



## The Nottingham Park Estate Limited

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### **Summer Update from The Park Estate**

Dear Residents,

We hope you're enjoying the warmer summer months. As you'll note, this year's residents update has taken a slightly different shape: a short video from members of the team, followed by this written summary with a little more detail on the areas we know you care about most. This is simply due to a staffing shortage across the Estate team. We will be returning to our usual in person meet next year and the usual AGM will be taking place as normal on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2026.

This Residents' Update focuses on three core themes: Telecoms, Biodiversity, and the Green Heritage work being explored by Nottingham City Council. We hope you find it useful and as always, please do get in touch if you have any questions or feedback.

#### **Telecommunication**

This is a topic the Board has been working on for some time, and one that we know matters to a number of you directly. We are giving you a clear account of where things stand currently.

NPEL requires utility companies to obtain a work permit before carrying out any excavation work on our roads and pavements; this is a similar process to that of the council. A fee is charged to undertake these works, ensuring it is properly planned, safely carried out, and completed to the standard our residents expect. The vast majority of utility companies accept this arrangement without issue.

Openreach, however, have refused to pay. They claim that national regulations, specifically the Electronic Communications Code, a legal framework managed by Ofcom, prevent them from doing so. Their position is that private estates benefit from improved infrastructure and should not charge for access. We fundamentally disagree.

The Park Estate has its own unique governance requirements under the Nottingham Park Estate Act 1990, and it would simply not be appropriate for residents' Rentcharge funds to effectively subsidise the routine maintenance or commercial activity of a private telecommunications company. As previously mentioned, utility companies pay equivalent fees to work on council-managed roads right next door to us, Council Tax payers are not expected to underwrite that work, and neither should our residents.

The practical consequence of this impasse has been significant. Openreach have been unwilling to upgrade or extend their fibre broadband infrastructure across the Estate where excavation is required. More frustratingly, other broadband providers who use Openreach's network, including Plusnet and Vodafone, have in some cases sold fibre packages to Park residents that cannot actually be delivered. The Estate Office has raised this directly with both Openreach and the relevant providers on multiple occasions, including escalating to Openreach's CEO office, but we have not yet reached a resolution.

We have now appointed a specialist consultant with specific expertise in the Electronic Communications Code to help us understand precisely what the regulations do and don't allow, and what established practice looks like elsewhere. In parallel, we are in active negotiations with Virgin Media, who are also bound by the Code, but have shown a more constructive approach to reach a formal written agreement. Once that agreement is in place, it will provide a clear, Code-compliant basis on which to re-engage with Openreach.



### **Telecommunication - What You Can Do**

If you are an Openreach customer and are unhappy with the service you are receiving, particularly if you have been sold a package that cannot be fulfilled, please raise a formal complaint directly with Openreach, ideally copying in NPEL too. Every complaint logged strengthens our position if we need to escalate further.

We will continue to keep you updated as this matter progresses.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging & Estate Infrastructure**

We discussed EVs at the AGM in November, in respect of a question on the provision of communal charging facilities. To recap, we shared that at the time, there was insufficient demand to warrant exploring the provision of communal facilities, with the initial survey results showing less than 6% ranked EV charging as the most important topic and less than 20% ranked it as extremely important, meaning EV charging was therefore not carried forward as a priority item into the more detailed follow-up survey. We have since received some enquiries regarding private EV charging arrangements, including the use of charging cables across pavements and the installation of pavement charging channels or similar infrastructure.

As the use of EVs continues to increase, we recognise that convenient charging facilities are becoming an important consideration for some residents. We understand why these requests are being raised and appreciate the desire to find practical solutions.

What may initially appear to be a straightforward request involves a number of wider considerations that require careful assessment before any decisions can be made.

As the owner and steward of the Estate's roads and pavements, NPEL must consider a broad range of factors, including operating within the Estate Regulations, public safety, accessibility, legal liability, insurance implications, future maintenance responsibilities, infrastructure ownership, and the long-term impact on the Estate.

For example, even considering solutions involving infrastructure installed within pavements, often known as 'cross-pavement gullies', with providers offering an 'easy' all-inclusive cost package, questions are raised: safety, ownership, ongoing maintenance responsibilities, and potential liability should an accident occur. There are also broader considerations around consistency, future demand, and the precedent that any decision may establish across the Estate.

