

MONTPELIER SQUARE GARDEN

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday 23rd March 2016
Held at: German Christ Church Basement

Committee Members Present:

Daniel Quirici	(8)
Lady Marshall	(21)
Jane Bradbury	(39)
Neil Carthy	(26)
Avril Cox	(18)
Nicholas Davie-Thornhill	(32)
Christopher Didizian	(44)
Costas Michaelides	(1)

Association Members Present:

Charles Cox (18), David and Vivienne Eckhardt (29), Chris Hudson (7)

Also attending:

Robert Player of Garden Associates

Apologies were received from Ali Malek QC (13).

The meeting opened at 6:30pm. Daniel Quirici was proposed, seconded and approved as chairman of the meeting.

The minutes of the 2015 AGM were proposed, seconded and approved.

Lady Marshall gave a short report on the garden:

- 2015 was a good year for the garden with mostly fine weather.
- In the Garden Squares Competition we came 3rd, a drop of one place on last year. The judge praised the 'outstanding' quality of the garden and only a few points separated the top three places.
- We have purchased two teak armchairs and accompanying side tables for positioning on the paved area on the west side. They should provide relief for the solitary reader looking to enjoy the garden without interruption.
- Robert and his team have cut back the privet hedge on the north, west and south sides. The hedge had become overgrown and was very woody, with signs of significant aphid damage on the west side. The current appearance is stark but they will shoot within a few weeks.
- Lady Marshall thanked Robert Player and his team for their work throughout the year.

The chairman gave thanks to Lady Marshall for her work and this vote of thanks was echoed by all present.

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Mr Player then reported on the work performed by his team in the past twelve months:

- He began by noting that it was the five year anniversary of his appointment
- The year always begins with the final removal of the leaves. Plane leaves are separated and the rest composted. He estimates that we generate 15-20 m3 of leaf mould compost annually, representing a significant saving of both money and landfill waste.
- In spring the tulips followed by the alliums and the narcissus appear to brighten one's heart. Spring colour can be riotous but summer colour must be more ordered. The herbaceous border is being revamped this year so tulips will be absent from there.
- A new edible quince tree has been planted near the new bark path in the NW corner.
- Rosemary was added to the north gate area. It seems to be surviving the dryness.
- New summer plants include mahonia 'soft caress' and viburnum plicatum 'kilimanjaro sunrise' – the wedding cake tree – to the back of the main border.
- He uses no chemicals for insect control. A paraffin burner takes care of interlopers on the paths.
- Annually the lawns are aerated, scarified and fed. The resulting sward is healthy despite the pedestrian traffic and overhanging trees.
- It is time for a change of atmosphere in the paved area. The urn will be re-sited and the bed softened with a multi-stemmed birch. The snow white bark should contrast pleasantly with the yew hedge.
- He elaborated on the hedge cutting. It had become too high to maintain and negatively affecting other plants. The job involved 5 people for 3 days but he viewed it as part of the maintenance of the garden and no extra charges will be levied.
- In response to a question he said that there had been no repeat of last year's security incidents.
- Overall the garden is in excellent health but everything needs to move forward or it stagnates.

Mr Player received a round of applause at the end of his report.

Mr Carthy then gave the Treasurer's report. He reported that for the 2014/15 period income roughly matched expenditure despite a £5000 charge for tree works. For the 9 months to Dec 31 2015 expenditure was in line with the budget. He planned to change the accounting year to match the calendar year. He then outlined a plan to paint the railings in Q1 2017. It would be a major project costing in the region of £20,000.

A vote was taken and IT WAS AGREED to raise the precept to £45,000 for the 2017/8 fiscal year to cover both new hardwood compost bins and the painting of the railings.

Mrs Bradbury informed the meeting that this year the annual Christmas carols party would be on December 14th.

Mr Carthy noted that the first meeting of this committee had occurred on 13th April 1867 so it would be the 150th anniversary next year. IT WAS AGREED to hold a summer party next year in celebration.

The meeting concluded at 8pm.