

# Seabrook Orchards Residents Group (SORG)

## Minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting

held at Trinity School, Fish Street

Thursday 29 June 2023 at 7.30 pm

Present: Nat Baker (NB), Ed Rashbrooke (ER), Jonathan Goldsworthy (JG), Annabel Harris (AH), Gordon Edwards (GE), and 57 other members

Apologies had been received from members including Andrew Sails (AS) who was unable to attend as an exec committee member due to illness.

ER took the chair of the meeting.

<b>1</b>	<b>Refresh on SORG</b>  NB presented a refresher on who we are and what we do.  What is SORG? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A formally constituted group run by and for Seabrook residents</li><li>• Our constitution is available on the SORG website</li><li>• All residents are eligible to be members</li><li>• Currently we have 155 households on our membership list</li><li>• An Executive Committee is appointed annually at the AGM</li></ul> What do we do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We share information and concerns across the Seabrook community via our website, emails, general and executive meetings</li><li>• We liaise with third parties and seek to speak on behalf of residents</li><li>• We work together to find answers to questions raised by the community.</li><li>• We seek to improve the Seabrook Orchards community for all.</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes</b>  The Minutes of the inaugural AGM held on 12 September 2022 were approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.
<b>3</b>	<b>Elections and volunteers</b>  During the course of 2022-23, Annabel Harris, Jonathan Goldsworthy and Ed Rashbrooke were all co-opted into the Executive committee.  Thanks were expressed to Mark Sweet and Gordon Edwards for their work as members of the SORG Executive Committee elected at the previous AGM. In the course of the year Mark had had to stand

down. Gordon Edwards did not seek re-election for 2023-24, having been elected Chair of the Newcourt Community Association and focusing his attention there.

AH, JG, ER, NB and AS had been nominated to continue as officers for the coming year, and were duly re-elected.

No additional nominations had been received, but AH introduced a slide showing the Executive would welcome further support from the community who have time, knowledge and/ or expertise to offer for the community, including getting more community events/ get-togethers/ clubs going.

### **3 Annual Report**

The SORG Exec presented the annual report for 2022-23:

#### **3.1 Overview of 22-23 aims (AH)**

- Dialogue: Set up ongoing regular dialogue with Seabrook Orchards Management Company – positive liaison started with Michael Dart.
- Get Noise Barrier Answers: Pursue answers and resolution around M5 noise barrier and associated landscaping (planning compliance) – liaison and site visits with Exeter City Council – trees to be planted.
- Future Influence: Seek to influence future community facilities e.g. playground number 2
- Running Community Facilities Principles Seek to understand plans for running community facilities (community hall, allotments, orchard, sports pitches etc) in line with planning timeframes
- Ransome Strip: Pursue relevant bodies for a resolution on the ransom strip and road connections – long story!
- A Voice: Continue to give the Seabrook Orchards community a voice – including with Councillors
- Inform: Keep the community informed – newsletters and briefings.

#### **3.2 Relationship building (JG)**

In the course of the year we have met with many people. Thank you to:

- Michael Dart
- Exeter City Council (ECC) – Stacey Salter (Planning Enforcement) and Sulina Tallack (S106 officer)
- Devon County Council (DCC)
- Councillors - Andrew Leadbetter (in attendance), Matthew Williams, Josh Ellis-Jones
- Bloor Homes – Will Allen, Customer Care
- NCA – Gordon Edwards
- Trinity School – Owen Wilder and team

#### **3.3 The ransom strip (ER)**

Ed recapped on the timeline with the ransom strip, the fence between Vernon Crescent and Fish Street having been re-erected a number of times over winter 2022-23. In early February 2023 the

road and pavement created by Bloor was dug up and a barrier fence installed. This was under legal instruction to Bloor from HOLAW Ltd (owners of the ransom strip).

Ed has spent considerable time and effort contacting HOLAW Ltd (in Spain, Switzerland etc) and liaising with their solicitors. Ed sought legal advice through property law specialist contact in Mitchelmores who suggested a Licence for Access for pedestrians and cycles could be requested. Ed wrote to HOLAW to ask if they would consider a Licence of Access however this has been rejected in the strongest terms. There is no permission to construct infrastructure on the land.

At present we are powerless to change the current situation on access. There is no legal obligation for the road connections between Vernon Crescent and Fish Street, and Dart Avenue and Admiral Way to be completed until 651 homes have been built, as detailed in the Section 106 agreement.

Access by stealth is the only current option. Don't deface or remove official obstacles.

