

AGM, Arundel and Elgin Garden, Tuesday 13th November.

Held at Westbourne Grove Church. W11 2RW.

Attendees from the Committee:

Calum MacInnes, Nathalie Faure Beaulieu, Kit Davis, Melode Parker.

Apologies:

Tassy Barham, LeeLee Brown, Carrie Ferman.

Attendees from the Garden:

Fiona and Chris Fleming-Brown, Anne Fry, Brenda Brady, Andrew Pilkington, Alison Kidd, Mark Travis, Catherine Derrough, Mary Cameron, Barbara Carlisle, Edward Lockhart-Mummery, David Solomon.

Start of the Meeting: Minutes from previous AGM to be approved.

Chris Fleming-Brown made the observation that the minutes did not mention that the previous committee's resignation and who were appointed as the new members of the committee. Calum agreed that this needed to be added and the amended version is now included. The Minutes were approved on the basis that this change was made.

Brief Introduction to the Committee and their Roles:

Calum, Nathalie, Melode and Kit did this.

Chairman's Report:

Calum reported on the year passed, noting that the focus of our funds and energy was on the completion of the railings project. It was noted that the project was delivered within 1.5% of the

projected cost, on time, and to a standard of workmanship that we all feel very happy with. There was a comment from the floor that the workmen were pleasant and helpful, and that the railings have really raised the standard of the look and feel of the garden. The one downside were the break-ins that happened at a time when the railings were down. A contribution was made to those affected by Metalcraft and also from the garden's contingency fund.

The other main events of the year were mentioned as having passed off successfully; these were the fireworks, the summer party and the garden open day. The garden open day will be done in conjunction with Arundel and Ladbroke Gardens, who are one up from us. They also work with the National Garden Scheme, so it has been proposed that we open on the same day and offer a joint ticket to both gardens in an attempt to lure visitors into our garden once they have been into A&L gardens, which we felt we missed out on this year.

We will also try to get back onto the list of gardens that host the Shakespeare in the Garden plays. We missed out this year due to a timing issue. This will mean that we will host four events in the year, which was felt was enough to keep keep residents engaged with the garden.

Dogs: It was decided to ban an excessively aggressive Jack Russell from the garden. The committee are clear that this kind of dog is not going to be allowed onto the garden given the number of small children that use the garden.

Children: It was also noted that there were in the summer many children milling around the central garden not under parental supervision, and this needs to be kept in check as several residents complained that this was a source of annoyance to them.

Precept: The precept for next year, 2019/20, was voted on at the last AGM. The amount is to be £80,000. This is a decline from £115,000 which was unusually high to pay for the railings. The reason that it is still remaining relatively high is because the garden

has struggled with several years of under-investment when the precept was at £30,000. The gardeners need equipment, a new shed, and the children's playground at the Ladbroke Grove end needs to be given a better surface to name a few areas of obvious need of an upgrade. It is also important that the garden builds up a contingency fund of at least £30,000 or even up to £50,000 in the event of an accident or legal challenge.

Japanese knotweed: It was noted that this is a frustrating feature in the garden. Whenever it is spotted by the gardeners, they deal with it, but if anyone finds it in their garden, then the gardeners need to be notified immediately as it is a serious threat to the buildings.

AirBNB: Fiona Fleming-Brown mentioned that the garden might benefit from a fob key system to prevent AirBNB visitors getting into the garden and also to prevent entry to residents who break the rules. The committee had looked into the fob option, but the cost of delivering an electricity supply to the Ladbroke Grove end of the garden, as well as the maintenance of the system was prohibitive to moving forward with it for the time being.

Treasurer's Report:

Nathalie reported that the railings had worked well from the financial perspective with a very limited over-run, so we end the year again in a strong position with a cash balance of £51,803, against a forecast of £31,548. It was noted that the £80,000 precept next year will be used to upgrade the gardeners equipment, the playground equipment and also the build a contingency fund of £25,000.

Tree Report:

Melode delivered the tree report having taken over this year from Guy. She went through the key points in a report that we had commissioned that looked at all the trees in the garden and gave recommendations as to which needed attention most and graded the trees accordingly. We will have more funds in the next year to

start some of the work to renew and plant trees and shrubs where required, than we had this year.

Garden Report:

Tassy was unable to join the meeting, so Calum delivered her report, most of which talked about in the Chairman's report. However, there were a number of suggestions from the floor about improvements. David Solomon requested that there should be more scented plants. Several residents noted that if the gardeners have a leaf blower, that this is a noisy and environmentally unfriendly piece of equipment, and should we have one. Calum mentioned that the gardeners made the case that this would change their lives given how much time they spend collecting leaves by rake, and Calum said he would put this comment to the gardeners to see if they felt there was an improved product available or if they really needed one.

It was also requested that we think about importing some hedgehogs into the garden. The last time this happened, sadly they all died or disappeared. However we were all keen to try again, and so Kit will look into this possibility.

Precept:

This was voted on at the last AGM, at a figure of £80,000. Calum said he hoped it would trend down from here as we finish the investment in the garden and build up a contingency fund.

Resignation of the Committee and Appointment of a new Committee:

The committee resigned. Carrie Ferman, LeeLee Brown and Megahnn Kelly will not be putting themselves up for the committee again, however Calum MacInnes, Tassy Barham, Nathalie Faure Beaulieu, Melode Parker and Kit Davis will continue to serve on the committee. Three new members were requested to join from the floor, and Mary Cameron, Catherine Derrough and

Edward Lockhart-Mummery offered to join, which was gratefully received.

With that, the AGM was finished and closed.

Calum MacInnes.