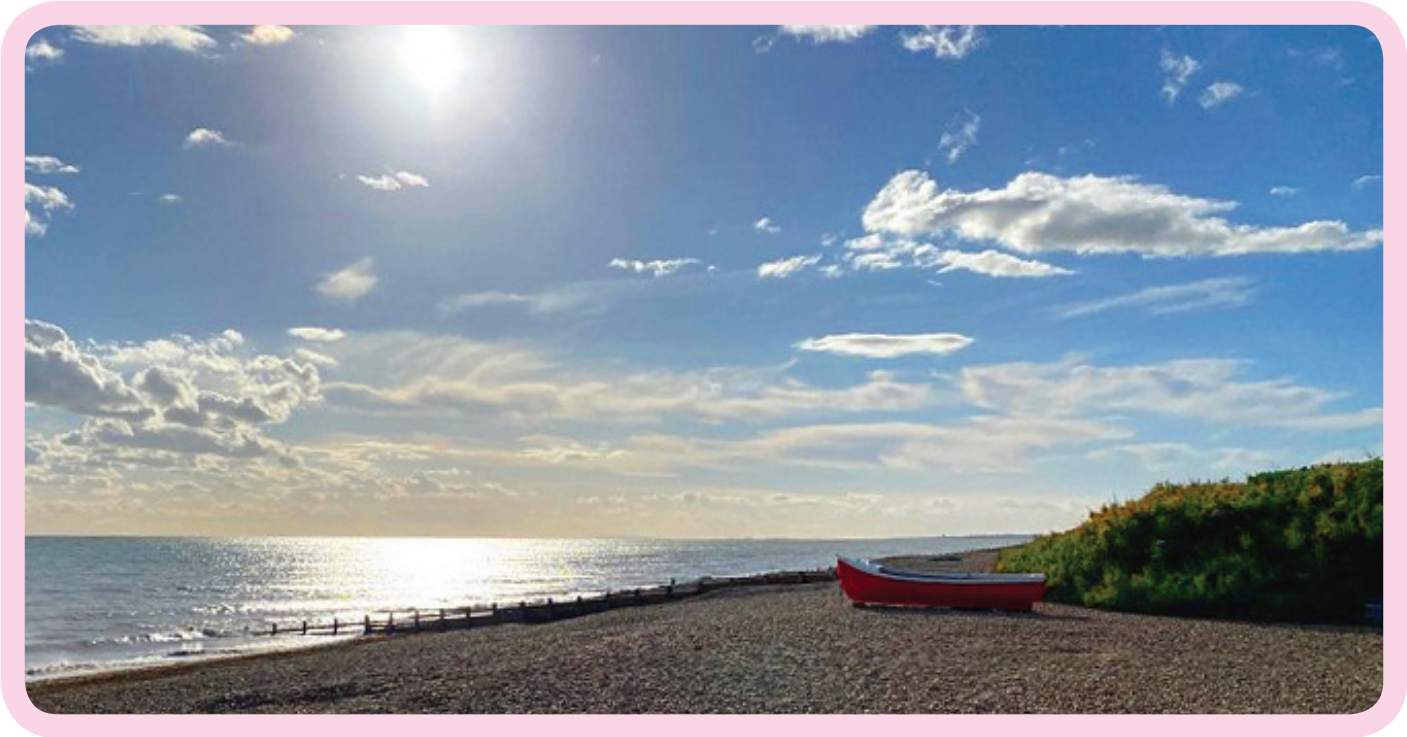
# Willowhayne Life

November 2022

**The newsletter of the Willowhayne Residents' Association**



**Welcome** to the latest edition of the newsletter for residents of the Willowhayne Estate. We hope you find it informative, useful and interesting. If you'd like to contribute to it in any way, by submitting an idea or picture, or suggesting a piece, please feel free to do so.

## Foreword

By Brian Wood, new chairman of Willowhayne Residents' Association (WRA)

"You must be b****y mad!" "Are you a sucker for punishment?" These were just two of the reactions I got when I announced that I was coming back for a second stint as chairman of the WRA.

So why did I throw my hat into the ring? Well, first and foremost, I love the Willowhayne Estate. My family and I have lived here for 25 years and I've yet to see anywhere else which begins to compare. It's not perfect, nothing ever is, but I still count my blessings when I drive onto the estate and think of how lucky and privileged I am to live in such a lovely place. Secondly, an effective board of directors is essential if the estate is to maintain its prestigious status and continue to attract newcomers. I have the greatest respect and admiration for those who volunteer to serve on the board – they contribute so much time and effort in looking after the estate, and they deserve the full support of residents. Too often the question is "What are you doing about it?" when it should be "What are we doing about it? How can I help?"

