

West Cliff House Owners' Association

Newsletter February 2023

West Cliff Community

Happy New Year to you all – we hope you had a good Christmas. This is the first newsletter for 2023 and the first since our AGM in October.

At that meeting it was clear that there are strong feelings about the issues affecting life on the estate. While we may not all agree about everything that happens, we are a community and it is in all our interests to keep the estate in good repair and for all owners to support the committee to do this.

We are using this newsletter to tell you a bit more about the committee and what we do and to ask for your help in keeping the estate such an amazing place to live.

Your Committee

The current committee is made up of nine owners:

Nigel Mawditt is the Chair and has lived on Second Cliff Walk since 1999. He is a trustee of the estate and the road rep for the four cliff walks. "I feel very proud and privileged to live on West Cliff, my goal is to care and preserve this beautiful location for the benefit of all."

Chris Leigh is the Secretary and has lived on Meadway since 2008. She has a background in management with the not-for-profit sector and local government. Chris is a trustee of the estate.

John Gaylard is the Treasurer and has lived on Meadway since 2015. John is the road rep for Meadway and is a trustee of the estate.

Lyndsey Blair has been a member of the committee for many years and has lived on Fourth Cliff Walk since 2006. Lyndsey is a Director of Age and Disability Advice Centre Ltd in Bridport and Amanuensis Business Services Ltd and an active Founder Member of Brit Valley Rotary Club and Assistant District Governor. Lyndsey is a trustee of the estate.

Colin Marley was born and grew up in Bridport and has lived on Brit View Road since 2005. He has worked in construction all his life and ran a successful heating and plumbing business. Colin has been an active committee member for many years using his skills, knowledge and contacts to make sure our roads, footpaths, drains, verges etc. are kept in a good state of repair

Emma Curryer has lived in Meadway since 2020 and joined the committee in 2021.

Chris Barette, a former company director, has lived on West Walk since 2021 and joined the committee in 2022.

Alan MacCartney lives on West Cliff Road and joined the committee in 2022 as road rep.

Neil Grimstone has been a resident since 2015 and works full time running one of the UK's largest waste management facilities. He joined the committee in 2022 and is the road rep for Brit View Road.

If you have any concerns or questions that you think the committee might be able to help with, please contact your road rep directly or via the WCHOA email mail@westcliffestate.co.uk.

What the Committee does for all of us

The committee, who are all volunteers and give up many hours of their time and expertise at no cost to owners, meets about eight times a year. While we each have our own areas of expertise, we also all contribute to making decisions that we believe to be in the best interests of house owners. Unfortunately, we cannot please everybody all the time but we do try hard to take the long term view for the majority.

We manage the upkeep and repair of all communal areas include roads, surface water sewers and drains, signage, gates etc ensuring that owners' subscriptions are used as efficiently as possible for the benefit of us all.

We liaise with external bodies such as Symondsburry Parish Council, Dorset County Council and utility companies . We try to meet the Dorset Council Ranger once a year to talk about footpaths on and around the estate. We respond to legal requests from conveyancing solicitors when owners are buying and selling property and are often asked to complete information about the estate for new owners. We oversee requests for easements and wayleaves which we do without having to incur legal fees.

Getting and staying connected

We know that not everyone has or wants Internet access but, for those who do, speed and reliability are important. At the AGM we had a brief presentation from the Community Officer of a company called Jurassic Fibre who have requested access to install fibre optic broadband on the estate. There were a lot of questions raised at the AGM about the pros and cons of allowing Jurassic Fibre to install its broadband but with no overall consensus or conclusion. One of our owners who works in Telecommunications has helpfully put together a one-page summary of

the position which we have summarised below and which we hope will help you decide whether or not it is something you would like to sign up to.

Email is now the most common method that public bodies and companies use to communicate with the public. It is cost-effective and quick and enables a lot of people to receive the same message at the same time. WCHOA would like to be able to communicate with owners via email and Neil Grimstone has kindly agreed to lead on this for the committee. Inside the newsletter you will find a note from Neil explaining more about this and how you can help the committee and sign up for email communication.

Speeding, parking, litter and dog fouling

Most people who live on and who access the estate show great respect for other owners, drivers and walkers. However a number of owners at the AGM reported an increase in activity that doesn't fit comfortably with our sense of community.

It seems that a small number of people drive at excessive speeds up and down the cliff. This is dangerous for walkers – particularly where there is no pavement and for owners backing out of driveways. The speed limit on the estate is 20mph and we'd like to ask all owners to respect this. Could we also ask owners who have holiday lets to ask their guests to stick to the speed limit and be mindful of other people walking and driving through the estate – perhaps a polite note in the guest information pack?

Like speeding, inconsiderate parking is also making life difficult for some people. Many of our roads are narrow and when drivers park on verges or at the sides of roads, it can be hard for other drivers to pass easily. In places where there are no pavements, parking on the road and verges also makes it more dangerous for walkers. In most cases, verges belong to the estate and not to individual houses meaning that house owners or guests should not be parking here. Your subscription fees are used to pay for grounds maintenance, and any damage to grass caused by parking on verges means higher costs for us all. Again could we ask holiday let owners to remind their guests to park only in spaces that belong to the property and not to park on verges or at the side of roads.

Finally we'd like to remind everyone to clear up after their dog(s) and to pick up litter. A few owners have reported an increase in both of these problems. As a private estate we don't have the support of the Council's refuse collection team nor do we have any public litter or dog poo bins and so any dropped litter or dog mess has to be cleaned up by individual owners.

Changes to footpaths and bridleways

All public footpaths and bridleways are included on something called the 'Definitive Map'. Any proposed changes to this map must be made to the local Council using a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) and can be made by anyone, anywhere. We currently have two DMMOs lodged with Dorset Council proposing changes to footpaths and bridleways on our estate.

1. The first is requesting that Hill Rise and the Four Cliff Walks become public footpaths. This DMMO was submitted by Karl Rogers who lives in Wattton in Bridport.
2. The second DMMO was submitted by Symondsbury Parish Council and affects a bridleway and footpaths at the top of the estate. The bridleway was 'stopped up' in 1961 to allow the top part of the estate to be built and it was never reinstated. Houses were built on top of it and, as a result, it now runs through the gardens and houses of seven properties at the top of Brit View Road. A number of footpaths remain unconnected and technically there is no continuous public right of access through the estate for pedestrians – although there is a bridleway down part of West Cliff Road. This DMMO is seeking to delete some sections of the existing footpaths and bridleway and add in new sections.

The issue of DMMOs was raised at the AGM but it was clear that some people are completely unaware these DMMOs exist, other owners are aware of them but not of the details and implications (pros and cons). The committee is therefore planning an EGM to give owners a chance to find out more about both of the DMMOs and the arguments in support of, and against, each of them. This is an emotive subject with many complex aspects. The committee and / or individual owners have the right to support or oppose either or both of these DMMOs or to remain silent on the subject. More detail on the EGM will be available as soon as we have a date and venue and we do hope that you will come along, find out more and let us have your views.

The DMMOs can be found on the Dorset Council register of DMMOs
<https://mapping.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/rightsofway/definitivemap/register>