

Devizes Area Board Meeting on 21st Nov.2016

Parish update

Urchfont Parish Council

A number of months ago we reported to Wiltshire Council the arrival of a “Residential Children’s Home” in the very small hamlet of Wedhampton. We further reported this to the Area Board during the Open Floor session on 26th September.

We still feel that the location of this home is totally inappropriate and that it is outrageous that a neighbouring council can impose such a care home facility without the prior knowledge of our own county council. We would request that pressure is put on Swindon Council to ensure that the children under their care are done so within their own boundaries and not imposed elsewhere.

Since the arrival of the child in Wedhampton we have had numerous incidents that are listed in the log below which is being compiled by the immediate neighbours to the property. (Hobbit House, Wedhampton)

Esland Ltd distributed to the local residents a “Good Neighbour Policy”. From studying this it is clear that they are not complying with their own policy. For example section 5 – React quickly and properly when incidents occur. Staff will “inform the community of action taken”, “advise neighbours of the use of the complaints procedure”, “check if satisfied with outcome”. In this document it also suggests that they should “liaise with neighbours within 30 minutes of an incident”. Not once as Esland been in contact with the community over any of the listed incidents below. Furthermore to date the neighbours have not seen the Complaints Procedure document nor any appropriate complaint form.

On 25th October a meeting was to be held at Bramley House to discuss all the disturbances. This was to be attended by Lucy Merrington (the local Esland manager), the Residents Group and Bill Donald local parish councillor. Unfortunately the manager failed to turn up as she was dealing with an incident at Hobbit House involving knives and physical damage. Another meeting has yet to be arranged.

Hopefully this report, along with the log below, will clearly inform Wiltshire Council as to the extent of disturbances being felt by the local residents.

The local residents need to understand:

1. What action Wiltshire Council will take in relation to the logged issues.
2. Instruct the residents on the most appropriate way to report future incidents.
3. What communication Wiltshire Council is having with Swindon Borough Council to see if the activities of Esland Ltd can be curtailed to within Swindon Borough Council’s area of jurisdiction.

Bill Donald

Vice-chairman, Urchfont Parish Council