



To: All Residents 25 January 1999  
From: Lady Marshall

**MONTPELIER SQUARE GARDEN REPORT  
JANUARY 1998 - JANUARY 1999**

At the AGM in January it was agreed that an effort should be made to rebuild the reserve fund which had become depleted during previous years. With that objective in mind garden expenses were kept to a minimum for the remainder of the year.

The routine maintenance programme and annual tasks were all completed. The only major additional work undertaken was the removal of the unsuitable Norway Maple in the NW corner of the garden and its replacement by a Liquid Amber which, in maturity, should be a more suitable shape and size for that position and will also provide bright Autumn colour which is always attractive.

Weather conditions throughout the year were very mixed but the garden performed as well as could be expected. Additional plants were added to the Western border and under the chestnut tree by the South gate with mixed results. These are difficult areas lacking water and light and will always need special care. The sprinkler system is a great help but on occasions manages to break down when it is most needed. Repairs take time and, unfortunately, the garden suffers accordingly.

Spike Jackson, the garden contractor, continues to give excellent service. His contract is due for renewal in April of this year. He has asked for a 9% increase (in line with the retail price index for the past three years) but has agreed to maintain his hourly rate for any additional work at the same level and I recommend that his contract be renewed.

Mrs Mackay-Lewis once again decorated the Christmas tree and several residents mentioned how much they look forward to seeing the tree in the garden during December. The evening of Carol Singing round the tree (organised by Mr Mackay-Lewis) was not favoured with good weather but some 50 residents attended and enjoyed this now annual event. We thank Mr and Mrs Mackay-Lewis for making Christmas a specially enjoyable time in the Square.

For this year we should undertake some major tree surgery. It is now at least 10 years since the plane trees were pruned and thinned and the time has come to do it again, not only for cosmetic reasons but in one or two cases for safety. Boward Tree Surgery, the company originally recommended by Westminster City Council and who have given us excellent service for the past ten years have quoted £3,348.75 for this work. It is a large sum but I recommend that we accept this quotation and do the work this Spring.

The bark chippings under the swing, despite being replenished each year, have reached a state of decomposition and need replacing. This will cost approximately £150.00.

Two half-barrels have rotted (after ten years) and need replacing. I would also like to purchase another one to be sited by South gate to provide colour and a better entrance on that side of the garden. The total cost will be approximately £120.00.

Our existing signs outlining the garden rules are inadequate for present-day usage of the garden. I propose that we have one new sign made outlining the garden rules simply and clearly and site this in the border by the seating area.

The paths have deteriorated quite badly over the past year due to wear and excessive rain. It is again approximately ten years since they were refurbished and although the annual contract does allow for some "topping-up" of the shingle, they are now in need of more major work. However, the cost will be in the region of £3,500.00, our budget cannot meet this expense for this year and we should plan to do the work in the Spring of 2000. For this year residents using the garden are asked to treat the paths gently! Thank you.

V. N.