

# MONTPELIER SQUARE GARDEN

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Date:** Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
**Held at:** German Christ Church Basement

**Committee Members Present:**

Daniel Quirici  
Lady Marshall  
Jane Bradbury  
Neil Carthy  
Avril Cox  
Costas Michaelides  
Ali Malek QC

**Association Members Present:**

Charles Cox, David and Vivienne Eckhardt

**Also attending:**

Robert Player of Garden Associates

Apologies were received from Nicholas Davie-Thornhill and Christopher Didizian.

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

The minutes of the 2014 AGM were proposed, seconded and approved.

Lady Marshall gave a report on the garden:

- It has been the best year yet for the garden and we have equalled our highest ever result in the Garden Squares Competition by coming 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is a result we can be proud of as our category is highly competitive. We also received gold medal status for the garden, in accordance with RHS guidelines for judging.
- The irrigation system remains problematic. It failed again in August but luckily it was not as hot and dry as the previous year.
- Security has become an increasing concern. Our shed was broken into last autumn and items belonging to the gardeners were stolen, to the value of £1000. Last month the gardeners reported evidence of intruders sleeping overnight in the garden. Tidying up after them has been very unpleasant. The police were informed and they were very helpful. The police will continue with night-time patrols of the square (they have a key) but residents are advised to just call 101 at the first sign of unauthorised access by anyone.
- We continue to conduct annual inspections on our trees by means of climbing. The most recent inspection uncovered a massaria infection in one of the plane trees. This is treated seriously because if the disease is allowed to advance large branches can fall without notice,

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with consequent risk to people and property. We are confident that our tree surgeon Tim George can identify the disease during his inspections.

- 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.

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

- 520 tulips, 250 dwarf narcissus, 75 leucojum, 44 alliums, 12 foxtail lilies has been planted recently. He has never favoured annuals preferring a more sustainable planting approach.
- 2 seasonal pot changes are performed per year
- Purple hazel has been planted to form a living arch over the path by the south gate leading to the lawn.
- We have an exceptional spring garden and he especially likes the dogwood with orange stems, the scented sarcococcas and the many excellent camellias.
- His aim is to extend the season of interest beyond spring. The garden should have something of interest every month of the year.
- The garden has some problem areas: some dry, some wet and some heavily shaded. His team view these areas as opportunities to be creative.
- He thinks second is a fine result in the LGS competition especially as the receipt of a gold medal indicates a score in excess of 85%.
- Biodiversity is being encouraged by bird feeders, bird baths and big thorny bushes and high nectar plants beloved by garden birds. We have a fox in residence behind the crab apple.
- In answer to a question about the bird baths Mr Player said that they scrub and hose them every two weeks to prevent the spread of disease.
- The garden aim at a high standard of sustainability: For example we generate 15 cubic metres of compost annually; we don't use insecticide, trusting the wildlife to take care of aphids etc.; chilli flakes are spread to deter squirrels eating the newly planted bulbs.
- Overall the garden is in excellent health

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

Mr Carthy then gave the Treasurer's report. He reported that this year's income roughly matched expenditure despite a £5000 charge for tree works. Every year we reserve £2,500 for capital expenditure such as the irrigation system improvement works. The budget for bulbs and plants is to remain at £2,500.

A vote was taken and IT WAS AGREED to hold the precept at £32,500 for the 2016/7 fiscal year.

There was a discussion of the problem of night time intruders and security generally. It was noted that Thurloe Square at one time had hired night time security. To assist the residents in determining what could be done Mr Eckhardt offered to contact a number of professional security firms and report back on security options for the garden.

The meeting concluded at 7:30pm.