

ARUNDEL/ELGIN GARDEN AGM 2014

Held at the Notting Hill Methodist church Lancaster Rd.

All committee members present:

Rob Sargeant – Chairman

Calum MacInnes – Secretary

Natalie Faure Beaulieu - Treasurer

Nick Bellet, Tassy Barham, Kit Davis, Fiona McAndrew, Guy Nixon, Rebecca van Dal

It was noted that there was a small attendance by residents

Treasurer's report: (Natalie Faure Beaulieu)

Due to the gradual increase of financial pressure on the budget especially in terms of the increase in Gardeners wages to a more appropriate level, it was put forward that the garden precept should be increased to £40K pa. This was based on maintaining all other areas stable and keeping a small amount aside as a contingency fund. It was agreed that we cannot afford to resurface the second children's area of slide/climbing frame at the Ladbroke grove end next year but we hope to this in future years. Included in the budget is a sum to do essential maintenance work to the iron railings at the Kensington Park road end of the garden for 2015.

Presidents report: (Rob Sargent)

The president congratulated and thanked the gardeners for their amazing hard work and spectacular results for 2013/14. He especially made comment about winning the 2nd prize in the royal borough (Kensington and Chelsea Brighter Borough Scheme). It was commented on that the major project of 2014 – resurfacing the children's area under the swings - had been a great success although it was noted from some residents that the colour was slightly bright but was improving with time.

All the members of the committee resigned and new members were invited to step forward for election to the committee. Carrie Ferman was keen to join the committee and was welcomed warmly.

Tree report: (Guy Nixon)

Guy met with James Burton (chief arborist for RBKC) who said that he was not in favour of the removal of any of the limes for any reason other than the fact that they have reached or are nearing the end of their natural lives;

If was discussed that we could begin a program of planting the next generation of tall garden trees in the existing gaps between the mature limes and that

Fastigiates could make good specimens for the garden. He also mentioned that Gingko could be another alternative that would cope with warming temperatures. Once replacement trees had matured over the next few years, we could then revisit the possibility of the Limes being thinned as they came closer to the end of their natural lives;

One way in which we could address residents concerns about the honey fall from the Limes is to increase the frequency of the pollarding of the Limes and perhaps consider alternating to avoid them all being stripped back to the braches at the same time. It was agreed that we would pollard the limes every other year rather than every three.

One lime was identified outside the house of Rob Sargent that has a fungus that is weakening the tree and it was suggested that the royal borough arborialist would entertain an application for its removal. We discussed the location for a replacement for this tree being to the East of the existing two limes outside Robs house

All of the other Limes seem to be in good health - the leaf fall we've seen this year is probably a result of the dry spell earlier in the summer.

We have not yet replaced the Willow that was removed from the horse shoe bed (at the Eastern end of the Garden) but will do so this year - A Fastigiate oak was agreed upon as the replacement tree.

The Silver Birch planted 18 months ago by the Western entrance has died - Paul will order a replacement tree at no further cost to the garden.

Lastly it was commented from one of the residents that they were extremely concerned about the removal of the lime as mentioned earlier and would this cause subsidence to the nearby houses. Guy agreed to discuss this with the arborialist and get back to the concerned party.

It was also discussed that a painted post might be placed in the position where a new tree is due to be planted so that people who live near there might have the chance to comment on the positioning of the new tree.

Garden report: (Tassy Barham)

Again great praise for the excellent work of the gardeners Chris and Anna throughout the course of the year – which was recognised in the garden winning second place in the Kensington and Chelsea Brighter Borough Scheme. Congratulations for their prize.

It was mentioned that residents should be aware that they are NOT allowed to cut down trees/bushes nor do any gardening/pruning in the communal garden area even outside their houses. If residents would like something changed or tended to, please speak to Tassy or Nick, or the gardeners directly.

The garden has had many new plants and shrubs during the year; one area of focus has been the Ladbroke Grove hedge with many new large Privet planted, both at the LG entrance and along LG.

Entertainment:

There was general appreciation for an excellent fireworks evening which had a very good turnout this year . The paella stall did well and it was thought that perhaps next year we would charge them to set up their stall (?£100). Some residents commented that they would like a hog or lamb roast.

There were various discussions about the summer party and whether we should sell tickets for future events. The general feeling was that this was not a welcome idea and might cause divisions. It was also mentioned that we could look at sponsorship but comment was made that this was not successful in the past.

Other business:

Lastly there was discussion about whether in principal the residents and committee might agree to personal donations to the garden and it was felt that this might not be a problem if the donation was to the garden fund in general and did not give the donor any special rights in the garden. There were some people who disagreed with any donations.