

16 May, 2023

Dear John Bloor and Directors of Bloor Homes

We are aware of the agreement between Ruddington residents and Bloor Homes East Midlands about tree planting for The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) on the southern boundary of the new 'Fairham Green' housing development.

We the undersigned call on Bloor Homes to please:

- 1. Honour the arrangement with Brookside Residents' Action Group (BRAG) for the already delivered trees to be planted in the gap ('void') between the two boundaries.**
- 2. Reposition the several fence panels which have been put in recently to allow adequate width for the agreed tree-planting in this gap.**
- 3. Act urgently before further permanent fencing is erected to ensure an adequate space for tree planting, wildlife and boundary maintenance along this entire stretch.**

We are backing our community of volunteers 'BRAG for QGC' to get over the finishing line to plant 106 Dwarf Hornbeam saplings in the original location – a project that has recently been given Royal approval. A thank-you letter from Buckingham Palace on behalf of The King acknowledged the locality of this tree planting. His Majesty, who is The Patron of The QGC, was sent a Fairham Green site map which highlighted the specific area for these trees.

All was going to plan until an "*internal miscommunication*" at Bloor Homes (which has been admitted in calls and emails from your staff) led to the fencing subcontractor on-site beginning to install the permanent fencing just inches away from the existing residents' boundary, rather than following the line of blue marker pegs. Reasonably this mistake can be rectified if Bloor Homes allowed just a bit more space in the gap to enable the royal tree planting there, i.e., a few feet between the two boundaries to plant The QGC as agreed.

BACKGROUND: It was great 'green' news for Ruddington village when we heard last July that your company gave its full backing for residents to plant a royal row of trees in the narrow gap stretching about 223-metres along the southern boundary at Fairham Green. It is the only side of the development not to have a wildlife corridor, so adding to The QGC here was a fantastic environmental idea from residents who overlook your new development (built on former Green Belt and flood plain). BRAG for QGC was set up specifically to plant here.

This jointly agreed project was that Bloor Homes offered the gap by giving its permission to plant The QGC in this narrow leftover space on the southern edge of the Fairham Green development in Ruddington. Due to planning, BRAG accepted existing residents would do the tree planting themselves. Bloor kindly agreed to fund 106 Dwarf Hornbeam saplings, which were carefully researched and chosen to create a canopy suitable for this gap.

This March, residents were excited when they were given the go-ahead by Bloor Homes to order the trees and start clearing the gap behind their homes since The QGC official deadline was 31.03.23. With Bloor unsure when the fencing would start to be erected, it agreed BRAG could start planting in the gap - and gave an assurance, via Ruth Edwards MP, all its workers would take great care when

working in the area. Keen to get pre-planting, families even went out on Mothering Sunday (19th March) and this 'good news' story was covered in local media on 20th March.

But then, just a day later, a few fence panels behind Plot 127 started to be placed into the actual gap earmarked for The QGC! Subsequently Bloor Homes reviewed the title land deeds - saying The QGC trees can't be planted by the residents where originally agreed, after all.

Although on paper it may appear to show that there isn't a gap, there evidently is one. Where the fence panels have started you can clearly see the gap. Importantly, the photo (attached) shows the blue marker pegs where the boundary fence was supposed to run along, as confirmed by Bloor's site manager to members of BRAG. He explained, the new bungalow gardens would end at these marker pegs because that is where the permanent wooden fence would be erected, so The QGC would be on the other side of the boundary fence in the gap between the two borders.



OUR REQUEST: On behalf of Ruddington residents, we are asking for your intervention, please, so The QGC can be planted in the gap. All that is required now is a relatively simple fix to allow a few feet in width with a clear instruction from you about where to place the permanent boundary fence. We suggest '2-metres off-set' because that is where Bloor Homes' blue fence marker pegs are.

We acknowledge that Bloor Homes East Midlands staff continue to apologise for its "*internal miscommunication*" about the gap. Also, they have pledged "*we continue to be in full support*" of The QGC, and Bloor Homes have taken "*full responsibility*" for halting the tree planting in its original location - seemingly because of an inhouse mistake between colleagues that has led to a narrower gap when some fence panels started to go in. Reasonably this situation can be rectified if Bloor instructed its fencing subcontractor to give just a little more width in the gap, as originally arranged, to enable the royal tree planting.

Although Bloor Homes has suggested alternative tree planting locations on the Fairham Green site, we concur with residents this defeats the object of planting at the southern edge and the reason

BRAG for QGC was formed. Planting elsewhere on the site will not meet their ambition and, indeed, this variety is not really suitable in appearance for random planting. Also, the saplings are currently too small and vulnerable to be planted in public open space. Many of the residents do not have room to plant the trees at the rear of their own back gardens – which was the other Bloor Homes suggestion. In any case, the intended row of uniformly spaced trees could not be achieved other than in the intended gap.

Even your new homebuyers at Fairham Green, Steve and Wendy, told BRAG they heard about Bloor's blunder. They too wish to see the tree planting for the late Queen in the gap between their bungalow and existing residents' back gardens. They've even asked Bloor Homes to move their fence but had no joy so far.

We respectfully ask that Bloor Homes do the right thing by the residents who are bordering the gap as they try to fulfil their commitment to our late Queen; to create a green screen canopy and 'nature corridor' with all the environmental benefits of tree planting. The repositioning of a few fence panels means Bloor still gets its boundary, BRAG can plant the saplings in the original gap and both parties can complete their mutual arrangement for an attractive row of trees as a living legacy for Queen Elizabeth. Furthermore, this gap will allow fair and reasonable access for these residents to maintain their back borders (e.g., hedges and fences).

Meantime, members of BRAG for QGC are currently looking after all the dwarf Hornbeam saplings in their pots until they can be planted in their intended location, as soon as this disappointing and upsetting situation has been rectified.

We look forward to a positive response.

Yours,

Signed

Cllr Jen Walker
Rushcliffe Borough Council

Cllr Mike Gaunt
Ruddington Parish Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council

Cllr Graham Fletcher
Chair, Ruddington Parish Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council

Ruth Edwards MP
Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe