

## **MINUTES –AGM – HYDE PARK GARDENS**

19<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 6 p.m.

Present: Haydn Turner  
Myrtle McGuire  
Mel and Barbara Altshuler  
Charles Wigoder  
Kenneth Ibbett

Apologies were received from Robert Player who had a prior commitment to be on the panel of BBC's Gardener's Question Time, and also from Stuart Glyn.

The meeting commenced, with the first matter being the Election of the Garden Committee. It was agreed that the existing Committee be reappointed.

Budget and Expenditure was the next topic. Haydn mentioned that part of our agreement for budgets and accounting were that they would be circulated before the meeting and they have not been. Haydn apologised and explained there had been problems with the transfer of figures from the previous agents to Westbourne Estates, therefore the accounts for the last year had not been circulated.

This year we have overspent by £7,000. The overspend was necessary because of new planting and also trees. The reserve is now down to £25,000. Last year we raised £63,000 and spent £70,000. The budget for this year, including planting another one-third of the perimeter at the Brook Street end of the garden, is £66,000.

Haydn said he would be happier to put a little more in the reserve because of the trees. It was therefore discussed whether we could raise another 7% to cover what we know will be spent. Charles Wigoder's instinct is that if we ask people for a 7% increase they will object and we would be better to raise between 4-5% this year and then the following year another small increase. It was decided to ask for a 4.9% increase this year.

WESTBOURNE ESTATES joined the meeting.

Robert Player's had given Haydn Turner a report on the garden. We won the Silver Medal this year and it was felt this was due to the fact we had come first so many times, it was someone else's turn. However, the Silver Medal is still excellent and it is valued by us.

Robert is continuing his work on the back area of the garden, and putting more shale on the pathways. Also two more major trees have to be felled due to fungus. The Cherry Tree, which has been under threat for some time, will be retained for another year.

It was pointed out that the gravel path has been destroyed outside No.19 where the builders are doing extensive work, and it was suggested that funds are taken from the deposit lodged with Westbourne Estates to repair any damage.

Robert needs a far better accounting system so that there is more analysis.

We agreed to re-appoint Robert Player's company as the Gardeners. We also agreed that we were very happy with Westbourne Estates and wished to continue with their management of the Garden.

Charles Wigoder raised the subject of Dogs and mentioned there is no need for dogs to be allowed to run wild in the garden. He felt dogs should be registered and a discussion ensued. He also felt dogs should be allowed in the garden only before 9 a.m. and after 6 p.m. and always on leads. At any other time NO DOGS.

The problems with one or two owners was discussed it was felt necessary to write to Milica Kastner at 2 Hyde Park Gardens, and Giovanna Grassi at No.14 with regard to problems with their dogs, and also with the lady who works for Milica and brings several small dogs into the garden and lets them off the lead. She has also been rude to several people in the garden, including the gardeners and pretends not to speak English

The Church Commissioners rules state NO DOGS. People must adhere by our Rules, which are:

1. DOGS ONLY ON LEADS
2. NO-ONE WHO DOES NOT LIVE HERE ALLOWED TO WALK THEIR DOGS
3. REGISTER DOGS WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

Therefore anyone who is resident in the garden and owns a dog must register with the Managing Agent with a photograph and contact details immediately.

No other dogs are allowed in the garden.

If the rule is abused, the disobedient dogs will be banned from the garden.

Only registered dogs are allowed into the garden.

The question of the inequitable percentages of the garden rates was raised. Haydn said that the Church are reviewing the whole contract between themselves and the Committee and he has been trying to have a meeting to discuss this for three months. They now say they wish to have an urgent meeting.

Knight Frank have been asked about this and we will ask them again.

It seems that certain residents are not paying their garden rate until this is resolved, but it was pointed out that this is absolutely wrong. As a Committee we are doing everything we can to resolve the situation but dealing with Knight Frank and the Church Commissioners is not easy.

We are very much against allowing people to default on their garden rates.

Haydn and Westbourne Estates will do their best to resolve this illogical system. Hopefully a meeting will take place in the next week or two.

After any meeting with the Church Commissioners Haydn will report back.

The question of outstanding garden rates was raised. If not clarified we should send legal notices out. It seems the Church Commissioners have never paid the £50,000+ which they ought to have paid in garden rates for certain leases in Hyde Park Gardens over the years. They owe in the region of £51,000.

We are in a difficult position as the Church Commissioners set up this garden scheme a long time ago and we do not really have the powers to amend it without their input.

The meeting closed.