

Beckets Grove Phase 2 Residents Association

Meeting Minutes

Date & Time - Tuesday 14th October 2025 at 7.30pm

Location - Wymondham Rugby Club downstairs 'The Mane Study'

1. **Introduction** and taking of attendance, apologies, and meeting notes being taken by.

Residents Attending

Kevin Farrow (Chairperson), Sarah Tate (Vice Chairperson), Darren Tate, Angela Kenny, John Kenny, Emma Peek (Joint Secretary), Claire Small, Gail Fordham, Philippa Black

Other Representation,

FirstPort (Emma Offei) *Online Virtually*

Apologies

Ellie Morgan (Joint Secretary), Barbara Draper, Claire Carter, Delyse Reynolds, Eileen Parrott, Tony Parrott, David White

2. **Review of meeting minutes** from July 2025, and any points resolved or not being expanded upon in this meeting.

- a. Bin store on Barnes close – Repaired just before last meeting and rectified.
- b. Fencing requested by landowner to restrict access to the path – Fence repaired and signs in place. No excessive damage over the summer so will continue to monitor as required.
- c. Jake – work onsite – WhatsApp communication – Happy with this and it is working well for those small issues that could become problematic if left for too long.
- d. Customer service payment issues 2025 – lack of policy knowledge – Point raised with Peter Moore who investigated and responded. No further payment issues but the lack of policy knowledge was not addressed, and we do not expect to see any significant change in this regard. Will leave until the next issue arises.
- e. Sewage concerns, any further issues (Persimmon) – No further issues identified or needing to be raised.
- f. MP Ben Goldsborough meeting – Meeting with Ben in April, it may be beneficial to approach again if we do not see adoption progress moving forward in early 2026.
- g. AGM updates – Changes to minimum numbers required applied to constitution and updated on the website, no role changes made. Gail added to the committee group as she had been mistakenly left off from before when she should have been added.

3. **FirstPort points to pursue.** Reordered to most recent communication set to Emma Offei on 11th September 2025.

We started by aiming to make it very clear the following was not directed with a personal intent at Emma. We are sure there are internal reasons in FirstPort which cause some of the problems we are trying to address, but she is our key point of contact for all things FirstPort related. Ultimately, we are not getting the service we are paying for. Months, and in some cases years of issues not being addressed or dealt with caused strong feelings and frustration in the room throughout the meeting. There are constant issues and failings on things that form the fundamental reason for FirstPort to be in place.

- a. **Issues with FirstPort management and response** - Completion times and general communication over the last 6 months has been poor. There has been very little addressed in terms of the points that were raised at the beginning of the year. Comparing the service received to costs incurred and items resolved, we are not getting value for money. Current costing of management of Phase 2 is just under £2,400 per month (£28,704 for the year/12 = £2,392). Kevin addressed the fact that he puts more time and effort into management of the development and issues raised than FirstPort does.
- b. **Jeckyll Road play area** - Completion of work was agreed in February following failure to resolve last year, however there has been continued failure to secure a date for work to be completed. A request had been made for the work to be completed before this meeting date however that also hasn't happened. Emma advised that CPC were due to start work on Thursday 16th October. This will conflict with the half term holiday, but the general agreement was to get the work done and not delay it further. The area will be closed to allow the ground to compact and grass seed to start to take. Advised that if FirstPort had not got their contractor to complete the work by the end of November we would pursue for the refund of the November management fee, then December and onward until it is completed.

Post meeting note - The work has started, ground raised, matting laid and grass seed applied. Will monitor and raise any issues, and reiterate that this work is being done at Persimmons cost.

- c. **Covered general waste bins** – Installed about a month ago. It took FirstPort and their contractors 5 months to source and install. We asked why, especially as the bins were ordered in June. Emma could not provide a specific reason. We suggested that poor communication and action was a probable cause, this was not denied.
- d. **2024 Accounting issues, explanation, assurance and resolution** – We have already addressed in emails a series of issues on the 2024 draft accounts, a summary of the main issues follow.
 - i. Poor general accounting - we were advised that accounts are not reconciled throughout the year, only 6-9months after the year end as with 2024 accounts now. Delays and recent issues were put down to the outsourcing of different accountants as more developments have been taken on by FirstPort. We replied that FirstPort's business development is not our concern, but correct accounting of our management company is. As this is one of the main things we pay FirstPort to do it was suggested they should put greater focus on serving their existing customers correctly.
 - ii. Misallocation of charges (risk assessments, courtyard maintenance) – A charge of over £1,200 was misallocated to estates. We had questioned what this charge was for, considering the previous year's charges and non- adoption of most of the site in 2024. This was a misallocation and was a cost of a risk assessment for the apartments, apparently for the courtyards. It was stated that this was a ludicrous amount for a courtyard that had nothing in it. We asked to see the risk assessment in an attempt to justify the cost.
Post meeting note – Risk assessment received, this was a fire risk assessment that included the internal communal apartment spaces and covers them until July 2027. Cost is a little more justified with the greater scope, however the cost does seem quite high. No comparison costs provided, we will expect greater cost consideration in the future.
 - iii. Apartment electricity charges and sudden accruals – There was a charge of over £1,600 applied to draft accounts, when questioned this was removed due to accruals on the accounts. Billing evidence was requested.
Post meeting note – Electricity bills supplied for dates between 21st Sep 2021 and 8th June 2024, nothing earlier can be found and may not have been charged. The cost charged over this time period was £1,383.80. Charges taken by FirstPort on accounts between 2020 to 2023 total £2,778.00 and include an increase of £378.00

in 2023. We have asked for an explanation including why the additional amount was taken.

- iv. Apartment Fire System maintenance – There was around £3,500 of fire maintenance work completed on the apartments in 2024. We were advised this is work that had to be completed. This was not estimated for at the beginning of the year, and the six apartment owners were not made aware of this work and the costs. There may be an additional charge to the apartments because of this. The lack of communication about additional non estimated work is concerning. If it is £3,500 then each property would be paying just under £600 extra. We asked whether that would be something anyone individually would be happy to accept without warning.
- v. Separation of charges between Apartments, Courtyards and Estates – These should be separated, and the revised 2024 accounts should reflect this. Any additional charges for Courtyards and Apartments will be covered by those appropriate properties and will not be passed on to the estate as a whole.
- vi. Why has this happened and how can we have confidence in accounting accuracy? – Emma could not provide an answer, and she receives what is provided to her by FirstPort accounts. She was also not looking after our development in 2024. We stated that it does not instil any confidence in the accuracy of FirstPort's accounting for us and makes us question what else is incorrect.
- vii. Revised copy of 2024 accounts – Emma will provide these as soon as they are available. We will scrutinise and raise any further issues. We have advised we are not happy for our Directors (Persimmon employees) to sign this off unless we have approved them first.
- viii. Resolution and credits prior to 2026 estimates – We have reiterated that if these are not resolved and appropriate credits declared before the release of 2026 estimates and invoices, then some of us will refuse to make a 2026 payment until we have an accurate statement of our accounts. Any letter charges applied we will demand to be removed.
- ix. Assurances for 2025 accounting accuracy – Unhappiness with the poor accounting was again reiterated. We expect improvements for 2025 but we will be checking.

- e. **Woodland and tree work including hanging vines and paths** - A survey has been conducted by Talking Elm of the woodland area for tree safety, identifying dead or degrading trees that should be removed. Talking Elm have provided a quotation of £6,570 +VAT with noted auditions increasing it to £8,118 +VAT. One of the main additions is for an Elm Farm tree, also a Phase 1 plan was provided with it so we are not certain if it includes Phase 1 trees too. The survey and quote were provided back in August and before reviewing we had requested that FirstPort need to justify the quotation, explaining to us why the quote is good and fair compared to other providers, or to comparative projects on other sites. We are not willing to just sign off over £8,000+ without knowing we are not paying over the odds. The same request was made in September by email, also addressing the inclusion of the Elm Farm tree and we have asked for a quotation to be provided, only for Phase 2, with cost justification or other quotes to complete the same work. If it can be proven that this contractor is providing good pricing and good quality of work, then we will happily reduce the quote scrutiny. However, Phase 1 woods were left in an untidy state when Talking Elm did them so we particularly want to ensure our expectations and the end results align.

