

MONTPELIER SQUARE GARDEN

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Date and Time: 5 February 2013, 7pm

Venue: 26 Montpelier Square

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Christopher Didizian

Mr. Daniel Quirici

Mr. Neil Carthy

Mrs. Avril Cox

Lady Janet Marshall

Mr. Ali Malek

Mrs. Anica Nishio

APOLOGIES

Mrs. Jane Bradbury

Mr. Nicholas Davie-Thornhill

1. Mr. Quirici was appointed meeting chairman.
2. The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21st March 2012 were formally proposed, seconded and approved.
3. Lady Marshall presented the Committee with a report on the state of the garden:
 - a. The garden experienced adverse weather in 2012: a drought followed by a long period of wet weather. We have lost 3 newly planted silver birches and two of the cherry trees (one on the West side, the other on the East side) are looking vulnerable.
 - b. The gardeners have worked hard to cut back many of the overgrown plants on the East side. This has opened up a number of areas for planting in the coming season and we have already planted a young cherry tree in one of these sites.
 - c. We completely refreshed the gravel in 2012 and the paths are looking much better. We continue to top it up every year, as before.
 - d. In the annual Garden Squares competition we were placed fourth, receiving a Highly Commended rating from the judges. This result was disappointing as we were in second place last year but are confident of an improved position in 2013.
 - e. The gardeners are currently planting more bulbs including snowdrops throughout the garden. New roses will be added to the back of the herbaceous border in Spring.
 - f. We have planted Acers and others to brighten the garden in late Summer/Autumn.
 - g. Trees
 - i. We planted a Catalpa in the SE corner in honour of the Queen's jubilee and the plaque was unveiled at the annual Summer Party.
 - ii. Substantial pruning has taken place to both of the bay trees.
 - h. The irrigation system will need to be upgraded in the coming years and a reserve should be established for the purpose.
4. The chairman and committee thanked Lady Marshall for all her efforts in the past year.

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5. It was AGREED that a new tree be planted in memory of the late Lord Colin Marshall, who passed away in 2012. Lord Marshall had a life-long connection to the Square and was a stalwart attendee at our AGMs. Suggestions for the type of tree included a deep red Magnolia. The tree will be dedicated at the next Summer Party.
6. A financial report and draft accounts for the 9 month period to 31st December 2012 were presented by Mr. Carthy.
 - a. After a number of years of profit this year expenditure exceeds income to the tune of about £3,000.
 - b. It was AGREED that the budget for plants and bulbs remain at £2,500 per year.
 - c. It was AGREED to reserve the sum of £2,500 per annum against future capital expenditure.
7. Mr Carthy supplied the committee with some information about the tree inspections that occurred in May and November.
 - a. The inspection in May was performed by Keith Macgregor who is a qualified arboriculturalist and included a risk assessment for each of the large trees. No tree was considered a significant risk to the public. He recommended a separate climbing inspection by a tree surgeon to look for any signs of Massaria disease.
 - b. The second tree inspection took place in November. Mr Macgregor and a tree surgeon, Mr Tim George were in attendance. No evidence of Massaria disease was found.
 - c. The committee takes the health of its trees very seriously and will perform inspections on a regular basis, as advised by Mr Macgregor and Mr George.
8. A draft agenda for the upcoming AGM was presented to the committee by Mr. Carthy. It was APPROVED for distribution. We will be inviting residents to put their names forward to join the committee at the same time as we distribute the agenda.
9. A Code of Conduct for members of the Committee was discussed and a sample text presented to the meeting. The spirit of the document was viewed favourably but it was deemed overly long and prescriptive. Mr Carthy offered to attempt a re-draft, in advance of presenting it to the residents at the AGM.
10. Non-payment of the garden precept by the residents of the American embassy-owned house was discussed.
11. The matter of a second planning application for the garden lights was discussed. According to the terms of our existing planning permission, the lights will go off on 30th April this year. If we decide to re-apply this will require a second bat survey, taken in mid-summer. It was RESOLVED that the matter be put before the residents at the AGM.
12. It was AGREED to hold this year's Summer Party on Tuesday 2nd July.
13. The meeting closed at 8pm.