We will continue to monitor the planning situation for Reserved Matters Applications which at some point will come forward to detail further phases of development, to ensure road connections are made possible by sufficient numbers of dwellings, or possible adaptation of the S106 agreement (if possible).

A member of the audience raised that emergency services keep being directed to Vernon Crescent to access Fish Street. **Action:** The committee resolved to look into this to see if Google can remove a road link. (Follow up: committee could not find any incorrect links on google maps.)

A member of the audience asked if there had been any legal precedent of people getting round this elsewhere. **Action:** The committee resolved to look further into it.

### **3.4 Undergrounding of overhead cables (ER)**

Undergrounding of the single set of overhead HV lines nearest Trinity School has been delayed for over 3 years whilst Secretary of State permission has been sought. This was finally delivered during 2022-23. Undergrounding is required before any further homes in phase 2a/2b can be constructed.

Tree work was carried out in the Millenium Woodland in winter 2022-23, and ducting installed for the new underground cables. National Grid/ Balfour Beatty/ Western Power are now dealing with this and the new towers, pulling the new underground lines and dismantling of old pylons is expected before the end of August 2023.

After this work has been done, Bloor will be able to return to site.

### **3.5 M5 noise barrier (ER)**

Our work in 2022 determined that the noise bund and wooden barrier at the crest had been completed to specification. The tree planting is the bit that is missing. This was brought to the attention of Stacey Salter at ECC Planning and dialogue was sought with the developers to ensure this was rectified. This was due to be completed January/ February 2023 but due to a tree shortage and running out of time, work was not able to be undertaken. Planting is expected winter 2023-24. (Winter is the correct time of year to plant trees.) Initial planting strategy is short in height but will grow in time.

A member of the audience asked if, as the trees were significantly delayed, the developer could be asked to plant more mature trees. The committee advised that Stacey Salter at ECC said they were only able to enforce the original planting specification as laid out in the S106 agreement.

### **3.6 Highways update (JG)**

Jon and Annabel (civil engineer professionals) conducted a log of all issues and highways defects and liaised successfully with Bloor and DCC Highways to understand next steps.

#### Phase 1

- Remedial works undertaken by Bloor (replacement kerb stones, tactile paving installed etc)
- Road works largely complete
- Road adoption is pending drainage sign off from South West Water

#### Link between Phase 1 & 2

- Bloor able to complete highway once overhead cables are dropped
- Streetlighting to be installed- can only do after overhead lines undergrounded
- Flooding, trip hazards and lighting to be resolved

#### Phase 2

- Remedial works undertaken by Bloor
- Road works largely complete ready for adoption
- Road adoption pending adoption of phase 1 and completion of phase 1/2 link. Road adoption can only happen to connect to an already adopted road.

To make life better for all;

- Park responsibly (to allow passing for larger vehicles)
- Moderate speed within the estate – improved with ramp installation
- Specific items can be picked up with Devon Highways once adopted

A member of the audience asked if there would be any yellow or white lines painted. Jon explained that this wouldn't be the case. Jon explained the rationale for road design in new housing estates. Where it might seem like roads are not wide enough or with middle white lines, this is a deliberate design decision to force drivers to drive slower. The emphasis is on people to drive responsibly.

Once roads have been adopted it would be possible to look at further measures such as double yellow lines as needed which was backed up by Cllr Leadbeater.

A member of the audience asked if there was something we could do as a community eg an education or signage campaign. After adoption, could be put forward.

### **3.7 Recap on phasing plan and anticipated next steps**

Nat gave an overview of the phasing plan (dwelling numbers and how this relates to what we expect to happen next.

Phase	Cumulative	Rough timeframe
Phase 1 = plots 1-200 (200 homes)	200	2017-2020
Phase 2a = plots 200-341 (141 homes)	341	2020-2022
Phase 2b = plots 342-445 (104 homes)	445	2023- ?
Phase 3 = Town square (23 homes)	468	2022-25?

\*No further information released on Phase 4 yet but planning consent is for up to 650/700 homes

Phase 2b can't be started until the HV cables are undergrounded.

Phase 3 is Seabrook Square- the community hall. Community café and flats.

Further community facilities aren't triggered further numbers of homes have been built.

What	By When	Rough timeframe
Noise barrier planting	Outstanding	Expected winter 23/24
Undergrounding of HV cables		By end August 2023
Phase 2a to be completed		2023-24?
Community hall construction	Before 350 dwellings completed	2023-24?
Start construction of phase 2b		2024?
Second play area	Before 400 dwellings occupied (mid phase 2b)	
Sports pitch construction	Before 450 dwellings occupied (late in phase 2b)	
Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) construction	Before 450 dwellings occupied (late in phase 2b)	
Laying out and planting of community allotments and orchards	Before 500 dwellings occupied	

We have understood the trees should be planted (plus other replacements across the estate) at the back end of this year.

