

Palace Fields Residents Association Monthly Minutes: www.palacefields.com

Date: 04-Dec-13: 8pm; **Next Meeting:** 08-Jan-13: 8pm; Árd Rí House Hotel.



1. Scan the code: www.palacefields.com
2. We are now on Facebook: "Palace Fields c/o the Residents Association"

Attendees

2: Marion Treacy
5: Marian Walsh
12: Deirdre McCarthy
48: Michael Goss
77: John Fleming

91: William Martin
144: Ronan O'Ceallaigh
150: Karen Kennedy
190: Mary Keaney
194: Breda Nicholson

239: Stephen McDonnell
275: Mary Fahy

Apologies

40: Bridget Flaherty
143: Mary Monaghan
179: Marian Costello
242: Bernie Kelly
245: Denise Burke
245: JJ Burke

Fox Landscaping: Garrett Fox

Contribution Data for AGM 2014:

- Can each representative(s) from each area, submit contribution data (numbers contributing, and not contributing to the estate upkeep) for Jan'13 meeting coming. Goal is to share this data graphically for each Area at the forthcoming AGM in 2014. Data needs to be gathered now for the forthcoming 2014 AGM in February.

Treasurers Report:

- Balance in main account as of 04-Dec-13 is €11,916.71, and includes all expenditure to date.
- Balance of the second account is €388.24. €860 collected in November 2013.
- Area 9 contributions to be followed up on.
- Outgoings for November €67 to Tuam Office Supplies, approved by the committee. Invoice from Garrett Fox due.
- Matter relating to the €140 in connection with Rob Steed still outstanding.

Maintenance of Communal Areas:

1. Green Areas:

- Main focus of this months meeting, was with regard to Fox Landscaping and quality of their work to date i.e. generally rushed and lacking finesse. Garrett Fox attended this months meeting to discuss and to answer questions as to why the workmanship has been of poor quality on occasions. A letter in response to a list of issues, from Fox Landscaping, with regard to his poor quality of workmanship was passed around.
- Main Issues of **cutting grass in unsuitable weather conditions**, leaving ruts in the greens as a result. **Damage to the base of trees due to strimming**. GF defended his actions by describing the weight of his mowers was 0.75 of a tonne which will increase as the grass is collected. He pointed out that most landscaping contractors would use similar equipment, but had not realised that the ground had deteriorated so quickly. As other estates he had worked on had been unaffected by the recent weather conditions. He mentioned that generally the soil conditions to all green areas was poor and inappropriate for grass that receives regular cutting. The **damage to the trees** had been caused by one of his operatives using a push mower with the rear wheels catching the tree trunks. He pointed out that on occasions he had used a strimmer to cut the central areas of some greens when conditions had been wet to avoid marking the greens. He pointed out that the trimmers he used were of a commercial heavy duty kind and needed two hands to operate. Making it difficult to use a hand held shield to protect the trees whilst strimming. He also pointed out that it is best practice to spray a weed/grass killer around the base of the trees to enable a strimmer to be used safely, as it is difficult to judge the length of the nylon strings.
- WM replied it was **not best practice to cut grass in the rain** and would be better to let the grass grow longer and return to cut at a more suitable time. Was it not possible to speak to a committee member and notify them of the change of date when the weather became more suitable. He mentioned that if it began raining once he had already started then that was understandable to complete it. He asked GF if he had walked the grassed areas to ascertain the condition of the estate before submitting his quotation? To make sure is equipment was up to the job.
- JF mentioned if the grass could be cut on a Friday particularly on bank holiday weekends. As the grass cut on a Monday becomes long and does not look as neat by the following Saturday and Sunday. Particularly in the fast growing season. GF mentioned that the grass was cut every 10 days and that it was not good practice to let the grass grow longer by missing a cut because it is wet to cut. He mentioned that he had walked the estate some three years ago and thought it was soft, but had seen Rhatigan's were improving the soil by carrying out certain works to it.

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- RO'C acknowledged that GF had made a good start at the beginning of the season, but had gone downhill as the year went on. He explained that **Leo Hynes had maintained the estate for the two previous years had made a wonderful job as a 'one man show'. We had all become used to a high standard of workmanship and care, and we expect a high level of standard from all contractors, for our estate as a result.** He mentioned that as well as the tracks being left in the two front greens, he was alarmed at the **practice of cutting the grass whilst the ground was covered in frost, and why cut the grass in the rain?** GF mentioned that he does not wait for a dry weather forecast, he has staff employed and are being paid from when he leaves his depot and whilst they are cutting grass on the estate. It is not viable to leave the estate and then return to finish.
- RO'C asked why **was it necessary to drive the mowers so fast whilst cutting the greens leaving marks on the grass**, is it not possible to slow down particularly around corners. He also mentioned that **the weed killing around the bases of the trees was not considered good practice as the weather conditions here will erode the soil after time and expose the roots**, requiring these areas to be built up with soil to cover the exposed roots. Also, that the weed killer would cause damage by being blown during windy conditions while being applied, causing more grass than required to be killed. It was concluded that the black PVC perforated socks described in previous minutes would be best practice. R'OC mentioned that **grass had been left on the road in his area twice** and had called him back to clean it up. GF responded stating that we try to allow this to happen again. GF mentioned that his machinery is designed to work at speed and that he does slow down at corners to avoid damaging the grass. He asked what happens to the grass that will grow behind the PVC pipe and the trunk? It was thought that this would not occur as the pipes were black and would not allow light to pass. He gave assurance that grass would not be left on the roads again and that it was down to the fact that they were losing light on that day and were rushing to finish the estate. He mentioned that the estate took approximately seven hours to cut with three persons.
- Vote was held whether to continue with contract with Fox Landscaping: **3/11 Against ; 8/11 For.** (One attendee had to leave early). Motion carried to continue with Fox Landscaping in 2014 on the understanding from Fox Landscaping, "learning from mistakes made".

Rhatigans & Galway CoCo. Handover:

- The 'Taking in Charge' officer at Galway Co.Co. Celine Delaney had been in touch and has written a letter confirming that they had taken action against Arlum Ltd in the shape of an enforcement notice and possible subsequent court action to finish the estate.

Nuisance Behaviour:

- Noticed that children from the estate been kicking a football against walls in the early hours of the morning, causing distress to residents. MG to approach parents of children involved. Ongoing.
- We appeal to all residents to minimize noise levels from house parties. Please be considerate to your next door neighbours and keep noise levels to a minimum.

Christmas Social Evening:

- December 20th in Reapys Bar at 9pm onwards, a few drinks to celebrate Xmas, **ALL WELCOME.**

Anaerobic Digestion Biogas Plant:

- No further feedback at this time, from Oct'13 minutes.

Appeal Against Joe & Helen O'Toole Retention of Car Park Area and Right of Way:

- Feedback in another six or more months.

Neighbourhood Watch Scheme:

- Meeting to take place soon.

Palace Fields Constitution Document:

- Now loaded on the website for viewing.



Nollaig faoi shéan 's athbhliain faoi mhaise dhaoibh go léir.

Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all

Useful Phone Numbers & Email Addresses:

- Palace Fields Residents Association: 087 3395593.
- Electric Skyline for street lighting replacement low call 1890 328587 or text 087 1955076 or Email: faults@electricsskyline.ie
- An Garda Síochana Tuam 093 70841. Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Liaison Officer – Frank Breslin.
- Dog warden name and number Christy Corcoran 087-2224192