What's my agenda? My immediate priority is to bring about some urgently-needed improvement to communications. Our new communications director, Mike Allen, has many ideas about this, and you may be sure that improvements will shortly be made to e-mail, written and face-to-face communication. For starters we're arranging an informal residents' meeting (see page 5) to listen to your views and concerns.

There's much to be done, and we're very fortunate to have so much talent and energy on the board. Every director recognises the challenges in maintaining and developing the estate, and each one of us will be fully focused on addressing those challenges. The board has been re-organised so that

individual responsibilities are clear to all involved, and there's back-up in each of the functional areas (see below).

But the most important ingredient for continuing success is you, the residents of the Willowhayne. Members of the board need your full support. We aren't perfect – no-one is – and we know only too well that we can't please all of the people all of the time. Criticism is welcome as long as it's constructive and presented in a respectful and coherent manner. Emotional outbursts, destructive criticism and abusive comment will simply be ignored. We're all equal and we all need to support each other.

The estate belongs to all of us – we're not just residents, we're stakeholders. Our properties represent the biggest investment most of us will ever make. If you're willing to join the board, great. But the rest of us can also contribute to protecting and enhancing our environment, in no matter how small a way. Whether it be by paying estate maintenance charges on time, keeping to the road speed limit, respecting and looking out for our neighbours, keeping the kerbs clear of pine needles and other potentially drain-blocking material, etc, each of us has a part to play.

Working together, we really can make a big difference. The bottom line is that we should share a common objective – to ensure that the Willowhayne is the best private estate on the South Coast.

Kind regards to all, Brian Wood

## Changes to the board

Having served the maximum period of six years on the board, Ray Churcher stood down from the board and as the chair of the WRA. We thank Ray for his efforts at the helm navigating some turbulent waters.

We also say a fond farewell to Arthur St John Simpson, who left the board at the last AGM. We thank him for his service and wish him the very best for the future.

The WRA welcomes three new board members:

- Mike Allen moved from London to Myrtle Grove with his wife last year and has taken responsibility for communications on the estate. Mike has worked in publishing for over 30 years and runs a publishing sales and consultancy business.

- Andrew Nicholson is a retired company director with an extensive background in the non-housing construction industry. Andrew has lived on the estate for a number of years and is providing support on infrastructure and planning.

- John Coleman and his wife have recently moved from London to Myrtle Grove. John takes responsibility for the grass, trees and the tamarisk hedge on the greensward, as well as support on communication, and health and safety.

## WRA board responsibilities

| Function | Lead | Support |
|---|---|---|
| Communications | Mike Allen | Brian Wood & John Coleman |
| Legal | Sue McMain | Brian Daley |
| Infrastructure | Terry Burke | Andrew Nicholson |
| Planning | Chris Bowman | Andrew Nicholson |
| Security | Brian Wood | Martin Mandelbaum |
| Health and safety | Martin Mandelbaum | John Coleman |
| Grass, trees & tamarisk hedge | John Coleman | Martin Mandelbaum |
| Finance | Brian Daley | Sue McMain |
| Hobdens liaison | Brian Wood | Sue McMain |
| Miscellaneous | Brian Wood | Terry Burke |

# AGM minutes

Minutes of the WRA's 48th annual general meeting held on 27 July at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston, BN16 1EZ are available on the estate website at www.willowhayne.org.

# Finance report

The WRA board recently reviewed the association accounts to the end of September. All estate rates for the year have been paid, except for one property which is under probate, whose rates will be collected once this is complete.

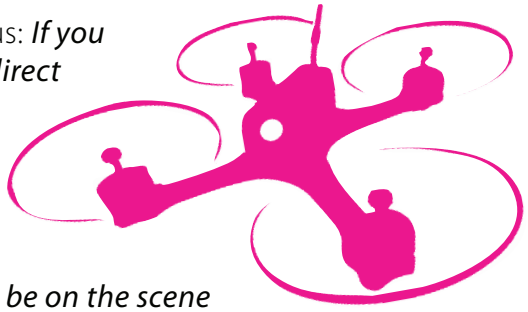
Overall expenditure is within the budget for the year agreed at the 2020 AGM. The only unexpected expenditure has been installing the concrete blocks at the twittens to keep travellers out, the cost of which has been offset by savings on other areas of expenditure. During the remainder of this year there will be a significant spend on road repairs (see overleaf), which was allowed for in the budget for the year.

