

MOBILE HOME RESIDENTS FORUM

Monday 28 April 2014

Present:

Councillor Heather Morris (Chair)
Councillors D J Henson

Also Present:

Jan Grundy	- Exonia Park
Graeme Guy	- Ringswell Park
Val Ewings	- Exonia Park
Steve Porter	- Exonia Park
Alan Southard	- Newport Park
Malcolm Thomas	- Ringswell Park
Wendy Threlfall	- National Association of Park Home Residents
Geoff Threlfall	- National Association of Park Home Residents
Julie Wale	- Ringswell Park

Also Present:

Environmental Health Manager and Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Committees)

In Attendance:

Caroline Aird	- Age UK Exeter
Colin Anderson	- J & J Crump & Son
Denise Dearden	- Trading Standards
Inspector Tanya Youngs	- Devon & Cornwall Police

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Baldwin.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2013 were agreed.

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MOBILE HOMES INSULATION - COLIN ANDERSON FROM JJ CRUMP

The Chair welcomed Colin Anderson from J & J Crump & Sons.

Colin Anderson gave a presentation on Park Homes specialist insulation systems.

Although there is no funding from ECO for park homes at present, this was likely to be introduced in late summer.

An energy survey can be provided at a cost of around £60-90, but this will be taken off the cost of the insulation if the decision is taken to proceed, and this will be the only up-front cost.

In response to a question as to whether the insulation is suitable for aluminium walls, Colin Anderson responded that it should be suitable, but he would check.

In most cases windowsills would be replaced.

Councillor Morris referred to the Green Deal and that she was aware of one firm operating in Exeter allegedly Green Deal approved. The Green Deal logo can be found on the last page of the presentation (attached to the minutes).

Colin Anderson advised that the U-Value of park homes is usually provided in the manufacturers brochure. However, if this is not available, the manufacturer can be contacted direct if still in existence, or another alternative is to approach other owners with the same type of park home. A chartered surveyor can also be contacted to carry out a survey, although there would be a cost to this.

Leaflets were provided.

The Chair thanked Colin Anderson for his presentation.

4

SALE BLOCKING - TRADING STANDARDS

Denise Dearden attended the meeting to discuss sale blocking.

However, representatives at the meeting advised that it was not now particularly an issue since the new legislation had come into force.

Denise advised that she could be contacted if any problems occur and useful information could be found on their website - <http://www.devonsomersettradingstandards.gov.uk/>

A member requested information on how to find out whether cold calling companies or those that distribute flyers are genuine. Denise advised that their website held information on how to check if companies are legitimate and how to check if businesses or charities are registered.

Caroline Aird advised of an ECO scheme for boiler replacement for those with broken mains gas boilers.

The Chair introduced Inspector Tanya Youngs, who encouraged reporting to the Police, as her role sits around quality of life and anti-social behaviour.

A current scam was highlighted that was targetted at older people, particularly in the Torquay area. Telephone calls were being received advising that there had been a fraud in their bank and asking customers to withdraw their money straight away. They requested customers to call them back to verify their identity thinking that they had connected to the bank. Once cash is withdrawn in person, a taxi or courier is waiting to take it to a 'safe place'. There had been over 20 victims in the Devon & Cornwall area. Inspector Youngs reiterated that banks will never call and request details from you, and encouraged Forum members to spread the message.

5

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

Councillor Morris asked members of the Forum for views on how beneficial they found the meetings.

Members felt that the Forum was a useful tool for obtaining information and that it was good that they had a voice. Attendance from the Police and Age UK was welcomed.

It was also a useful way to make contacts, eg following the Fire Service presentation at the last meeting, a presentation was arranged for residents.

Members felt that the Forum was moving in the right direction and that they were more supported.