We addressed chipping the cut wood and using as much as possible in the path. Emma advised bark chip is better than wood chip because wood chip breaks down quicker and creates mud. We said this happens anyway with bark, but we might as well use the material that is there. We advised we would be happy for chip piles to be created for Jake to then distribute as required. Larger thicknesses we have requested to be cut to 1.2-1.5m long and stacked in piles away from the path and ply equipment to create habitat piles.

We discussed the path edging and agreed that going forward we will only expect Jake to replace the edging if the timber lengths remain intact and can be resecured with a stake. New stakes can be used but when a panel is broken or split then it can be removed and not replaced. Ultimately these edges are going to get knocked out and broken and they will also

deteriorate quickly. We either constantly keep replacing them or we just let the edges go. The wood chip will still be partially retained by the ground behind the edges and the ground barrier material will still stop any growth in the path. Jake may need to place new wood chip when it starts to become uncovered, such as at the entrance points to the woodland which are already quite bad for this.

- f. **Clements Avenue hedging** – Cost to heavily cut back and remove all material quoted by Talking Elms at £1,150 +VAT. As above we have asked for comparison and/or justification of this quote.
- g. **Planting outside 33-55 Reeve Way** – Replacement planting to fill gaps in the hedge quoted at £634.90 +VAT by Talking Elms again. As above we have asked for comparison and/or justification of this quote. This has also been raised by a resident.
- h. **Planting alongside Briggs Mead** – Requested for planting to create a hedge on the grass edge alongside Briggs Mead. Talking Elms have quoted £1304.95 +VAT. As above we have asked for comparison and/or justification of this quote. Before this is planted the brick services structure at that grass edge needs to be removed by Persimmon. We will chase this with James Mulhearn but have also asked Emma to do the same.
- i. **Grit Bins** – Emma has provided two prices for grit bins (see below). We are awaiting confirmation on the size of the lower costing bin and have also asked for pricing for the bins to be topped up.
 - i. £975 – supply and install 2 x 200L grit bins and 20 bags of grit
 - ii. £628 – supply and install 2 grit bins with gritIf installed, the grit can be used by residents but FirstPort cannot apply it. Due to insurances and potential claim risks, they cannot and will not be responsible for any spreading.
- j. **Tree replacement** – There are 5 trees in communal spaces adopted before April that need to be replaced. A quote was provided for 7 and then 6, but not for 5. Realistically it is now too late in the season so this is most likely to happen next year now. Quote was from Talking Elms so again justification and or comparison of the prices would be required.

Persimmon advised that the trees that they planted at the beginning of the year have no guarantee. They were hit hard over this summer due to going into the ground when it was warm and not having enough water. Contractor apparently visited several times 2-3 weeks after planting. Persimmon said they expected a FirstPort solution but did not check one was in place. A particular species of tree seemed to struggle in all areas and James at Persimmon said he would investigate the unsuccessful species. However, some that were not growing have produced leaves later in the year after the heat. We do not expect that Persimmon will do any further communal space planting with replacements. The suggestion was made that we waited until next summer, survey the tree and check it is growing, then decide if replacement is worthwhile.

- k. **Watering** – A possible solutions for watering was provided by Emma, but it was provided too late. Watering bags can be supplied by Talking Elms for £30+VAT each (filled). A refill of them would be £675 +VAT based on having 30+ bags. Talking Elms can also source a standpipe at £46 +VAT, +Anglia Water charge, +Watering visit charge. We are asking what the charge would be from Anglia Water, and the cost to water all the communal trees. We have suggested a standpipe would not be needed for the whole year. It could be split between developments and we would just need to address ensuring the charges were correctly applied.
- l. **Solar lighting quotation** – We first asked for a quote at the beginning of 2024. We have had a quote for floor mounted 0.6m solar lights but they were deemed unsuitable as there is no PIR and they are likely to be kicked/knocked out of the ground. A PIR (Passive Infrared) means the light will go off and save the battery power rather than always being on. We have asked for a price for square black aluminium posts, 1.8m long to be dug in 0.6m into the ground with face mounted solar light with PIR. Emma to source this quote.

