

Bownham Park Rodborough Residents' Association Ltd

Newsletter March 2012

Dear Residents,

1. Reduction in Maintenance Charge

The letter/email method of carrying out a vote seemed to have been very well received.

The final tally by close of play on February 29th was:

For the reduction in charge	57 votes
Against the reduction	2 votes

Over 86% of the residents eligible voted which was an excellent response and thank you all.

Therefore, as the majority was in favour of reduction, the invoice for Year 2012/13 will now be £200 instead of the original £250 as voted for at the last Annual General Meeting. Although we hope to keep the £200 for several years, we will of course have to vote each year on the amount to be levied as is required under our constitution.

You may wonder why we have changed the statement from “Subscription” to “Maintenance Fee”.

Most of our costs are for the upkeep of the Park of which the road and environs are the major items. This includes the cattle grids at the top and bottom and also sweeping as well as general surface maintenance.

We therefore wanted the invoice to reflect that the payment was primarily for maintenance of the Park rather than just a general subscription. There are other costs of course such as grass cutting, accounting, printing, postage, insurance, legal costs and general administration, but these are easily outweighed by the maintenance costs.

2. Bownham Park School Development.

In conjunction with Bownham Mead and Shepherds Well Residents Associations, we have been in contact with Gloucestershire County Council to see if there has been any progress on the re-development of the School. The current situation is that the present occupants of Bownham Park School will remain until the autumn of 2013 at the earliest. Very little has been done regarding drawing up potential plans for the site. At present, we do not expect to hear from GCC for at least two or three months.

3. Broadband to the Park

As many of you may know, the government want to ensure that everyone has access to the high speed internet by 2015. The main method of increasing the speed is what is known as “Fibre to the Cabinet” whereby fibre optic cable is laid from the telephone exchange (Amberley) to the nearest distribution cabinet. The cabinet which feeds all of Bownham Park, is located at the rear of the Bear of Rodborough Hotel.

Gloucestershire County Council has allocated £1.6 million to various projects including improving the telephone network but this money is spread very thinly. Unfortunately Bownham Park is a residential area and therefore not a priority, business use being more important.

Amberley exchange has 1171 residential numbers and approximately 50 business numbers so even the businesses do not have much clout. (It seems that if you work from home, any work number that you have is counted as residential.)

Following contact with Chas Fellows, our Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment he has suggested that contact is made with GFirst (Gloucestershire First a countywide economic partnership) and BT themselves.

Contacts: www.gfirstbroadband.co.uk/ and www.openreach.co.uk/orpg/home/home.do

The provision of a higher speed network could increase the potential value of any property that is for sale on Bownham Park.

4. Spring is Sprung.

We are now almost at the equinox and plants and trees are springing into life. Can all of you, where you have overhanging branches, hedges etc. cut them back to the verge so that the roadway is clear for pedestrians and drivers.

5. Council Members

We currently have 4 Council Members as well as your Secretary and Treasurer, which is the minimum permitted under our constitution. Ideally we would like a full complement of 6 Council Members, especially if one or more of the current 4 are unable to stand for re-election.

Our Council currently meets for about 2 hours, 4 times a year plus occasional brief meetings to deal with urgent matters. It is not an onerous job and hopefully interesting, which will give you an insight into the running of Bowham Park.

If any of our residents would like to join the Council please let me know.

Martin Clements
Secretary BPRRAL