

1991 Feb

**MONTPELIER SQUARE GARDEN ASSOCIATION**

**Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting  
of February 12th, 1991  
(at Number 2 Montpelier Square)**

1 **Rates**

The main purpose of the meeting is to determine the level of the rates for 1991. It is confirmed that the Committee has been given formal authority to set the rate by the association.

We are reminded that Montpelier Square is one of the only 3 garden residents' associations in London to have retained a special status regarding the ability to levy taxes.

At present we number 95 persons eligible to pay the rates (compared with 119 last year), including 19 who have here a secondary residence and diplomats of the US and Irish Embassies who are not liable, but who have indicated to us that they would be willing to contribute their theoretical share of the rates.

Because of the wise past policy of providing for the risk of not obtaining a grant from Westminster for the railings, and the positive result of the 1990 financial management, the association, according to its treasurer David Eckhardt, has a cash surplus of about £13,000.

In view of the main investment made with the railings in 1990, it is agreed that there is no new major expenditure which justifies keeping in line with the level of garden rate in the past.

The proposals which can be brought to the attention of the AGM on February 14th 1991 concern mainly the restoration of the paths (estimated budget : £5,000 plus VAT), the irrigation system including boring to the aquifer and installing a pump to have our own water supply and the installation of a new water tank and a new shed (estimated budget : £12,000 plus VAT).

Regarding the necessity of a new irrigation system, it is noted that the extraordinary cost of watering, by hand, paid to Spike's in 1990, was around £2,500, which could be avoided in the future by a fully automatised irrigation system.

Given the overall running cost of the garden estimated at about £5,000 by our treasurer, including £3,800 plus VAT payable to Spike's, the committee recommends a proposal to levy about £200 per chargepayer (down from £575 in 1990).

This rate would ensure that a comfortable level of provision is maintained to allow for a risk of damage to the irrigation system or the railing, for example.

It is also proposed that a certain amount of the cash surplus be transferred into a nominal capital account.

2 New Keys

It is decided that a leaflet restating the garden rules will accompany the issuing of the new keys. In particular the principle according to which keys are conceded to each house, and not to individuals, and remain the property of the square is confirmed. In order to reinforce self-discipline, a proposal to print basic rules on key tags will be submitted.

3 Rate refunding

Since the association does not want to set a precedent, it is agreed that we will not accept to refund the company owning Number 5 which accommodates 7 flats.

4 Conversion of Number 24 into flats

The association will object to that conversion.

5 Garden security

A suggestion by Jeremy McKay Lewis to hire the services of a "pensioner" to help with the supervision of children playing in the garden has been accepted and will be followed up with the local authorities (Westminster and Chelsea).

The meeting is adjourned confirming the AGM of February 14th at 6.30 pm.

*David Quinn*