Phase 2a and recommence after HV cable work completed. This year? Seabrook square should also be built this year or next as it must be constructed before 350 dwellings are completed. So it depends when Bloor re-mobilise to site. Phase 2b likely to be started around the same time.

The second play area will be constructed during phase 2b construction, before 400 dwellings occupied. Note that the sports pitches inc MUGA are not scheduled (legally) to be complete until late in phase 2b/ 3 completed (depending on construction order). Laying out of allotments and orchards will follow much later.

Exactly when stages happen depend on rate of building progress by Bloor.

### 3.8 The year ahead and strategic aims

Other things we'll be working on this year

- Ongoing dialogue with SOMC. We are nurturing a productive yet young relationship.

- Seabrook square is due to be constructed and this will house a community café/ facility. There may be opportunities for us to input into this and be involved with its future. This is something we are exploring to understand more about.
- Keeping up with what is happening on site and build and adoption timelines. Also what this means for managed areas and influencing what we can for the future.
- Communicating knowledge and information with the community.
- Encouraging community development.

### **3.9 Future aspirations**

Jon outlined that Seabrook Orchards - bigger than a typical hamlet. There is lots of talent and fantastic people within the community.

Opportunity to set up new groups / events and raise awareness of existing groups – utilising website / mailing list as a platform to inform residents of upcoming events and activities.

Security – keep informed through community channels – We can work together i.e Neighbourhood Watch?

What would you like to see?

Untimely it's the people that make a community!

### **3.10 New website and mailing system**

This year we have set up a website for the Seabrook Orchards Residents Group:  
[www.seabrookorchardsresidents.co.uk](http://www.seabrookorchardsresidents.co.uk).

It is accessible across all platforms- PC, ipad, mobile-friendly.

We are still generating the content but information includes:

- About SORG- who we are and our purpose and constitution
- Around Seabrook Orchards
- Documents and Reference- minutes, knowledge bank (can you contribute eg deed of covenants, solar, drainage etc?)
- Committee and Contact Info – about us, how to contact:  
[info@seabrookorchardsresidents.co.uk](mailto:info@seabrookorchardsresidents.co.uk)
- News
- FAQ
- Community Links
- Gallery
- Get Involved- your community events and ideas?

<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>Subsequent discussion and questions included:</p> <p><b>4.1 Ransom strip</b></p> <p>Q: Can we just have a walking link? A: At present, not officially.</p> <p>Q: How can we stop ransom strips in the future? A: Ed has asked the Head of Planning at ECC. They have noted this as a recurring problem across many developments but are not (able to?) doing anything about it.</p> <p><b>4.2 Parking</b></p> <p>Q: Can the school be contacted to ask parents not to park on corners on Dart Avenue/ around the school. A: we can contact the school.</p> <p><b>4.3 Phase 2b flats</b></p> <p>Q: Are they private or rented? A: We can find out. Subsequent answer: Flats on the corner of Fish Street/ Dart Avenue are shared ownership (affordable homes).</p> <p><b>4.4 Dog bin?</b></p> <p>Q: We have recently acquired a dog. Can there be a dog bin installed? A: The green spaces on our development will be serviced by the Seabrook Orchards Management Company when they are handed over from Bloor. Dog bins cost money in servicing which would have to be paid for from community purse via the Management Company. If this is something the community wants then it could be looked into at a point in the future, but right now it is best if you take your dog poo home with you and put in your own bins.</p> <p><b>4.5 What specifically can we (the community) help with?</b></p> <p>Q: You have asked for help but it might be easier to quantify this for some of us to think about. What do you most want help with and how much commitment would it be? A: right now, we need help with running the website, any expertise in management companies, and any expertise in running charities. Commitment could be anything from giving advice (a couple of hours?) through to helping research and move things forwards. Generally, the SORG exec committee meet once every 6 weeks for 1.5- 2 hours and carry out work between these dates as we have time.</p> <p><b>4.6 Bloor mis-selling</b></p> <p>Q: Bloor have mis-sold to us that the roads will be connected from phase 2 into Vernon Crescent/ Admiral Way. What can we do? A: The roads will legally have to be connected when/if 651 homes are constructed. If Bloor told you that it would be sooner then this was incorrect. If you have this in writing then it would be useful for us to see it.</p>
	<p>The meeting concluded with many words of thanks from the audience to the committee and all involved at 9pm.</p>