It's expected that by the end of this year there will be a small surplus of income over expenditure which will increase the association's reserves. These reserves will need further increase in future years to reach a level sufficient to cover future major infrastructure work which will be required, plus any unexpected legal expenditure, etc, without requiring an increase in estate rates above the level of inflation.

It was agreed by the members at the AGM in July that next year's rates, payable in January 2023, will increase by 10% over the 2022 levels to reflect the impact of inflation on association costs.

# Drones

From recent discussions with residents and as a result of a question posed to the board at the AGM, we contacted the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to gain a clearer understanding of our rights in relation to the operation of flying drones over the estate. The laws are very complicated, as the regulations vary according to each drone's weight and purpose, as does the need for registration and the competency requirement. It might be difficult to ascertain whether a drone is being operated legally or not.



The CAA told us: *If you feel there is a direct breach of the law, contact the police as they have the opportunity to be on the scene quickly, investigate and identify as necessary. Unless you are able to identify the drone operator and provide some video or photographic evidence of potential Air Navigation Order offences there is very little the CAA can do.*

*If you believe there are privacy offences being committed, you can contact the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office). UAS operators and remote pilots should be aware that the collection of images of identifiable individuals, even inadvertently, when using surveillance cameras mounted on an unmanned aircraft, may be subject to the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Information about these regulations can be obtained from the ICO website* (**https://ico.org.uk**).

*Within the Open Category most operations must maintain a 150 meters distance from buildings and uninvolved people. Refer to CAP2012* (**https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP2012_EU_Drone_Rules_Factsheet_V7%207.pdf**). *Further information can be found through the Drone Code* (**https://register-drones.caa.co.uk/drone-code**).

Can recreational drones fly over residential properties?
*Yes, unless a Flight Restriction Zone (FRZ) is active, UK airspace is considered public space. Whilst there are restrictions on distances of operations, the CAA may grant Operational Authorization for operations at reduced distances, for example the A2 sub category within the Open Category. This may also be granted through Operational Authorization within the Specific Category.*

Drone users are advised: *If your drone or model aircraft is fitted with a camera or listening device, you must respect other people's privacy whenever*

*you use them. If you use these devices where people can expect privacy, such as in their home or garden, you're likely to be breaking data protection laws.*

In summary, the WRA forbids the use of drones on the estate. Residents are entitled to their privacy and can ask drone operators to desist their activity.

## Travellers

In July a convoy of travellers were camped in Langmeads, and attempted to get onto the greensward. As a result of this, the board, with the help of some residents, took the following actions:

- Advised residents by email.
- Parked cars across the twittens to block them off.
- Closed the Angmering Rd gate because it is the most direct route to the greensward.
- Increased security patrols and focused their attention on the accesses to the estate, twittens and the greensward.

Although the travellers have since moved on, we believe a long-term risk remains. We're making arrangements to permanently protect the greensward by replacing the temporary concrete barriers with more aesthetic boulders. The gates to the estate may be closed at short notice if we believe there's a risk of travellers trying to get into the estate again.

We're contacting the water authority about protecting the gate at the east end of the greensward. We'll also communicate with the emergency services about the restricted access to the greensward. Thanks again to everyone who helped to protect the estate.

## Tamarisk hedge

The cutting of the Tamarisk hedge on the greensward was completed in October, and, despite being quite extensive, it's looking as good as possible. Some of the larger branches which were sticking up on the south side of the hedge have been cut to keep everything as balanced as possible. The hedge required a more substantial cut using chainsaws to encourage new shoots to grow at a lower level.

The hedge's new haircut

## Jubilee trees

To celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, it was suggested that trees be planted in honour of Her Majesty's service. We're delighted that Peter and Carol at 4 The Roystons took the opportunity – the results look fabulous. Thank you, Peter and Carol. The WRA will also plant a tree in honour of the service of her late Majesty.

A tree for a jubilee

## Roads

The following road repairs are being conducted:

- Repairs in West Ridings at the junction of Angmering Lane where there's sinking and cracking to the road. This junction will be closed off for three weeks. Diversion signs will be in place for visitors' vehicles approaching from Angmering Lane, directing drivers via Tamarisk Way and the Ridings. It's hoped that, where possible, residents will use the other access points, such as from Selborne Way or from the direction of The Ridings gate.