- m. **Fencing quotations** for Barnes Close pit – We have three quotes that vary quite significantly, see below.

- i. Quote of £595 + VAT for 4 posts with 2 rails vs. £1,000 for fencing both sides
- ii. Why has the £237.76 price provided by Jake been disregarded?

The most expensive was quoted without survey and we believe is a 'finger in the air' quote. The price by Jake is the most cost effective however Emma had appeared to disregard this option. We have asked her to discuss this with Jake again and instruct him to proceed as long as the price does not suddenly jump. We are trying to deter and restrict children's access to the pit and feel that under £300 is a suitable price for this work. It is less as labour is not included because Jake will fit it for us.

- n. **Property sale charges** – Upon sale the property owner needs to contact the FirstPort property transfer team. They will charge £440 to the seller to produce a management pack for the buyers. This will take 15 days and to fast track and complete in 2 days will cost £630. This pack will include the following, but it is not a physical document:

1. Law Society LPE1 (Leasehold Enquiries) or FME1 (Freehold Enquiries) Form
2. Service Charge Statement of Account
3. Most recent Estimate/Budget
4. Up to last 3 years' Audited Management Accounts
5. Fire Risk Assessment
6. Asbestos Report
7. Insurance Certificates
8. Major Works Notices
9. Completion requirements within an Information Sheet
10. Link to FirstPort's welcome document

The buyers pay £580 for a deed of covenant & certificate of compliance which is charged to their solicitor. These costs are at least attributed to something that is needed and has a cost to produce.

Some of the items above in the management pack relate to apartments and not general estate properties and most of the items exist already and could be easily collated. Kevin stated he could get access to most of them fairly quickly and we have therefore asked for justification of this charge, including why estate properties pay the same as apartments, and why there is a charge placed on sellers at all. The other key point raised is that at no point have FirstPort done anything to ensure its customers know what the property transfer process is which is why the Residents Association get contacted by sellers' solicitors and buyers. This should be rectified.

It was also noted that some Briggs Mead residents moved in over a year ago and still hadn't been correctly set up with a FirstPort account.

- o. **ROSPA checks on play equipment** – Reports reviewed and the installation of strimmer protection on the posts of the wooden equipment has been noted. The Jeckyll Road play area maintenance access gate is not locked on the road side as it should be. The ground bolt either needs to be cut down or the hole in the slab made deeper and wider. A padlock then needs to be fitted and kept in place. Emma to raise with CPC.
Reiterated the point raised by ROSPA and communicated by Emma about keeping dogs away and preventing fouling on or around the play equipment in the woods and North West corner. ROSPA wanted signs and to prevent access to dogs but Emma is aware the area gets as much, if not more dog walking use than it does play use.
- p. **2026 estimate charge sign off and agreement** - We will not accept Director sign off unless we have reviewed the estimate charges first. Our directors are not being involved or engaging with us as we feel they should. We certainly do not trust them to give the estimates any significant attention and consideration and this has been proven in previous years. Emma agreed for us to be able to review.
- q. **Lagoon strimming and fence clearance** – Each year half of each of the three lagoons will be fully cut back on the sloped edges. This was done at the end of last year by Persimmon

contractors and each year the side cut will alternate. We have requested that Jake cuts up to 0.5m around the full loop of the fencing and continues to maintain this throughout the year, including strimming the area behind the gates to allow them to open. This will keep the inner area of the lagoons looking tidier and reduce the vegetation growth into the fence wire. Emma agreed for this to happen and that the cutting back should happen in November.

- r. **Property boundaries** – Kevin requested that Emma provides us with any boundary plans that she has access to. Some residents are questioning boundary ownership, and this will assist with advising. Nearly all boundaries are 50:50 shared between properties. These have been requested from Persimmon but as responses are limited, we're not sure if/when we will hear back.

Post meeting note – These have been supplied and Boundary plans for the whole site have been sent to all committee members for reference.

