

# Ifold Estates Limited

## Minutes of the 47th Annual General Meeting for 2021

<b>Date:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2021 at 3.00pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Zoom Call Meeting of Members
<b>Directors Present:</b>	Jon Pearce (JP) Chair Sarah Butt (SB) Carolyn Saunders (CS) Phil Salkeld (PS) Bill Bottomley (BB)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Karen Fuller (KF), Roy Baldwin (RB), Phil Woolnough (PW) Mr Messenger (Avellana)
<b>Other attendees:</b>	Donna Golds (DG) - Administrator

### 1. Receive apologies of absence

JP started the meeting by welcoming all members. JP introduced himself as chairman of the committee (the council of management) and chair of this meeting today. He thanked all those in attendance. JP showed the agenda on screen and link to 2020 AGM meeting minutes (which are published on IEL's website) and said that whilst waiting for those to join the meeting any one in attendance could read through the minutes if they haven't already read them. JP said that the committee hoped to be back to face-to-face meetings next year and that he planned to transact the minimum business as laid out in IEL's bylaws. JP said that there is no planned "special business" to discuss and no call for any poll or vote. JP said that he will go through all member questions submitted in advance later in the meeting.

JP said there will be an opportunity to ask questions during AOB at the end but to keep the meeting orderly if a question is something very specific to one property then it may be better handled directly but if a question needs to be asked in the public forum then the committee will take the question and respond at a later date once an answer is agreed. JP confirmed that the committee are happy to publish answers for full transparency. JP went through the apologies. JP said that during the meeting he will mute those in attendance but where voting is required and during AOB he will unmute.

### 2. Resignations and election / re-election of Directors

JP said that a third of the committee were required to resign in order to be re-elected and said that in this instance it would be Karen Fuller and Roy Baldwin resigning but both had opted not to stand for re-election. JP said that Phil Salkeld (Northwood) who was co-opted onto the committee in April 21 would now be formally voted on. Carolyn Saunders (Janda) proposed this and Sarah Butt seconded nomination, and he asked if there were any objections. There were no objections. JP said that Vicky Cooper Johnstone (Commercial Sales Centre) has shown an interest in joining the committee but as yet has not been co-opted. JP said that the committee are always looking for new volunteers. DG to inform Companies House of resignations. **Action: DG.** JP thanked Karen Fuller and Roy Baldwin for their time serving the community, he also thanked all existing Directors and DG as Company Secretary.

### 3. Approval Minutes from 2020 AGM

JP said that in normal circumstances copies of the minutes would have been made available to all in attendance at the meeting. He said the draft minutes were distributed on IEL's website following the 2020 AGM last year and have been available for review there. JP asked if there were any alterations required to the minutes. JP proposed the motion to approve the minutes. JP gave the members a chance to unmute if

there were any corrections required. There were no objections and JP raised the motion to approve the minutes and all agreed.

#### **4. To receive and consider the 2020 Annual Report and Accounts for 2020**

JP said he would not read the Auditors report but that all residents had received a copy in the 2020 accounts document sent prior to the AGM along with the invitation and question sheet. He confirmed that the 2020 Annual Report was published and distributed (paper) in April 2021 and he has taken that as being read.

JP said that during 2020 there was a thorough drainage survey undertaken which was followed by remedial works including installation of road gullies and also additional kerbing installed to protect the verges choosing worst affected areas. He explained that chippings were applied to road in 2020 in an attempt to extend the life of the road before undertaking the resurface in May 21. JP said that no money was contributed to the sink fund (to cover cost of resurface) in 2020 and it was agreed to not increase the estate charge as there were sufficient reserves available to cover this cost. He said the same decision not to increase the estate charge this year was made for the same reason. JP said that with regards to debt recovery, the committee continue to take all necessary steps to collect outstanding maintenance payments through small claims court and have a debt collecting agency to do this. JP said that we are successfully reducing the number of debt actions each year, and the addition of a 'late fee' has helped in this. JP confirmed that IEL has secured one debt from a recurring debtor by applying a charge on their property. He explained that this is a 'good' debt and must be repaid when the house is sold. He explained that this was the first try of using such a charge and is a useful tool to have but not to be used regularly due to the high legal costs relative to our low annual invoice. JP went through a snapshot of the accounts to date.

