

Newcourt Community Association (NCA) AGM

2nd October 2024 Minutes

Meeting opened: 19.33

Welcome. The meeting was opened by Gordon Edwards NCA Chairman.

Apologies- None

Any Other Business- Can we discuss St Bridget's Nursery Site Planning

Approval of last year's minutes- All members voted to approve

Resignation and election of Trustees- Gill Westcott and Paulene Godfrey Retired. Paulene Godfrey wants re-electing- Sam Proposes, Helen Seconds. Paulene Godfrey and Sarah Barnett (Pitman) to be elected. All members voted in approval

Accounts for 2023- Karen explains the breakdown of the Newcourt Community Centre finances. All residents voted in agreement with the accounts

Chairman's speech- Gordon Edwards

- Thanked everyone for attending the rearranged AGM due to the clash with the important football match
- Theme of last two AGM's has been restructure and reorganising management at the Community Association so it is resilient and has an ongoing future. This is now almost complete. Thanks to all the staff and trustees
- We had an Exeter City Council rent review. Rent is not increasing but have lost the rent grant of £5,000. No opportunity to speak with the Council as yet on our lease.
- NCA trustees have undertaken a strategic review. Lot of different ideas discussed. One idea is to develop a more substantial community hub. Would need more trustees, significant grant funding and a willingness on the part of Exeter City Council to change the leasing arrangements. Gordon has contacted Exeter City Council to discuss.

Community Centre and Charity Report- Karen Silcox – See Appendix 1

Local updates

Persimmon apologies however sent a written report- see appendix 2

Tim neighbour (Resident) is frustrated that persimmon are doing more building works on the local land yet haven't responded to the feedback forms they sent out to the residents. Tim states 'there is no response, and the council haven't got back to anyone. People are selling their homes due to this building work'

Newcourt & Topsham police team update- Written update- See appendix £

S.O.R.G- Seabrook Orchards Residents Group- Natalie from the group inform us there are 5 members on the committee and have a big emphasis on community. SORG are very disappointed in the Bloor who changed the planning to lower the number of properties being built to avoid being obligated to pay to open the current ransom strip. With the new number of homes, they no longer are obliged to proceed in legal discussions. Karen explains the community building due to be built has the same planning regulations as the Newcourt Centre and we are reaching out to avoid there being the same planning problems that we have experienced.

Any other Business- St Bridget's Nursery Planning Application. Peter Howard-Williams reports that in the original greater Newcourt plan there were residential plans so the land will be used for residential purposes. The original plans show that road access was to be off the Ikea roundabout, this is why it was built. However, St Bridget's do not own this land to allow access to come from here. There will be a hearing where Peter will attend as a rule 6 status to put across the resident's safety concerns and to encourage that planning is not given unless the access route is from Ikea roundabout. Peter encouraged residents to go onto Exeter planning website and write any objections or comments.

Break

Residents Question and Answer time.

1. What do you do when Persimmon or the Council ignore you? - A) Residents can complain to their local councillors.
2. Many residents got in touch to complain about parking in their streets. Can anything be done? Some streets will have to wait for the road to be adopted by the Highways authority before restrictions can be considered. Putting in restrictions is a legal process. Where roads are adopted, residents should contact their County Councillor to discuss the issue.
3. Parking on the pavement. Is there anything that can be done? It is police matter. Residents feel that the police do not take action.
4. Wooden fences around the estate. The matter needs to be raised with Exeter City Council as they are responsible for the fencing.
5. Junction with River Plate Road and Omaha Drive – Persimmon have agreed to widen the junction. Work should start Easter 2025

6. Road adoption Admiral way & School Crossing. There is no progress with the school crossing. Persimmon could put up some speed signs to encourage road users to travel more slowly. There is no legal deadline for road adoption.
7. Local amenities Post Office or Doctors Surgery – no plans
8. Ransom Strip. DCC believe that when all the houses are built there won't be any value to the land. At this stage a compulsory purchase order could be considered.

Meeting closed 8:56pm

Appendix 1 – Charity Manager’s Report.

My name is Karen Silcox and I have been working with the Newcourt Community Association for the last three years.

My role is to support the trustees in their duties. The NCA has three key aims

- communicate local information, gather and consider residents’ ideas, concerns and opinions;
- (b) design, manage and promote activities;
- (c) 4. consult and liaise with local authorities and other relevant parties.

