

SAPRA

St Andrews Park Residents Association



Chairman: Adam Bennett
Deputy Chair: Michele Needleman
Treasurer: Richard Williams
Secretary: Welby McRoberts

<http://www.sapra.uk> | committee@sapra.uk

St Andrews Park Residents Association	
Meeting	September 2020
Date & Time	Thursday September 24 th 2020, 19:00-21:00
Attendees	Michele Needleman (Deputy & Acting Chair) Richard Williams (Treasurer) Welby McRoberts (Secretary) Abs Gupta Susan Hampshire Kat McKay Arif Jaffer Ayesha Ahdan Goretti Thomas Jeremy Forrester Chandike Mallowaorachihi Seema Ansari
Apologies	Carina Hendriks Vanya Allen Adam Bennett
Agenda	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New acting chair• Minutes Updates & News from Mainstay <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noticeboards• Bins & litter picking• Estate Manager latest• Merger with FirstPort• Next service charge bills• Feedback of new Mainstay Portal Updates & News from Vinci St Modwen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Road Safety Audit• Estate-wide parking policy• Annington Homes site development News from Apartment blocks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New cleaning contractor• Wellington House high electric bill• Halifax House render stain• The Triangle basement bins• Bristol House faulty entrance door• Lockheed House meeting with Catalyst NOM (Neighbourhood Operations Manager) SAPRA Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SAP In Bloom scheme• Next SAPRA Newsletter• SAPRA website updates• SAPRA AGM AOB

SAPRA

St Andrews Park Residents Association



Chairman: Adam Bennett
Deputy Chair: Michele Needleman
Treasurer: Richard Williams
Secretary: Welby McRoberts

<http://www.sapra.uk> | committee@sapra.uk

Common Abbreviations:

VSM – Vinci St Modwen

MS – Mainstay

LBH – London Borough of Hillingdon

Introduction

New acting chair

Please note Adam Bennett's recent resignation was largely due to increased workload from his employers. He will hopefully continue to serve on our committee. Michele stepped in as Acting Chair until next AGM and chaired this meeting.

Minutes

As no-one volunteered to take notes for minutes, Welby obtained agreement from those present to record this Zoom meeting.

Mainstay Updates & News

Noticeboards

Pictures of a noticeboard design used at another St Modwen Homes development were forwarded to Michele by Sian Robertson (MS) and shared at the meeting, along with estimated cost of £2k each plus fitting. Following discussion on how these would be paid for (e.g. crowdfunding, estate fund, sponsorship), it was agreed that SAPRA should endeavour to obtain more general agreement from SAP residents before committing to this level of expenditure. Ideally, we need a way for SAP residents to vote on such things, perhaps via a voting mechanism on the SAPRA website.

Action: Welby to advise as to whether a voting mechanism could be included on the SAPRA website.

Bins & litter-picking

Michele commented that since the August SAPRA meeting with MS and VSM present, the bins on the estate appeared to be being emptied more frequently with far less litter seen. All present agreed this was also the case in their area of the estate. Nevertheless, we should remember this service is being paid for by all SAP residents from estate service charge, not from council tax. We've had no say as to whether bins should even be provided, their size or number. This is another example where a voting mechanism would be useful on the SAPRA website.

Estate Manager latest

Michele reported that Sian Robertson (MS) has recently interviewed a promising candidate for this role but must await approval from VSM before offering the job. This is because VSM will initially share employment costs. Michele told Sian about a previous promising candidate who had already accepted another job offer by the time VSM made up their mind. She advised Sian to chase VSM for a decision and keep the candidate informed, as it would be a shame to lose this opportunity.

Merger with FirstPort

Michele shared a press release posted on FirstPort's website, informing their acquisition of Mainstay was approved by the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority) on 16 September. As we heard at the August meeting, Mainstay claim this will make no difference to existing clients, including SAP Estate.

SAPRA

St Andrews Park Residents Association



Chairman: Adam Bennett
Deputy Chair: Michele Needleman
Treasurer: Richard Williams
Secretary: Welby McRoberts

<http://www.sapra.uk> | committee@sapra.uk

Next service charge bills

Michele reported Sian Robertson (MS) is already working on the 2020/21 budget, and provided approval is obtained from VSM, our service charge bills for the year beginning 1st Dec 2020 should be distributed prior to the due date. Michele wished Sian every success in achieving this, as it would be a first for Mainstay.

Feedback of new Mainstay Portal

Following discussion, those present who had accessed the latest version of Mainstay's portal either from a PC or smartphone, found it had similar content as before but was more difficult to negotiate. Welby commented the 'style' used was more modern-looking, though still dated. Regarding content, it still exhibits the basic problem of trying, but failing, to provide relevant information according to account type (freehold or leasehold).