- Work in Myrtle Grove in three locations where the road has sunk and cracked. All the repairs are on the west side of the road approaching the bend and on the bend. Although no road closures are necessary for these works, there will be barriers and all drivers should approach with extreme care.

- Work in Selborne Way to repair a crack.

## Road safety

The days are drawing in, and with the longer nights drivers need to pay extra care and attention to pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. We ask everyone to stick to the 20mph speed limit and not to park cars on the road. If residents don't do this, we can't expect visitors to comply. Having no street lighting poses a danger for anyone with mobility problems trying to navigate around parked vehicles in the dark.

The board would also like to make it clear that e-scooters aren't allowed on the estate. There's a misapprehension that e-scooters are allowed on private land such as the Willowhayne Estate. Firstly, permission is required, which the WRA would not give, and secondly, there is public access to our roads, so they're still covered by the Highways Act, which disallows the use of e-scooters.

## Planning

It's hugely encouraging to see the growing number of planning applications for renovations and improvement of residents' homes. We all benefit from the investment in the estate and the board welcomes applications. Planning rules are in place to keep the process fair and equal, and to ensure neighbours aren't unduly affected.

For anyone who might be considering a new development, here's an overview of the process, as well as how the board can help and how it considers applications.

The role of the WRA board in reviewing planning applications is to decide if any planned development is in keeping with the values and vision of the estate and its residents. A key factor in these considerations is maintaining the estate's quality of living.

The board will only consider a development on the submission of an administration fee to Hobdens and, where applicable, approval from the Arun District Council planning officer. All developments to properties, including changes to driveways, require WRA approval and payment of the appropriate fees as detailed on the WRA website. Once payment of this fee has been confirmed, a three-week period of consultation with neighbouring properties will commence.

The WRA has assigned two directors to oversee and help with the planning process. These directors will review all applications, confer with residents and wherever possible resolve any issues that have been identified by WRA or from neighbours during the consultation period for the proposed development.

If you've recently completed a renovation and would like to share the results with other residents, please send pre- and post-renovation photographs to Hobdens for inclusion in the next newsletter.

## Security

The board will be re-instating the 'greeting of guards' on the estate. Under this activity, which had been curtailed during the covid pandemic, security guards going on duty visit homes and checkpoints on the estate to establish any issues on the night. These checkpoints will be agreed with Brian Wood. If you'd like to volunteer your home as a checkpoint, please get in touch via Hobdens.

## Let's get together

The WRA will be hosting an informal get-together on December 5 at East Preston Village Hall from 6-9pm. Drinks will be served, and residents will be able to meet the board and discuss matters that affect everyone on the estate. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

# Communication – a final request

Communication between the board and residents is very important, not only to answer residents' enquiries but also to inform you of the board's actions and news that may affect you.

The threat of the occupancy of the greensward made very clear the necessity of notifying all residents of the action required, which the board had some difficulty in achieving.

Because it's impossible to get important communications out to residents in a timely way without email addresses, we once again ask residents to please give Hobdens your email address. We will not use this information for anything other than legitimate estate business, and won't pass the addresses on to third parties. If we don't have your email address, you won't get updates and important communications including notice of events.

If you don't have an email address, please write to Hobdens at the address further down this page.

Hobdens will forward enquiries to the relevant board member for initial review. Please allow three working days for a response – for urgent matters please see contacts.

From 2023 the newsletter will be distributed to residents by email only and available to collect from Graham Butt estate agents.

The website content will become "evergreen", with updates made only when required – for example, the addition of the minutes of AGMs. Urgent notifications will be emailed only.

We sincerely thank everyone who helps with the production and delivery of the newsletter and with weekend gate closures. The board warmly welcomes volunteers. If you can spare some time to help in any way, please let Hobdens know. The more support the WRA receives, the more effective and representative it will become.

We encourage all constructive feedback. The board aims to make life on the estate as pleasant as it can be. To echo Brian Wood's sentiment, it's a privilege to live here on the Willowhayne, and we aim to keep it that way for all of our residents.

## Useful contacts

**WRA board** info@hobdensmanage.co.uk
(The direct email to the board is no longer monitored)

**Planning** willowhayneplanning @hobdensmanage.co.uk

**Sussex Police**
**101** or **0845 6070999**
These numbers are for non-emergency incidents where a crime has already happened and there's no immediate risk of harm.

**Estate security** Avantguard Security
**01903 890261** or **01384 218909**

**Hobdens Property Management**
**01903 724040**
41a Beach Road, Littlehampton,
West Sussex, BN17 5JA

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