

FAQS ABOUT ELSEA PARK

What is the Elsea Park Community Trust?

The Trust was set up as part of the planning conditions when Elsea Park was first being developed. In summary, a volunteer Board comprising residents, land owner and council representatives is responsible for encouraging community involvement and maintaining the community assets. They meet monthly and are supported by salaried staff.

What do I get for the annual charge?

The annual charge covers the cost of staff wages, the purchase and upkeep of all property and plant owned by The Trust and all other operational expenditure that The Trust incurs in maintaining all open spaces and buildings which have been transferred to the ownership of The Trust. This includes all green areas, conservation areas (such as the Meadows and Setts Green), the Linear Park, children's play areas and The Centre @ Elsea Park. The annual charge does not cover roads, pavements, cycle paths, or street lighting, which remain the sole responsibility of the various developers until such time as they are adopted by the local authority; they will never be owned or maintained by The Trust.

How does the Trust run its finances?

A budget is set annually and is monitored through monthly reports to the Board. Value for money is ensured through seeking competitive quotes for expenditure over £2000. Staff pay is set in comparison to similar roles in the jobs marketplace.

The next step is to develop a five year business plan which The Trust aims to have in place by 1 April 2013. Trust members will be invited to help develop the plan.

How do I get involved?

There is a range of ways you can be involved: you can apply to be a Board member if you wish to be involved in the strategic management of the Trust or join the Events Group which promotes community activity at The Centre. Details are available from the Trust Office at the Centre or by email: admin@elseapark.co.uk

From time to time we carry out consultation exercises either through the newsletter or on individual project proposals. Help shape your community by responding to such consultations.

Are volunteers paid?

No, all volunteers (including Resident Directors) give their time freely and without remuneration.

How many staff does the Trust have?

We have six salaried posts, three of which are part-time. There is a Trust Manager, an Administrator and an Apprentice, together with a Groundskeeper, a Caretaker/Handyperson and a Caretaker/Cleaner.

Do you have a website?

Yes, you will find it at www.elseapark.co.uk. The website carries up-to-date information about activities in The Centre. Members can register and obtain a password to provide access to a restricted area from which you can access minutes of meetings and other reports.

How often is a newsletter published?

We aim to publish it regularly, at least quarterly, and more frequently whenever there is important news to share.

How can I find more about activities at the Centre?

There are regular activities running at the Centre on most days and evenings covering a wide range of interests. You can find out more from our website www.elseapark.co.uk, from our Facebook page, by picking up the latest activities sheet from the Centre or emailing us for a copy: admin@elseapark.co.uk

Are there any discounts at the Centre?

Residents receive 25% discount on the full rate to hire facilities at the Centre. Generally use of the kitchen is available free of charge to hirers of the hall. This means that the hire of the Hall is discounted to £26.25 per hour from £35 per hour, including use of the kitchen. Likewise the hourly cost of a half hall would come down to £15 from £20.

What about charges for activities and events?

The organisers of weekly activities make a charge for their classes which varies according to activity. The Events Group is organising functions for the community such as quiz nights and a New Year's Eve Party. Generally these are ticketed for which there is a charge.

There is no charge for the Wednesday morning drop-in session. Also the amateur dramatic group Elsea Park in Costume (EPIC) has free use of the Centre with a view to their performances providing community entertainment.

Can you tell me more about the Solar Panels on the Centre roof?

The solar (PV) panels generate income and savings to the Trust. Income comes from the Government Feed-In- Tariff for all the energy (electricity generated) and savings are made on the Centre's electricity bills by the building having first call on the electricity when it is generated by the panels. You can find details of the installation and see how much electricity is being produced by following the link on our website at www.elseapark.co.uk.

What are The Meadows?

The Meadows are a conservation area belonging to the Trust. They comprise of pasture, a wildflower meadow, lagoons and footpaths. They can be found between the by-pass and Elsea Wood. Truly a haven for peaceful walks.

Who owns the fountain ponds and where are the fish?

Kier Homes still own the fountain ponds and the Trust will not take them over until we have detailed information on the design and maintenance and have taken specialist drainage advice from subject matter experts.

When there were major works on the ponds all the fish were removed. The ponds are part of the drainage system rather than ornamental. This means that work to them has to be authorised by the Environment Agency (EA). The ponds were significantly overstocked with fish and in the interest of fish health the EA would permit only a smaller number to be returned. The surplus fish were returned to watercourses where there is under stocking of fish, and The Trust and the developer had no say in this matter.

A large number of fish have been returned and the fishery involved has evidenced their return in line with the consent of the EA. We know that they can't be spotted but we are assured that they were returned and in due course will naturally grow in number. The three carp have also been returned and have been seen by members and staff.

What about the roads?

The roads and footpaths are not in the control or ownership of the Trust nor are they intended to be so. The adoption process is subject to lengthy discussion and negotiation between the developers, primarily Kier Homes, and the Highways Authority at Lincolnshire County Council. In the interim some remedial work is being carried out in areas such as the Gables.

What liaison is there between the Trust and the developers?

There is regular liaison with Kier through Board representation, meetings, weekly logs and daily contact. There is more informal contact with David Wilson Homes. Regrettably we have not been able to forge structured working relationships with Bovis and Taylor Wimpy which means that we have not yet discussed land transfer with them in detail.

Any other questions?

If you would like to know more about these or any other subjects please email your query to admin@elseapark.co.uk or use our Facebook page, following the link is on the website: www.elseapark.co.uk