- s. **My Home Portal, charges for non-adoption by all properties** - Emma made us aware that charges are being applied from 2026 by FirstPort for non-adoption of the My Home Portal system. Letters can be sent by post but charges are being applied across the development based on the percentage of people not using the portal. This caused a significant amount of additional discussion, disgust, strength of feeling and debate. Some present felt that it was discriminatory towards several groups and this should be questioned further. We are aware FirstPort will get around this as it can be said that they are still offering printed letters, just with a cost implication. The charge is not excessive but as was strongly stated, FirstPort will be making savings from those that do use the portal so should not need to implement further charges on residents. They will essentially be fining customers for those that do not use the My Home Portal. Emma wanted to make us aware of the upcoming change and be upfront with us about it happening, but stated FirstPort aren't directly communicating this additional charge to its customers, as they haven't with other charges such as the property sale and new buyer charges for example. Ultimately there is little we can currently do about it, but the lack of clarity if Emma hadn't chosen to address this, further reinforces the negative feelings residents have towards FirstPort

4. Phase 1 Residents Association

Phase One have a group of residents at the early stages of setting up a Residents Association which is being led by Adam Kemp. Kevin brought them together following emails to us and has offered to provide support. Adam would have liked to attend the meeting but was unable. The suggestion has already been made that once they are setup and have found their feet, meetings with FirstPort might become a joint activity with reduced/specific representation from each Residents Association. The Committee/RA meetings could be conducted separately for each RA to share information and discuss. Ideally Elm Farm would also be in the position of having their own RA too. Some residents were looking into it but we do not know how far they got, we'll try to find out.

5. Persimmon points to update

Disappointingly Persimmon are going through another period of slow responses. There are some updates, all points except one have already been raised. We will continue to pursue for answers and to move things forward.

- a. Jeckyll Road play area – As noted above in FirstPort notes.
- b. Replacement trees that have not survived the summer - As noted above in FirstPort notes. It is very unlikely that we will get Persimmon to take this any further or to replace trees. We will survey all trees after the next growing cycle and decide what we do.
- c. Site signage - Reeve Way/Briggs Mead clarification & Albini/Carpenters addition. No update so we will continue to pursue James Mulhearn (Persimmon) for an answer.

- d. Update on Anglia Water, Highways Adoption & Full handover – Notes follow from James Mulhearn at Persimmon.
- Anglia Water (AW) internal restructure and changes over the last 3-6 months blamed for further delays. Engineers made redundant that covered this area. Has been moving slowly and Wymondham area engineer responsibility has only been decided relatively recently.
 - S102 Adoption route accepted by AW, this means faster adoption and not having to have a 12-month maintenance period.
 - Pumping station compound land transfers drawn up and deed of easement drawings created for AW Legal Team. Ready for adoption.
 - Approval of current pumping station design still in progress. New engineer visited and working with Persimmon colleague to satisfy S102 adoption.
 - Elm Farm adoption separate under a S104 (12 months). Elm farm cannot be adopted until Becketts Grove has been, making BG the priority.
 - In relation to Becketts Grove, all gravity sewers have been remediated in line with Anglian Waters snag list. If any changes are necessary to pump station specification by Anglian Water once they have reviewed all this information, we will make these changes as soon as possible.
 - We are still pushing for Becketts Grove to be adopted as soon as we are able. We have had delays due to Anglian Waters re-organisation, so we may not achieve adoption this year now but we will be pushing for as soon into 2026 as we can.

As previously discussed/noted, once Anglia Water has adopted the sewers, Highways can follow, then full adoption will follow this with Land Registry handover of communal spaces. The big positive is that it should be quicker avoiding the 12-month maintenance period.

- e. Contribution towards residents' administration costs in 2024 and through to April 2025, due to delays caused by Persimmon. – We still haven't received a response as requested from Michelle Baker, will continue to pursue a response and justification.
- f. Request for a Resident Director – To sign off FirstPort estimates communication and accounts. No update. Will continue to pursue this with James at Persimmon.
- g. Removal of brick services structure – As noted above with FirstPort points. We will also raise it with James Mulhearn directly.