VSM Updates & News

Road Safety Audit

Michele reported that Lucinda Clason-Thomas (VSM) is keeping SAPRA informed by email following the Road Safety Audit conducted by Atkins. An internal VSM Projects meeting is being held tomorrow (Friday 25 Sept), where this is being discussed. Lucinda will report more next week, as VSM is fully aware of SAPRA's high priority given to road safety on the SAP estate.

Estate-wide parking policy

Again, Lucinda Clason-Thomas (VSM) is keeping SAPRA informed by email on progress following a meeting between VSM, MS and PCM to discuss how to implement a consistent estate-wide parking policy. The requirements list provided by Michele was used as the basis for this discussion. As disclosed in her email of 23 Sept, SAPRA will be provided with a full proposal for discussion prior to any actions taken. This is to avoid any hurried plans being implemented that might cause further problems, as happened in the past.

Annington Homes site development

At the suggestion of Lucinda (VSM), Michele has sent an email enquiry to St Modwen Homes Customer Service, asking whether the 2 brick walls they demolished in Phase 6 to enable access to this derelict site will be re-instated, and if so, when. Clearly, residents of Phase 6 are anxious to know what is planned for this site, and whether Masterman Place will remain a no-through road. Welby demonstrated how to use Hillingdon Council's Planning Portal to find planning applications by area or road name, which was most helpful.

News from Apartment blocks

New cleaning contractor

Michele reported that Sian Robertson (MS) has appointed Begum Business Services (BBS – begumservices.co.uk) as the new cleaning contractor from 9th October, to clean communal areas of all Mainstay-maintained apartment blocks. BBS is a Bromley-based Facilities Services company, so look out for their 'low emission' vans! Sian advised BBS already provide cleaning services at The Dice, which is how she found them.

SAPRA

St Andrews Park Residents Association



Chairman: Adam Bennett
Deputy Chair: Michele Needleman
Treasurer: Richard Williams
Secretary: Welby McRoberts

<http://www.sapra.uk> | committee@sapra.uk

Wellington House high electric bill

This ongoing problem of an unrealistically high communal electricity bill is still being actively investigated by MS, and residents kept informed. It appears that Eco-tricity (electricity provider) was unsuccessful at their recent visit to use meter checking equipment, due to specifics of the original installation. Sian is now finding out who has the contract for maintaining the plant (which includes a ground source heat exchanger) and searching for maintenance records. Sian's current theory is the heat exchanger may have failed, and heating has reverted to all-electric. Welby re-iterated his view that the residents themselves should hire a qualified electrician to perform a simple check of the installation's cabling in relation to the meter, as there is no guarantee it was correctly installed.

Halifax House render stain

The unsightly stain on external render is thought to be the same latent defect as that found on an adjacent house owned by Susan (on SAPRA committee), who has provided Sian (MS) with details of her successful claim to LABC (the warranty provider). Sian hopes to pursue a similar claim on behalf of Halifax House. Incidentally, there is also render staining on Wellington House, but this is thought to be caused by poorly installed external windowsills and is being addressed.

The Triangle basement bins

Michele updated the meeting on this issue, since speaking again to Sian (MS). Further to Sian's email of 14 Sept informing us she had made progress on getting 11 recycling bins resprayed to become green general household bins, apparently Sian has not yet received a quote from UK Containers so cannot raise a purchase order. Michele advised Sian to chase UK Containers and to inform LBH, who may be able to provide details of an alternative supplier. In the meantime, residents have no option but to place general household waste into recycling bins.

Bristol House faulty entrance door

Michele informed the meeting of an outstanding fault on the level access entrance to Bristol House (part of Triangle development). This door is supposed to open automatically from outside, but despite the proximity reader illuminating green (to indicate accepted token), the door neither unlocks nor opens. Sian (MS) has sent out engineers from companies who maintain different aspects of the door mechanism (lock, door opener, door entry system), but each engineer simply checks their own 'bit' and proclaims the problem lies elsewhere. Michele gave Sian name and details of a door entry system engineer she recommends who may be willing to sort out the problem.

Lockheed House meeting with Catalyst NOM (Neighbourhood Operations Manager)

Michele informed the meeting that Jeremy has kindly arranged a meeting on 12th October with Mary Whitfield, the recently appointed NOM for Catalyst, the housing association that manages Lockheed House. The 2 main points we wish to raise are 1) unequal treatment between rental-only and shared-ownership residents regarding access to parking bays and 2) the need to inform residents how to dispose of bulky waste (e.g. old appliances), as currently residents are dumping unwanted items in the basement. Michele will also ensure that Mary is aware of the delineation between Catalyst and Mainstay responsibilities. Michele asked Jeremy to email her a list of any other points he'd like raised.

Action: Jeremy to email Michele a list of points for discussion, in good time prior to 12th Oct meeting.