The NCA express these responsibilities by maintaining regular email communications with residents, producing the Newcourt News and running the Newcourt Community Centre

As part of this role I send out emails to the NCA mailing list, oversee the production of statutory documents like the Annual Report and Accounts.

In 2023 we provided support to local groups through our small grants scheme. This included a community library, support with rental costs for the coffee club, Newcourt WI and the Newcourt Toddler Group and support with costs for equipment at Trintiy School.

In 2023 we also had a community, and events lead working with us 4 days a week. This lead to , amongst other things, the development of the café van which you see outside, the return of the Halloween Disco, landscaping of the front of the building to it more useful and our festive lights display. We also ran a community nature project with the support of the Devon Community Forum.

The Newcourt Community Centre continues to trade well, and we look for that to trade at a profit so we can use that profit to pay for the community events and activities we would like to do. We invested in our security system which has been a big help in managing the space.

We continue to work with our Community Builder Emma Wonnacott and are supporting her set up a games evening. If you want more details on that then please let me know.

Looking ahead to 2024 and beyond we know that with the loss of the rent grant our community programme will be smaller.

The costs of running the community centre have also increased. We have had a staff restructure which meant losing our dedicated community and events lead with some but not all those duties being absorb by other members of the staff team and by our volunteer trustees.

The barrier to development on this site is the restrictive lease and planning conditions on the building which makes it difficult to innovate and use the space to the best of our ability. We recently looked into siting an INpost parcel locker on site, but this would require planning permission and a change in lease terms costing hundreds of pounds to do. This is just one example of what we would like to be able to do more easily on site.

However, it is this experience that makes us well placed to support the setting up of the community building in Seabrook Orchards which is why we are keen to work with SORG and any other interested parties to see that project come to life over the next 2-3 years.

Appendix 2 Persimmon update

104 agreements (Sewers)

We have recently managed to get more of the sewers adopted. All the sewers in Admiral Way, Omaha Drive and Liberty Way are adopted.

The Sewers in Blakeslee Drive are currently begin reviewed as part of the most recent construction work.

The Sewers in the remainder of the development are currently being assessed and checked ready for adoption by South West Water

S38 Agreements (Roads)

Liberty Way – Now that the Sewers are adopted Devon County Highways have provide an update on the remedials required. This is currently being reviewed ready for tendering for the works. This includes the requirement for replacement street light lanterns for those that are not working. Aim to complete works and achieve adoption within 6 months.

Blakeslee Drive – The roads will be inspected by the Highway Inspector once the sewers are adopted. The sewers are currently subject to the most recent construction work. We would envisage at least 12 months before adoption is considered.

Admiral Way, Mountbatten Drive, Trafalgar Road, Victory Drive, Hardy Close, Hood Drive, King Avenue, Somerville Crescent, Beatty Avenue, Nile Road, Ark Royal Avenue, Endeavour Avenue and Bounty Grove – Steet lighting inspections are due to commence shortly to establish exactly which lanterns require replacement. We will then liaise with DCC Lighting team to ensure they are happy with the light spread from the new units (Design review). Once approved we will carry out the street lighting remedials, whilst the Sewers are being reviewed. Ince the sewers are adopted the Highway Engineer will visit site and carry out an inspection to provide a remedial list of works to achieve adoption. Once we have the list, we will request tenders and appoint a contractor to carry out the works to achieve adoption. We envisage this could take 12 to 18 months due to the size of the development and the fact that we do not yet have an exhaustive list of remedials for the development roads and footways.

Public Open Space

We have placed orders for the Play areas to be repaired in preparation for transfer to Exeter City Council. Once these works have been finished we will process the transfer as quickly as possible. We are waiting on parts for the play equipment before starting the works.

Hedge along Admiral way

The hedge underwent ecological surveys and has now been instructed to be cut back. This will be done as soon as possible by the contractor.

Appendix 3 Newcourt and Topsham Police Team Update

- Thanks for use of rooms to hold pop up surgeries
- Reports of youth anti-social behaviour. Action has been taken
- The team work hard to build good relationships with local organisations such as the Spar shop, School and Golf and County Club.
- Next police surgery 10am 20th December to the Community Centre.

