

KENSINGTON GARDENS SQUARE GARDEN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at St Matthews Church Room, St Petersburg Place, London W2 4LA
Wednesday 28th November 2018 at 7.30pm

Attendance

NAME	ADDRESS	FREEHOLDER	PROXIES
Jim Rea (Chair)	3/26 KGS	26 KGS	
Simon Glucina (Secretary)	2/26 KGS	26 KGS	70, 29, 72-74 KGS
Judith Schecter (Treasurer)	5/14 KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Brigitte Hapts	68 KGS	68 KGS	
Shaw Warnock	58 KGS	58-59 KGS	
Keith Barrow	c/o Garden House	86-92 KGS	
Jennifer Felderhof	14b KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Mariella Kremer	5/68 KGS	68 KGS	
Marius Felderhof	14b KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Caroline Egan-Strang	27 KGS	27-28 KGS	

1. The Rules of the Association state that a quorum is 7 members present in person or by proxy. The meeting was therefore quorate, 9 paid-up members – covering 25 frontages.
2. The **AGM 2017 minutes** were presented by Simon Glucina, Secretary: They were adopted unanimously by the meeting without amendment and signed by Jim Rea as a true record. There were no matters arising not otherwise on the 2018 AGM agenda.
3. **Chairman's Report:** Jim Rea summarised some of the highlights in the Association's activities during the past year. He commented that it had been an extremely successful year in the garden with beautiful Spring and Summer weather leading to a tremendous amount of recreational use. There had also been a large number of improvements made. These included:
 - a. an upgrade of the shed to a secure container (following a break in and theft of equipment from the old shed – the theft fortunately covered by our insurance)
 - b. installation of GoodNature rodent control kit (automatic humane traps for rat control)
 - c. a successful Open Garden Day
 - d. a feature in the Autumn Garden Square newsletter, highlighting the ecological approach to garden management and the Association's informative website
 - e. The installation of owl and bat boxes, to encourage residence of these creatures
4. **Horticultural report:** Jim Rea then continued with his horticultural report. He noted that the lawns were not being sprayed in order to protect children playing on the lawn from the detrimental contact with the pesticide. He also pointed out how all green waste was now recycled in form of compost, and that soft waste was used for a new worm farm. Woodchips were supplied by Tim George, our tree surgeon, to enrich the overall system. These actions have all improved the presence of natural organic processes, attracting microbes, fungi and insects, in turn leading to increases in wildlife including owls and bats. He noted that the gardeners, who were initially skeptical about some of these practices, were now very enthusiastic about them. Separately, significant tree work was undertaken during the year, removing low hanging branches increasing the amount of light in the Square. A question from the floor noted the recent removal of some trees (a diseased twin oak, the fallen crabapple, rubinias) with inquiry as to whether new trees would be planted. The Chairman responded that some trees had been planted, and that the Committee also needed in the planting strategy to be mindful of the need for sun to access the grass in the Square given that the plane and other large trees continue to grow taller each year. The Secretary read a report on developments in the small Square from Susanne Gahler, including plans to develop it with pavers given the challenge of growing grass in shady places.
5. **Treasurer's report:** Judith Schecter presented the financial situation of the Association: 55 frontages are now members of the Association, all paid up. The business year ending in March 2018 produced c.£33k of income and c.£26k of expenditure, producing a surplus of c.£7k. We

expect to run a deficit for the year to March 2019 of a similar amount given the investments made this year, the significant treework, as well as proposed improvements to the small square. Considering this sound financial situation, it was proposed and agreed (without objection) that the current garden rate would stay at the same level, i.e. £600 per frontage, with the two social housing members benefiting from a 25% discount. Reserves remain healthy at around 2 years' current income, and the meeting agreed that these needed to be preserved. There was a question regarding whether the garden rate should be increased to allow for greater build up of reserves to finance potential future works. The Committee responded that the level needed to be kept at an affordable level for residents (and that there had been two increases in recent years), but that this was a valid point in context of the Association's ambitions for the Square, on which the Committee would seek the views of residents.

6. **Reappointment of auditors:** Judith Schechter confirmed that she was happy with the service provided by our accountants (Tree Tops) and the meeting confirmed their reappointment for the coming year.
7. **Election of Committee Members:** Jim Rea resigned his membership of the Committee given his impending move to New Zealand. He spoke passionately about how it had been a privilege to stand on the Committee and how we were all very fortunate to have not only a beautiful Square to enjoy, but to have a community that was not riven with internal politics, as has been witnessed at other garden squares. For this and the continuing overall development of the Square, he thanked past and present committee members and KGSGA members present. The meeting thanked Jim for his inspirational stewardship of the Garden Square and his leadership of the Association, and the Secretary read out a note from Moray Angus, a former Committee member, conferring thanks for the works of Jim and Brian on so many improvements in the Square. The other current Committee members (Simon Glucina, Susanne Gahler, Judith Schechter, Jan Kremer, Catherine Ramage, Brigitte Haupts and Jelena Vickovic) were all re-elected. Caroline Egan-Strang of 27 KGS was also elected. Simon Glucina will assume the Chair in addition to Secretary duties and Jan Kremer will lead on horticultural matters.
8. **Update on Land Registration:** Simon Glucina gave an update on Land Registration. The short summary was that our application is still with the Land Registry. The Land Registry had requested additional proof of the nature in which the Association has asserted its ownership of the Gardens and, after a review of a mountain of old minutes and records by Catherine Ramage, Jim Rea, Judith Schechter and Wendy Wyver during the summer, a considerable amount of additional records was furnished in response. As at the date of the meeting, we were still awaiting a response from the Land Registry which is at present significantly backed up with work.
9. **Railings in the small garden:** Simon Glucina raised the issue of the installation of railings around the small garden, which was discussed at last year's AGM. Keith Barron on behalf of Garden House confirmed Garden House's willingness to fund to a level limited to £60,000. An initial estimate of costs was for well over £100,000. Efforts had been made by a number of interested residents to see whether the overall cost could be reduced, but feedback was that this is unlikely given the complexity of the job (principally relating to the need for bespoke footings for ironworks around the trees, which is very expensive). The meeting agreed that the priority for application of KGSGA funds is presently Land Registration, and that we cannot currently finance the shortfall for the railings project.
10. **KGSGA communications directly to residents:** At last year's meeting, a question arose as to how the Committee could develop direct email communication with residents given that the Managing Agents for members had a relatively poor record in passing on Committee communications to Square residents. Simon Glucina informed that meeting that he had been working with Salesforce.com which (thanks to the efforts of Jan Kremer) has agreed to provide an online tool to support better record keeping and GDPR compliant communication. The construction of this is in progress, but we hope to have it ready for the new financial year.

The meeting ended 9.10 pm.