These are not matters that can be assessed in isolation, nor are they issues that can be resolved through a simple approval process at this stage. Before any policy position and process could be considered, the NPEL would need to understand the legal, commercial, insurance, operational and practical implications in considerably more detail. This is set within the wider regulatory context, in that we understand that the government is planning to introduce permitted development rights for cross-pavement charging solutions later this year, but this is not extended to Conservation Areas, therefore planning permission in addition to landowner (NPEL) permission would still apply. Completing a formal review will require substantial time and resources and at present, the Board has not yet commissioned this. It does not mean that we are not engaging with the subject. EV charging is on the agenda for Planning, Property and Roads subcommittee and we will explore next steps going forward.

If you are considering purchasing an EV, please remind yourself of the Estate Regulations, which do not practically allow for charging on Estate roads (literally speaking, due to the requirement to have any road / footpath trailing items attended at all times).

As with all matters affecting the Estate, we will continue to keep the position under review and will communicate any future developments.



## **Biodiversity & The Greening of The Park**

The Park Estate has always been something rather special, a rich, living urban green oasis in the heart of Nottingham City Centre. Protecting and enhancing that natural environment is one of the Board's most important long-term responsibilities, and this year we have taken some significant steps forward.

We have commissioned specialist landscape and environmental consultants, Urban Wildness, to help us develop a new biodiversity strategy for the Estate. This will build on everything we have already achieved, from the introduction of bird and bat boxes to the success of initiatives like No-Mow May, carried out in partnership with the Nottingham Park Residents' Association. This will also set a clear, long-term framework for ecological enhancement across the Estate.

The work encompasses a revised tree management plan, updated ecological priorities, and the identification of new opportunities for habitat creation and green space. By engaging expert guidance, we can be confident that everything we do is sustainable, legally sound and aligned with best practice.

The Estate's urban woodland is our most valuable ecological asset. It is the backbone of a diverse and thriving natural environment. The strategy for tree management will explore how we can strengthen our woodland network further: improving canopy cover, creating new pockets of habitat and establishing green corridors that support wildlife, improve air quality, capture carbon and contribute to the wellbeing of everyone who lives and walks here. Healthy, well-managed trees are about far more than appearance. They are central to the Estate's character, its resilience and its future.

Inspired by exciting projects from around the country, such as the transformation of the Holbeck Viaduct in Leeds, the strategy will also explore imaginative landscape and architectural interventions that add real value to our shared spaces. Ideas under consideration include enhanced green corridors, improved recreational routes and ecological features that bring nature closer to everyday life across the Estate. The aim is to deliver benefits that are felt in recreation, wellbeing, land value and environmental performance alike.

This is not something the Board intends to do in isolation. We hope to see residents actively involved as the landscape strategy develops, with opportunities to help shape priorities, contribute ideas and refine proposals. The strategy will also support wider consultation, external funding applications and a phased programme of improvements over time. Something that may well also align to Nottingham City Council's Green Heritage initiative.

## **Green Heritage - A Nottingham City Council Initiative**

Green Heritage is a project being explored by Nottingham City Council. The reason it features in this update is to ensure our residents heard about it directly, and clearly.

This is a council-led initiative that sits outside of NPEL's remit and is still at an early stage. The aim is to understand whether there is appetite among owners of heritage properties to explore decarbonisation: things like energy efficiency improvements designed to work sensitively with older and listed buildings. The council is also exploring what grant funding might be available to support residents who want to take part.

As a Board, we've had early conversations about this work, and we're very much interested in what it might offer our community.



We'll keep a close eye on how this develops and will update you as things become clearer. In the meantime, if you have thoughts or questions about Green Heritage, you're welcome to contact the Estate Office or reach out to Cllr Sam Luxe at Nottingham City Council directly. Please note the survey mentioned within the video is open until August 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Keeping You Informed**

Improving how we communicate with residents is a clear priority for the year ahead, and you'll already see that taking shape in this update, a video from the team, a written summary, direct distribution through NORIS, and more to come.

As part of that wider commitment to communicating directly and consistently with all residents, the Chair's Report will from now on be distributed by NPEL directly to Members. We're grateful to Park News for the role it has played in sharing Estate information over the years, and we wish the publication well.

Going forward, you can expect all Board communications, including the Chair's Report, to come straight to you through our own channels, so that everyone receives the same information at the same time.

### **Thank You!**

As always, none of this happens without the dedication of Adam, Stacey and the whole Estate Team and without the goodwill and engagement of residents like you. We're proud of the area we get to call home, and we look forward to continuing with works to better our Estate in the year ahead.

If you have any questions about anything in this update, please contact the Estate Office at [enquiries@nottinghamparkestate.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nottinghamparkestate.co.uk)

*The Board, The Nottingham Park Estate Limited*