#### **5. To Authorise the Board to appoint and agree the auditors and their remunerations:**

JP said that the next point of action was appointing and agreeing the auditors and their remuneration, but he said that last year the question was raised "Why is IEL using accountants & auditors in Taunton and not using local companies (this must be more expensive- travel etc)?" JP said in answer that the choice of auditors in Taunton is through their connection with IEL's accountants, which are a local company based in Guildford. JP said that DG checked to ensure that IEL is still being offered a competitive price for the service and DG confirmed that the auditor's costs were competitive. JP proposed IEL continues to use the auditors and JP then asked for the accounts to be approved.

JP then asked for someone to propose the adoption of the auditors/accountants and their remuneration:

Proposed: Mrs Saunders (Janda)

Seconded: Ms Barry (Three Views)

JP asked if there were any objections and there were none. Mr Rose (The Ranch) suggested that IEL check the auditor's costs are competitive every five years. JP said that all contracts were re-tendered a year or so ago and agreed treatment of the auditors should be the same.

#### **6. Questions from Residents**

JP then addressed the questions posed by residents prior to the AGM.

1 Mill House, The Ride

We wondered whether the unsightly rubbish / garden waste on the corner of The Ride and Chalk Road (belongs to Shamba I think) could be tidied up or hidden?

JP explained that we also received the same question via email last month and so have been able to take some action already.

JP said the piece of land in question is within the boundary of Shamba, so it is their responsibility, not part of IEL. The waste there was cleared from the garden approx 3 years ago when the house changed hands and became a rental. The landlord was due to have it removed but had some issue with the contractor and it has been there ever since.

Despite being outside of IEL's control, IEL did talk to the tenant who has escalated to the landlord and been told that it will be cleared.

JP said that as an aside, planning permission is being submitted for the plot, so we can expect further works in the near future.

JP said that the next questions were from:

2 Chequers Close, The Ride

The rubbish on the corner of Chalk Road & The Ride (The corner of house Shamba, opposite Pasedena) - when is this going to be tidied up?

JP confirmed that this question had just been answered.

The grass verge opposite our close (outside Cobwebs) has been damaged by delivery drivers - when is it going to be mended?

JP explained that we did repair this last year with topsoil and seed, but it was damaged again almost immediately. The same is true for several other points around the village, and last year was particularly tough for this with all the delivery vehicles during lock-down. JP explained that we can expect this traffic load and driver behaviour to be the new norm. JP said to avoid wasting money on repeating the same repairs, IEL plans to install a substantial post within the corner of that verge to provide protection, and then will re-apply the soil and seed.

JP said that the two next questions were from:

Nanridge, The Drive

Please consider dog poo bins around the estate. Although I am not a dog owner, I really feel this would encourage those who are to dispose of properly.

JP said that this has been discussed before so is a recurring question. In our previous discussions we have decided NOT to install dog waste bins. The cost of the bins is not a concern, but a) would need an ongoing contract to empty the bins, and b) reluctance from property owners to have a bin sited outside their property.

JP said that some recent advice from Chichester is that these bins have minimal effect. Dog owners are either responsible (99%) or irresponsible (1%) and we might expect to end up paying a contract to dispose of the existing waste of the 99%, while still suffering the fouling of the 1%. JP emphasised that installing dog poo bins is not the solution.

What about some street lighting in-keeping with the estate? Doesn't need to be ugly streetlights.

JP said that knowing the history and opposition against 'modernising' Ifold, we would anticipate a strong backlash against this with many residents preferring the rural aspect of darkness, and a preference to avoid light pollution.

JP said that he didn't want to just dismiss the question, he said that the key advantage of private roads is allowing some control over our environment and so the original questioner's point is correct that we could adopt a scheme that suits us. i.e., Fewer, smaller, softer lights, in strategic places, perhaps with some smart control to limit the on-time.

