



27 Atlas Way, Oakgrove,
Milton Keynes, MK10 9SG
T: 01908 087499

E: clerk@broughtonandmkv-pc.gov.uk
W: www.broughtonandmkv-pc.gov.uk

OPEN LETTER

DATE: 4 August 2021
SUBJECT: Far Holme Pond in Middleton

TO:

Crest Nicholson (Adrian.sims@crestnicholson.com)
Milton Keynes Council Chief Executive (Michael.bracey@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Milton Keynes Development Partnership (nicola.sawford@mkdp.org.uk)
Ward Councillor Sam Crooks (sam.crooks@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Ward Councillor Uroy Clarke (uroy.clarke@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Ward Councillor Kerrie Bradburn (kerrie.bradburn@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Milton Keynes Labour Leader (Peter.Marland@Milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Milton Keynes Conservative Leader (alex.walker@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Milton Keynes Liberal Democratic Leader (robin.bradburn@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

CC:

The Parks Trust
Far Holme Residents

Broughton and Milton Keynes Parish Council (BMKPC) urges you all to press for a resolution over the Far Holme Pond in Middleton, and to ask for details of any steps you (or your organisation) have taken to date, to resolve the situation.

After the unfortunate experience of the play area, which was closed by the relevant authorities within days of being opened in March 2011 because of anti-social behaviour on a massive scale, Crest Nicholson applied for and was granted planning permission (13/00024/FUL) to dismantle the play area and create a pond and associated landscaping. The committee decision was made on 14 March 2013, and the decision notice was issued on 23 October 2013. This decision was welcomed by the majority of local residents, and it has been commented that the approved scheme very closely matches the pond and landscaping shown in Crest's marketing literature for their homes nearby. The intention has always been that as soon as the pond and landscaping are finished, they will be adopted by Milton Keynes Council and transferred to The Parks Trust on a very long lease. This intention, to achieve long-term maintenance of the new pond area, is also very popular.

In the almost eight years since then, the newly constructed pond has not yet been made watertight. Heavy rainfall fills the pond briefly, before the water level rapidly goes down to an unacceptably low level, clearly demonstrating the level at which the membrane is punctured. This situation persists, despite measures to increase the catchment area of the pond (following careful modelling submitted to Crest by local residents), and despite various occasions when Crest (through its specialist consultants and contractors) have patched, re-anchored and/or entirely re-laid the membrane. BMKPC understand there are a lot of photographs and correspondence showing this problem has been communicated to very senior Crest employees, very senior Council officers, and very senior MKDP staff, throughout this period.

BMKPC believe that Crest is responsible for fixing the pond, has not yet fulfilled that responsibility, and is not showing the necessary commitment to resolving the problem promptly. BMKPC believe Milton Keynes Council has powers under the Planning Act to force developers to comply with the terms of their planning permissions in situations like this and has done little or nothing to use those powers to get this problem resolved.

BMKPC believe MKDP has done nothing to use its considerable influence to get Crest to fix this pond, and nothing to acknowledge, log and mitigate its risks in awarding other major contracts to Crest despite this clear evidence that Crest lacks either the capabilities or the will to fix issues like this.

Therefore, BMKPC ask you all, please can you do whatever is in your gift (individually or collectively) to get this resolved. And we ask each of you to put on record the steps you have taken so far (without success) to get it fixed?

Broughton and Milton Keynes Parish Council looks forward to your response.

Yours sincerely



Vicky Mote

Proper Officer

On behalf of Broughton and Milton Keynes Parish Council