfield have now installed '20 is plenty' and 'Stop, Look, Listen' signage throughout Mercer Street and Duff Street with a view to decrease speeding and child safety. The Committee have contacted PKC regarding installation of the 'tubes' in Geddes Avenue to enable analysis of speeding vehicles. Springfield are open to this initiative and feedback is awaited from PKC.

PKC are reviewing road markings at junctions with Miller Homes as some road markings are unclear or confusing. No feedback has been received as yet.

The next virtual meeting with Springfield will be held prior to the next BPRCG meeting.

Bus Service

Primary school drop-offs and pick-ups now take place outside the Premier shop in order to reduce risk the risk to children waiting for the school bus.

Unfortunately, no feedback has been received from PKC regarding the local bus service. PKC has written again to Stagecoach seeking clarification regarding the service post-May 2024 when the current contract expires.

GD has circulated the latest version of the Springfield Development plan updated in September 2023 to the Group.

Cross-Tay Link Road

No further information regarding the status of the Cross-Tay Link Road has been received. The Committee has written to PKC requesting to be involved in the design phase. Input would specifically relate to crossings and the impact on the community.

Primary School Plan

No further update on the plans for the building of the new Primary School to be located adjacent to the High School has been received.

Paths

GD is meeting with the Landowner, Jim Ritchie, and Andrew Barrie to discuss installing quarry dust paths. A working group is going to be convened to identify the best method of ensuring the paths are maintained. The working group will be formed of the Developer, Landowner, Greenspace, PK Countryside and the BPRCG.

Litter Picking

Claire Leishman has responded to the Committee and has agreed provide equipment to enable litter picking to take place. The High School are keen to be involved in this exercise to assist in being good neighbours and enhancing community spirit.

Developers Fund

The Committee received £300 from the fund which pays for hire of The Hub for the BPRCG meetings. The Committee has asked for clarification on where interest paid on these funds ends up. GD has also requested information on the process for applying for further funding from the Developers Fund.

Bertha Park Pharmacy

Bertha Park Pharmacy is now open. GD mentioned that he had used the collect and dispense prescription service - all went smoothly and prevents the inconvenient visit into town. GD has asked if a text service could be implemented for notifications of availability of prescriptions for collection. The pharmacy are hoping to have a text service up and running sometime in January.

The pharmacy is open 7 days week. This is ideal for those residents who find it difficult to go into town due to work commitments.

AOB

Tractors are continuing to leave mud on roads and speeding through the development.

GD mentioned that Stagecoach have an escort role available for escorting school children on the school bus. This role is required 5 days a week and the role holder will be employed directly by Stagecoach.

A number of residents reported anti-social behaviour relating to cars racing in the car park of the High School and drifting round the roundabout at the entrance to the development. This activity has been reported to Police Scotland, who have stated that they will increase their regular patrols on the development.

GD minted that the Community Learning Co-ordinator is keen to visit to run sessions for residents on topics such as digital skills, etc.

GD attended the History of Bertha Park Meeting hosted by the West Stormont Historical Society in December 2023. GD found this meeting interesting and provided the Group with a brief history of Bertha Park and its links to Murrayshall, Thomas Graham (a General in Wellington's army) and it's history until the Ritchie family purchased the land in the 1920's.

Next Meeting is on Tuesday, 6th February 2024 at 19.30 at the Community Hub, 15 Adamson Avenue, Bertha Park, Perth.