JP said that it would be a challenge given that we don't have power readily available at the roadside. There have been requests for security cameras in the past, with similar challenges and questioned whether the two topics could be combined. He said having streetlights would be beneficial if CCTV cameras were to be installed. He said that we would need to study options and propose a scheme, then could seek resident opinion via public consultation. JP said that this is not the top of IEL's priority list.

JP said that the next question was from:

Zeka House, The Drive

Our house borders the road that goes into Wildacre Close. The bushes/trees planted along the verge seem to be very neglected with Ivy and other weeds becoming a problem in my garden. They don't just need a tidy up but care & time. It is a longish road to the properties and so costing me in time & money on my side of the fence. Roots are also causing distortion to my fence. Many thanks for your consideration & hopefully action.

JP confirmed that the verges in question are certainly within IEL's control, and so our responsibility to maintain. JP confirmed that we can action this via our contractor for general care. In terms of roots and more involved actions, we will have to visit and evaluate a plan that is satisfactory to all parties: the resident, IEL and the residents of Wildacre.

JP said that the next two questions were from:

The Meriden, The Ride

Is there any option for a playpark in Ifold?

JP confirmed the same question had been asked at last year's AGM and that the issue is space. He explained that the same discussion has come up at Parish Council and some initial discussions have started with Kelsey Hall. He said that IEL is not leading this but willing to support as needed.

The road to Plaistow is dangerous. It would be great if funding could be sought for a path to allow walking between Ifold and Plaistow playpark/store/pub!!

JP said that this was a good suggestion, but IEL's responsibility stops at the end of The Ride and a footpath to Plaistow would fall under the Parish Council and Highways Authority. He said IEL does liaise with Parish Council and is aware that PC is gathering inputs for potential future projects which \*may\* be funded through "New Homes Bonus" and other available grants. JP said that we have passed on the suggestions of playpark and footpath, but it would carry some weight if residents also made their suggestions to the public consultation. He said we will share links to the PC's public consultation when it goes live on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

JP mentioned that there are various footpaths already connecting Ifold to Plaistow, via adjoining fields, just not along the roadside.

JP said the next question was from:

3 Birchwood Close

Please can you move as much of the Ifold Estate paperwork online - using email and internet links. For those without internet access or who are uncomfortable using the internet, you could ask for them to request hard copy information.

Appreciate this will have to happen with another mail drop but ultimately it will save a lot of wasted paper and cost.

Where hard copy information is needed, it doesn't need to be on such thick/expensive paper or professionally printed booklets.

JP said that generally speaking IEL is more efficient now with paperwork than ever before: online meetings, cloud storage for most documents, email for day-to-day communications.

He said that we are building up our online communication, but have not yet achieved the 'critical mass' to switch over and so in the near term would effectively need to run two contact lists (online and hardcopy) and believe that the added admin effort and cost would far outweigh the paper savings. There will be a tipping point somewhere in the future when it starts to make sense, but we're not there yet.

JP said that there are:

Blog = 140 followers

Facebook = 240 followers

Email list = ~300 but many outdated or duplicated

JP said for a long time it has been IEL's intention to minimise cost of print & postage by consolidating all our correspondence into one single-envelope-per-year, which is why we invoice in April/May after the accounts are filed and audited, and in time for the invite to the AGM. He said that we do take care to limit the contents to fit within the 100g limit of a 2nd class stamp. The point is valid that paper could be saved by printing on thinner paper, and we'll bear that in mind when preparing the correspondence next year.

JP said that he will publish AGM answers on website. JP said before he moves onto AOB if there are any questions specific to a property, he would ask members to send an email but if needed to be asked in the public forum that is okay.

### **Any Other Business**

There were no questions asked. JP thanked everyone who attended meeting and said that IEL is always looking for volunteers and to get in touch if interested. JP said that IEL could be contacted via:

[www.ifoldestatesltd.wordpress.com](http://www.ifoldestatesltd.wordpress.com)



[ifold\\_estates\\_ltd@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ifold_estates_ltd@hotmail.co.uk)



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Postbox at Kelsey Hall



Walking around the village

**The meeting closed at 3.43pm.**