

FOUR OAKS ESTATE NEWSLETTER



Issue Number 21 – March 2021

Traffic Mitigation & Potential Gating Update

Despite lodging an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness to Birmingham City Council (BCC) in April 2019 a determination has still not been made, despite continual pressure from our planning advisors. BCC says a determination can only be made after 101 years of Sutton Coldfield Town Council Minutes have been scrutinised and that this process has been hampered by Covid-19 restrictions. The board is unwilling to 'suffer' further delays and it has resolved to install an interim gate on Wentworth Road. This will be a farm-style gate that will be closed intermittently to establish the 'gating principle', although access for residents will be available at all times of course. The gate will be staffed by security personnel when closed during peak periods. This will be at limited cost to ensure that significant Estate funds are not put at risk. The board is aware of the importance of this project and will continue to 'push' BCC for a full determination.

Openreach Ultrafast Broadband

Good news – Openreach has commenced the process of laying fibre to facilitate ultrafast broadband with speeds potentially up to 900 mb/s. So far fibre has been laid in stretches of Ladywood Road and Bracebridge Road and when the new service is available, a note from Openreach is delivered to each relevant house confirming this and giving a date that the service can be requested from the resident's ISP. Openreach is not able to give a date for when the 'roll-out' will be completed Estate-wide, or indeed a schedule of roads/dates, as this depends on funding and installation logistics. This is though very positive and welcome progress.

Grounds Maintenance matters

- * Edges & Hedges are underway with works under the Footpath & Verge Improvement Plan in Hartopp Road and Bracebridge Road. This is an ongoing long term plan carried out on a prioritisation basis.
- * There has been a significant increase in littering around the Estate since the latest 'lockdown' and our litter bins have often been filled to brimming point, often with fast-food containers and coffee cups! The bins are currently being emptied at least twice weekly and sometimes daily.
- * During this time of year with snowfall and generally wet weather our verges often suffer from vehicle damage. This damage is repaired on an 'as required' and ongoing basis.
- * The replacement lighting column in The Moorlands will be installed in the next few weeks.

Works to Estate Land

It is important to remember that **no works to Estate land can be carried out without prior consent**. Works carried out without consent may need to be removed, leading to considerable wasted time and cost. Estate land includes:
*** Footpaths & Verges * Driveway crossings * Roadways**
If you wish to carry out any works to Estate land outside your house please contact us first.

AGM & General Residents' Meeting

Due to Covid-19 restrictions it was not possible last year to hold an AGM in the usual way where all residents are invited. It is unlikely that a physical meeting of this nature can be held in the next few months and to ensure that we comply with our lawful obligations a 'formalities only' 2021 AGM will be held shortly. The board is totally committed to holding a general residents' meeting as soon as possible and hopefully this will be around September. We will keep residents informed.

Tree Survey & Tree Works

Every two years we have a Tree Survey which is carried out by a specialist firm of arboriculturalists and this year's will be carried out in May. Each of the near-400 trees on Estate land is inspected to ensure its safety and so our wonderful 'tree stock' is protected and sustainably managed for future generations. As the Estate is part of the Four Oaks Conservation Area it is unlawful to carry out any tree works without consent from Birmingham City Council's Tree Officer.

An Estate resident has formed two **WhatsApp groups**. The first is a **Community group** to allow general interaction between residents and the second is a **Security Group** to respond to security and other urgent concerns. Just email Stuart Tullah with your mobile number if you wish to be 'added' to the groups.

Circulation Information

This newsletter will be sent in a format that allows easy reading on a mobile device/ tablet. A PDF version will be uploaded to the website and is available by email.

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