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Date: 3 March 2014 at 21:32:14 GMT
To: Old Stocks Court Management <committee@oldstockscourt.co.uk>
Cc: Beccy Hazelden <becshazelden@gmail.com>
Subject: Sink Hole and Drainage

Hi All,

As we haven't yet had any direct communication from the management group, we thought that we'd just drop you a quick line to understand the current position.

As far as we are concerned there are currently two broadly credible theories as to why the collapse happened:

The first being that there are old chalk mining activity in the area (as per our groundsure survey previously provided to you) and that as a result of the recent wet weather, a mining area underground became waterlogged and collapsed. According to Vaughan's email, Dr Clive Edmonds, a recognised national authority on sink holes, is of the view that ground surveying would be required to confirm the extent of potential risk.

The second being that water from the blocked drains found a route of ingress into the surrounding ground, this water then found the route of least resistance, over time wicking away the underlying ground causing the collapse - this was highlighted as the probable cause by the subsidence expert sent by our insurance company.

Or there could be elements of both at play, if you believe that there are other credible rationales if you could let us know we would appreciate it.

As I understand the OSMC position at the moment, you do not want to undertake any survey of communal ground and I haven't seen any proposals regarding solutions for drainage.

This concerns us at a couple of levels, if the first scenario is true, then there is the potential for further collapses on individual and communal land. Without surveying this land we won't know the risk that this poses and any potential remedial steps. I would view the position of not surveying the communal land by Vaughan and Sarah's drive as negligent (given the known risk and proximity of a previous incident) and I think that there is a potentially very large liability with that position should something happen in the future - it is not an

exaggeration of any great degree to suggest that the recent incident could have had a very different outcome. To that end we would request a couple of different things, firstly a written rationale for the position taken re surveying and secondly confirmation that liability for any future incidents in no way passes down to individual householders.

Regarding drainage issues, we are very keen that Vaughan and Sarah insurers establish the reason for the collapse rather than simply filling the hole and pretending it didn't happen. As if this is shown to be the cause of the collapse then filling the hole will simply move the problem to a different area at a later date as the water finds a different route of least resistance. A situation which we certainly don't want as there would never be any certainty of the ground that we were walking on around the drain, be it our land, the communal land or Vaughan and Sarah's land. Could you confirm what the plans are that are being put into place to resolve the drainage issues?

I understand that some are of the view that we shouldn't survey as it might show that there are problems. Personally I'd rather know about the problems and then be in a position to deal with them (or not as the case may be) and make an informed decision. I believe by not communally surveying all that is going to happen is that the surveying cost is passed to individual householders when they come to sell (at a much higher price in totality than if we did it communally) - Any future searches will show mining activity in the NW corner of OSC and an insurance subsidence claim (potentially related) in the south east corner - individual households would then either have to bear a reduced sale price or the costs of the individual ground survey. From a purely selfish perspective this would benefit us as we're not planning on moving for some time and the majority of the cost would be borne by others in the meantime. But I think that probably we should work as a community in this regard.

For the benefit of clarity, we are fully supportive of Vaughan and Sarah allowing their insurance claim and investigations to run their course and I don't think that the suggestion that they should simply take remedial action without understanding the cause to be of benefit to anyone. They have been affected more than anyone by the current situation and I don't think the tone of some of the communications have been of benefit to anyone, or helping us all to come to a joined up position on how best to resolve the matter.

Kind regards,

Stuart and Beccy Hazelden