Inspector Youngs enquired as to whether it would be more useful to have a police presence at residents meetings or at the Forum. It was noted that PCSOs do attend residents meetings when invited. Inspector Youngs asked for any feedback if representation from the police is not consistent as there was a specific role around reassurance and she needed to be confident that PCSOs understand the issues. It was noted that PCSOs visited Ringswell Park on a regular basis.

Councillor Morris put forward the suggestion that the number of meetings be reduced to twice a year. However, the Terms of Reference stated that extraordinary meetings may be called where necessary.

Members of the Forum agreed to reduce the number of meetings to twice a year and the Terms of Reference would be amended.

Councillor Morris also advised that, as stated in the Terms of Reference, the position of Chair shall be held for no more than two years, without re-election. Therefore at the next meeting, an item shall be placed on the agenda to elect a new Chair.

6 **DISCUSSION/IDEAS - HOW TO ENCOURAGE OTHER PARK HOMES SITE MEMBERS TO ATTEND**

Councillor Morris asked Forum members for suggestions as to how to encourage other members to attend. There is currently no representation from Rydon Park.

It was suggested that an article could be placed in the Citizen.

Keith Williams advised that he had spoken to the owners of Rydon Park to suggest representatives, but had not yet received a response.

Newport Park does not have a residents association.

Councillor Morris would ask Councillor Hannaford, as Portfolio Holder, for his thoughts.

7 **DISCUSSION - ANNUAL MEETING WITH OTHER PARK HOME RESIDENTS WITHIN OTHER AREAS, IE THE FIRS, PATHFINDER VILLAGE, CAT & FIDDLE - CAN THE COUNCIL ORGANISE OR ASSIST IN THIS AREA?**

Councillor Morris suggested whether an annual meeting with other park home residents within other areas would be beneficial.

Members advised that they had attempted to do something similar 3-4 years ago, but it did not progress any further.

A Mobile Homes Roadshow was taking place in Cullompton on 1 May, and feedback would be sought at a future meeting as to whether this was useful.

Contact would be made with representatives from South Hams, who attended the last meeting as observers, to see if they found it informative.

8

LICENCE CONDITIONS (WITH EFFECT FROM 1 APRIL 2014)

Members requested that all reference to 'caravans' should be changed to 'park homes'.

Reference was made to the proposal for park owners to reclaim proposed licence fees through the pitch fee paid by residents. Keith Williams advised that the legal advice he had been given was that it will not affect those sites that had a current site licence as the licence was in existence when the changes came into force.

However, park home residents were of the view that it will be added to the pitch fee as park owners were required to apply for a new licence. Keith Williams would obtain clarification and information would be emailed with the minutes.

Exonia Park

The Licence Conditions were agreed.

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Rydon Park

The Licence Conditions were noted.

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Ringswell Park

It was noted that all Licence conditions, except Ringswell Park stated that 'roads, communal footpaths and pavements shall be adequately lit, at the park owners' expense...'. Ringswell Park's conditions, however, omitted 'at the park owners' expense'. It also stated that where a porch is installed, only one door may be permitted at that entrance to the home, either on the porch or on the home. The constraint of only having one door had been removed from other park conditions. However, this site licence had been set by the Court.

The park owner will need to approach the City Council in relation to changes to the site licence once planning permission had been granted for the expansion of the site.

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Newport Park

The Licence Conditions were noted.

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PARK RULES

Keith Williams advised that he had written to all park owners, and a consultation paper should be sent to residents of all Parks. Once approved, these would be lodged with the Council.

Park Rules for all sites would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. Wendy Threlfall suggested that Brian Doick, the President of NAPHR could be invited to the meeting.

13 **Newport Park**

There is now a requirement to provide construction details of sheds for the owners' consideration.

14 **PLOT PLANS**

An independent surveyor would produce the plot plans, which would be held within the Site Licence.

15 **ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Election of Chair and Park Rules will be the only items on the August agenda.

16 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The date of the next meeting was noted as Monday 11 August at 2.15pm.

(The meeting commenced at 2.15 pm and closed at 3.37 pm)

Chair