



The Committee of Management of  
Hanover Crescent Enclosure

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Committee of Management of Hanover Crescent Enclosure**

**Thursday 23 May 2024**

### **Opening**

The Annual General Meeting of the Committee of Management of Hanover Crescent Enclosure was called to order at 19:35. Leanne Allan, as a nonresident, was the independent Chair and opened the meeting.

### **Present**

There were 20 attendees. Apologies were received from 9 residents and the Mayor.

### **Nominations for Membership of the Committee**

One member of the outgoing committee, Sue Gollifer did not put themselves forward for re-election. Other members of the outgoing Committee volunteered to be re-elected. Maria Weijers put her names forward. Sue was thanked for her 33 years of valuable contributions to the work of the Committee.

### **Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM**

The minutes of the 2023 AGM were approved

### **Secretary's Report and Review.**

John Hinchliffe presented the report, part of the published AGM pack, and summarised the Committee's activities over the previous year, inviting comments and suggestions on the work of the Committee.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Paul Farmer introduced the financial statement, part of the published AGM pack, explaining the year-end financial statement that were in good order with the establishment of a reserve fund just above the £30k target. A large amount of 'other income' was explained as being from the prolonged use of a skip by one resident.

### **Election of the Committee**

Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the new Committee was appointed. The remaining outgoing Committee members, plus the new nominee were appointed without a vote being necessary. Committee members for 2024/25 are: Paul Farmer, John Hinchliffe, Neil Smith, Amanda Papadopoulos, Chris Carter-Pegg, Jasbir Walter, Martha Turland and Maria Weijers.

## GENERAL MEETING

### General Business

#### 1. Garden and Tree Maintenance

There were further unavoidable tree maintenance works over the year as some of the more mature trees become weaker or over-large. We hope to do minimal maintenance work over the next year or two. We investigated a newish TRIG vaccine treatment against Dutch Elm disease and have just had the 12 larger elm trees treated. This will be an annual treatment, but we will check any new evidence before we agree treatment next year.

There was concern that the north end of the garden looks bare of mature trees following the work on the two large sycamores . There are several smaller trees growing well in that area and new shrubs have been planted. A new Liquidambar tree has also been planted but here is little space to plant any new, larger trees.

The Committee has been considering removal of the lime tree by the North Pillar, and grinding out the stump to make space for a new tree. The lime is not in the best of health and is beginning to affect the pillar and wall. This will be further considered.

The wildflower beds were agreed to be a great success and we should consider extending them further.

It was suggested that we consult a landscape specialist to get any suggestions to improve the gardens in keeping with their historical nature. And residents were encouraged to pass on any suggestions they have to the committee.

#### 3. Electric Vehicle Chargers

David Lancefield introduced this proposal on behalf of an ‘EV Group’ of six households.. David outlined the four steps required to get up and running – installation of a power unit (cost £6k), installation of kiosk and charger (cost £14k), selection of an energy provider and provider for access control and billing.

The proposal is backed by the outgoing committee and the committee would administer the system. This new proposal is to fund the 50% of the cost donation from the group of six households. The remaining 50% would be a loan from the crescent reserve fund that would be recovered over the years ahead by charges to use the facility. (The proposal rejected in 2022 was for all funding to come from the Crescent Levy). The income back to the committee would come from an access charge to new users of the facility and from an uplift to the unit cost of electricity used.

Among the points raised were:

- That EVs are far from having a certain future, that the investment would be wasted; that the project is being pushed by an exclusive group; that the project is being steamrollered through, that the land is owned by Brighton Council and the committee is not permitted to build on it; that the committee is legally constrained to only looking after the gardens; that

the kiosk and chargers would be out of keeping; that the project will create division amongst residents.

That anyone can still join the EV Group and share the initial investment; that if some new technologies replace EVs the chargers could be removed; that the East Sussex Act allows the committee to do any projects mandated by residents; that planning consents would be re-checked and requested if needed; that the Crescent should encourage car owners with EVs as a contribution to reducing pollution in the city.

- That the contingency fund should not be used to finance infrastructure; that there were risks in such a capital project.

That the investment is a recoverable loan from the fund; that the capital costs would increase further if a decision is delayed; that the £10k gift offered by the EV group for a project that will be done by the Crescent at some point is embarrassingly generous and should be accepted with thanks.

- That the use of two spaces (initially) for EVs will cause parking issues; that having dedicated parking spaces was unprecedented, that any future extension of the facility would create further problems; that it was already suggested that the parking regulations be amended.

That the spaces next to the chargers would remain usable by all; that when EV users are in the bays they would not be using another bay; that there were dedicated motorcycle bays; that the parking regulations would be updated to formalise how the access charge to the EV chargers will be administered; that changes to parking regulations are always subject to an AGM vote.

- That there may be ways to reduce the capital costs by locating the kiosk differently; that the kiosk needed to be vandal-proof; that there should be a further check on the possible use of the existing supply in the lampposts.  
That the kiosk will be on a concrete base and similar to telephone junction boxes around Brighton; that the options re trenching and use of lampposts will be confirmed.
- That there had been several queries about proxy votes in the AGM (not permitted), and there were a relatively high number of apologies, some people had expressed views to the secretary via email and others had expressed views to a member of the committee who had circulated a letter to some residents inviting negative responses to the proposal.

Given the heightened disagreement in the meeting, the Chair declined to put the proposal to a vote. It was proposed instead we attempt to reach a greater level of agreement by the Committee distributing balanced documents for and against the proposal, holding a further meeting, and balloting all residents within 6 months. This proposal was agreed with no votes against.

#### **4. Bike Stands**

Martha updated the meeting on the renewed bike parking facility at the south end, and proposed we do the same at the north end in the summer at a cost of under £1000. The proposal was welcomed and approved.

## **5. Railings on pedestrian entrances.**

The proposal to install railings between the pillars across the inside pedestrian entrances at both ends of the crescent had been approved at the 2023 AGM at a cost of £5k. Chris explained that planning consent has not yet been finalised, that £600 had already been spent and in the meantime the total cost has substantially increased. He will provide and install the base stones for the railings at no cost. He asked for approval of a final total of £6.5k for the whole project. After comments that this may help deter some people from using the crescent as a toilet, the revised budget was approved with no comments against.

## **6. Crescent levy for 2024.**

The outgoing committee was proposing that £3k be raised this year. Half would be to cover the extra cost of the railings and half to enhance the funds for tree maintenance. This is half as much as was raised last year. The proposal was approved without discussion.

## **7. Any Other Business.**

None

The Chair thanked everyone and Neil Smith thanked Leanne Allan for chairing. The Chair closed the meeting.

JH 28/May/24