SAPRA Topics

SAP In Bloom scheme

Susan informed the meeting of her idea for a 'SAP In Bloom' initiative for Spring 2021. She explained her idea of distributing packets of seeds and/or bulbs with our next SAPRA Newsletter, which will include a relevant article on the scheme. The idea is to encourage residents to create an attractive floral display in their front garden, balcony or window, that can be viewed from the road. There could be a competitive element to the scheme, where we ask others to vote on their favourite displays under different categories, for example. The rector of St Andrew's Church has already expressed his willingness to be involved. Susan has obtained offers of seeds and bulbs, and VSM are keen to contribute. The John Locke Academy has been given permission by VSM for children to plant a wildflower garden in a grassed area near the St Andrew's Rd/ Bader Way junction. The meeting agreed the SAP In Bloom scheme would help encourage our sense of community and no-one objected to Susan developing it.

Action: Every committee member to put their thinking caps on and help Susan develop this scheme.

Next SAPRA Newsletter / SAPRA Website / SAPRA AGM

The meeting briefly talked about our next Newsletter. It was generally felt SAPRA needed to get information out to all residents soon, even if that meant it wasn't in the form of a full colour printed leaflet as before. In particular, we need to inform residents of the existence of our SAPRA website (www.sapra.uk) and encourage them to access it for information. According to our Constitution, we need to hold an AGM in October, to include voting for SAPRA officers (Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer). There is little point us limiting voting to the existing committee, this needs to be opened up to the whole estate. Welby suggested we use the AGM to vote on a special proposal to treat the AGM vote as temporary until such time as we can have a far larger community group meeting for an SGM, to achieve a more democratic vote.

The meeting also discussed how we can further develop the website to improve its usefulness. The current WhatsApp 'St Andrews Park South' group suffers from its restriction to 256 users. It would be useful to have a moderated discussion forum for all residents via our website, as well as the previously mentioned voting mechanism. There must be people living on the estate with the skills and time to expand the SAPRA website functions, we just need to find them.

Action: Michele to write a letter to all residents, informing them of SAPRA's website, our AGM, and a plea for residents with appropriate skills to volunteer their help in developing the website further.

A.O.B.

Road Signs

Michele reported that in her discussion with Lucinda (VSM) about road signs, she offered to supply a numbered list of missing, damaged and incorrect signs along with a map indicating their locations. Lucinda would find this most helpful in determining which signs are still the responsibility of VSM, and which have already been adopted by Mainstay.

Action: Michele to produce a numbered list of missing, damaged & incorrect road signs, with map.

SAPRA

St Andrews Park Residents Association



Chairman: Adam Bennett
Deputy Chair: Michele Needleman
Treasurer: Richard Williams
Secretary: Welby McRoberts

<http://www.sapra.uk> | committee@sapra.uk

Plans for original RAF entrance (Hillingdon Road).

Michele reported she had spoken to Lucinda (VSM) about this entrance, asking what was planned (i.e. will it be refurbished, removed or re-built). The reason being, it would be most convenient if pedestrian access was allowed through one of the padlocked side-gates, as it would provide a route for residents to use Manor Way bus stop, and access our closest post box on the other side of Hillingdon Rd. Royal Mail have refused our request for a post box on the estate as all our postcodes are deemed within a half mile of an existing post box, as the crow flies. Lucinda agreed to find out what is planned for this original RAF site feature.

Zoom Subscription

There was a discussion on whether having a SAPRA Zoom subscription would be worthwhile if it was also made available to estate residents to use in place of face-to-face meetings, for example special interest groups like book clubs or mother and toddler groups. Welby commented that Zoom (and possibly other virtual meeting platforms) offer special deals to non-profit organisations.

Action: Welby will investigate this subject and report to committee.

New signage at Playgrounds

Seema and Susan informed the meeting they had recently seen a new sign on the Giles Crescent play area stating its intended use by children age 3-12. Richard reported a similar sign on the Burbridge Gardens pocket park, stating intended use for children age 8 and under. We were all surprised such notices had been erected out of the blue, without pre-warning or consultation. Michele commented VSM may have been advised to erect such signs following risk assessments of all play areas and would find out the reason.

Action: Michele to find out reason behind these signs appearing.

Army Pull up bars

Following this topic raised at last month's meeting, Seema emailed the council to ask why the wooden pull-up bars in Dowding Park had been removed. She received a reply from David O'Driscoll (LBH) stating they'd been removed as they were deemed unsafe and beyond repair. The email suggested residents apply for a Chrysalis grant to pay for new trim trail equipment and supplied a link. Evidently the resident (from Masterman Place) who raised this issue also works for LBH.

Action: Seema to let the resident know about this response and offer to help with the Chrysalis application if needed.

Closing

Meeting Ended at 21:00.