6. South Norfolk District Council & Town Council

- a. Any update on land supply and housing need for Wymondham – Cllr Roberts was asked for an update, but nothing was received. His position on the SNDC planning team prevents him from making too many statements regarding planning in the area before it comes before the council.
- b. Any other points to raise - None

7. Planning application for the land North of Elm Farm

Currently no decision on the planning application but we will continue to monitor it. Several key points were put forward contesting it as previously mentioned in other meetings, especially the non-adoption of drains and sewerage by Anglia Water which means there has been no sign off or clear indication that the drains are suitable for the current need, let alone additional properties.

8. Bus Stop crossing petition

Big thanks for Angela Kenny for setting up the Albini Way bus stop petition. We still want/need people to sign and support the petition and emails have been sent out about this. Town Council, District Council (SNDC) and our MP are supporting it, along with our Norfolk County Councillor which provides cross political party support. This may in part be down to them all wanting to be seen to positively support the community but ultimately the decision is with Highways and Norfolk County Council, and the potential blockage is funding, historically different figures have been projected that seem to vary year on year. There may be an attempt to tie improvements to the 110 Safron properties off Croft Way that are currently in planning.

Angela Kenny will be attending the Town Council meeting with Councillor Robert Savage on 4th November to hand in the petition. It was suggested that those that are assisting Angela went along to support too, along with anyone else that wanted to attend and potentially put their own points forward.

Post meeting update – The town council have not put the petition on the agenda for the 4th November and are sending a letter to Norfolk County Council to address the request. There is uncertainty why this hasn't been put on the agenda, possibly because it is not their responsibility or decision, possibly a political reasoning. Angela is investigating and is intending to go to the Town Council meeting still and try to raise the point.

9. Rugby Club Fireworks

Details provided by the Rugby Club of the traffic management plans for the Fireworks on Friday 7th November.

On Entry

- *Heavy signage this year and no road closure required.*
- *CSAS Marshalls with signage on Albini Way/Norwich Road junction with large signs stating entry to residential area only, no access to fireworks. Directing people to enter via the roundabout.*
- *Another Marshall at the Reeve Way/Briggs Mead entry stopping traffic if they have come in off Albini Way, then letting them go when there is a gap in the traffic, but they would have to wait as they disobeyed the signage.*
- *Another Marshall as usual on Bray Drive asking them to get their tickets ready and not to turn into the drive unless they have a ticket.*
- *Entry signs at the roundabout saying this way for fireworks and we will cone the whole main road from the roundabout all the way through to the club.*
- *Cones also placed along Albini Way and Reeve Way as with previous years.*

On exit....

- *One on Bray Drive directing traffic to go left, then another at Reeve Way/Briggs Mead ensuring traffic flow goes into Briggs Mead to the roundabout rather than into Reeve Way.*
- *Exit will be much easier this year, and traffic flow should be quick due to the roundabout.*

We will aim to communicate with as many via email and Facebook that this is what will be happening and ask for the roads to be kept clear of parked cars.

If any issues arise on the night that the Rugby Club should be made aware of, residents should contact the club directly. The club is very happy to address any issues of resident concern, however they are not able to police irresponsible parking on the development. Marshalls will ask vehicle obstructions to be moved where possible. As always let's hope for a nice dry night to assist walkers. If you are concerned about a piece of grass or verge near to your property, then we suggest putting out cones or cordoning it off to discourage parking.

10. Any other Business

- a. Property Deeds - Resident members are currently looking into potential changes that can be made to property Deeds to remove the "Rent Charge" element being secured against the

property. This is causing more instances of mortgage companies wanting an indemnity insurance to be taken out. Will advise all with further updates when available.

11. Meeting dates for 2026

Meetings will be held in one of the four locations at Wymondham Rugby Club. Downstairs Mane Study or Lions' Den Function Room, Upstairs Red Lion Meeting Room or Main Bar. Ask at the upstairs bar on the day if you are unsure where we are.

Dates will be...

Tuesday 13th January 2026

Tuesday 14th April 2026

Tuesday 14th July 2026

Tuesday 13th October 2026