

KENSINGTON GARDENS SQUARE GARDEN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at St Matthews Church Room, St Petersburg Place, London W2 4LA
Tuesday 26th November 2019 at 7.30pm

Attendance

NAME	ADDRESS	FREEHOLDER	PROXIES
Simon Glucina (Chair and Secretary)	2/26 KGS	26 KGS	
Judith Schecter (Treasurer)	5/14 KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Jan Kremer (Large Garden & IT)	5/68 KGS	68 KGS	
Susanne Gahler (Small Garden & Keys)	58 KGS	58-59 KGS	
Caroline Egan-Strang (Garden Parties)	27 KGS	27-28 KGS	
Jelena Vickovic (Community Engagement)	70 KGS	70 KGS	
Brigitte Haupts (Committee Member)	64 KGS	64 KGS	
Jennifer Felderhof (Committee Member)	14b KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Marius Felderhof	14b KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Mariella Draaijer	5/68 KGS	68 KGS	
Tim Tasker	27 KGS	27-28 KGS	
Shaw Warnock	58 KGS	58-59 KGS	
Peter Kirk	3/26 KGS	26 KGS	
Felicity Kirk	3/26 KGS	26 KGS	
Alex Ockwell	10 KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
H. Makalanda	12b KGS	10-14 and 54-55 KGS	
Donata Invernizzi	60/61 KGS	60/61 KGS	
Barry Wojcik	8/27 KGS	27-28 KGS	
Celia Berry	8/27 KGS	27-28 KGS	
Dieter Wellmann	64 KGS	64 KGS	
Sean Weaver	5/46 KGS	46 KGS	

- 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 18 frontages.
- The **AGM 2018 minutes** were presented by Simon Glucina. They were adopted unanimously by the meeting without amendment and signed by Simon as a true record. There were no matters arising not otherwise on the 2019 AGM agenda.
- Chairman's Report:** Simon Glucina summarised some of the highlights in the Association's activities during the past year. He commented how fortunate we all were to live on such a beautiful square. It had been a very good year in the garden, built on the strong foundations left by Jim Rea, chair until the 2018 AGM, who had placed considerable importance on ecological matters. There had been a reformulation of the committee following Jim's move back to NZ, with greater definition in roles and autonomy and accountability within them, and the Committee had worked collaboratively and well. There were several highlights to report, including much a stronger community element with monthly coffee mornings and garden activities such as bulb planting involving more residents, and significant improvements in infrastructure. Both gardens were looking beautiful, particularly through the spring and summer. The financial position for the Association remained healthy, and there was much to look forward to with further development and community plans for the year ahead.
- Small garden report:** Susanne Gahler then continued in more detail with the report on the small garden. There has been a lot of focus on horticultural development with more shade loving plants established and providing colour in the warmer months. In terms of development, we have plans to plant more shrubs such as yew hedges which will make it more attractive when walking by, and to replace the acacia tree with two small trees. This will be a particular benefit once the longer-term project of railings installation commences, at which time there will be a more direct view into the garden from outside. Susanne mentioned that there will be a new pathway installed before the end of the year providing greater light with reflecting coloured pebbles, and the intention is to install a walkway of stepping stones around the garden so that people can move around it more easily. Once the pathway is addressed, we will look at seating. As regards railings for the small Square, Susanne reminded the Association that three years ago planning permission for the

installation of new railings for the small garden had been obtained. This had been driven significantly by Garden House which had also undertaken to fully finance their installation. However, this financing commitment was now reduced to £60k so a gap remained that is beyond the means of the Association to progress. We would make contact with Garden House to help understand the options given that the planning permission would expire in the Spring. Finally, the meeting was reminded that the same key was used to access the small square as the large and that she would be grateful for continued assistance with watering in the summer months.

5. **Large garden report:** Jan Kremer then continued with the report for the large garden, and paid tribute to Jim Rea who had laid such a strong foundation with soil and composting. Since taking over, Jan reported that he had given much thought to developing a plan that would allow more colour and flowers to be sustained in the garden, and he had been putting in a water drip system to help support plants in the borders, which receive little direct water in the middle of the year due to the umbrella of the plane trees. Efforts would continue on this in 2020 and Jan thanked residents for their help with this work. A small shed had been moved to the western side of the garden, freeing up space on the sunnier eastern side for more flowering plants. Jan also reported that he had been developing a tree-tracking system to help monitor the health and history of each tree, all of which were now numbered. We needed to proactively monitor the health of all trees given the presence of the massaria fungus and its impact on plane trees, and avoid any surprises such as the falling of the crab apple two Springs earlier. Jan said that he had been noticing more litter in the gardens, much of which may be 'blowing in' e.g., McDonalds wrappers from people throwing away litter after eating in parked cars; we must all do our bit to clean up after ourselves and not be shy in calling out other users who do not treat the garden with the respect it deserves. There were also more squirrels in the garden, and we may need to give some thought to how to manage this. Finally, in response to a question from the meeting, Jan said he would give some thought to how to make the large green container store shed in the south-western corner (installed after the former wooden shed was forced into) more sympathetic to its surroundings and discuss this with Alex – this could include, for example, painting it a darker shade of green and installing some wooded lattices.
6. **Community report:** Caroline Egan-Strang gave the report on garden events and parties, and reminded the meeting that the key principles relating to parties were the need for thoughtfulness from all residents regardless of garden membership and the right to enjoyment for garden users, supporting the feeling of it being a garden for all to enjoy. Funds raised from parties (there is a fee for gatherings of 10 or more) support the garden and we were delighted to see 11 parties through the year. Two larger parties had been held – one for Garden House as part of a marketing effort, and a second supported by generous hosts to which everyone in the community was invited, which was wonderful to see. One party was held without permission and in breach of a number of rules and this had been followed up with a warning. During the year, the Committee had taken the opportunity to review party rules with some updates – these make clear, for example, that there is no room to store party kit, rubbish needs to be removed and the gate must be kept closed during parties. A finish time for parties has been added, given the garden can act as a sound bowl. The updated rules are on the website.

There was further update on the community events through the year. The annual garden party in September had been a success as usual. This year, Jelena Vickovic has been at the heart of establishing monthly coffee mornings on the 1st Sunday of the month at 11am, which have continued throughout the year. There was a very successful bulb planting coffee morning in early November which around 30 residents were involved with, and 2500 bulbs planted between the gardens, including lilies, crocuses, daffodils and snow drops. We await their arrival of their shoots and colour in the Spring and intend to make bulb planting an annual event. Finally, the garden participated in the Open Garden Squares weekend for which we open our doors to ticketholders for one day. It is always a pleasure to share the garden with interested parties as part of this London wide initiative.

7. **Land registry update:** Simon Glucina updated the meeting with developments in relation to our long-running initiative to obtain possessory title to the gardens, formalising the fact that the Association has had possession and control of the gardens for many decades. There have been frustrations with the process this year – following reaching the milestone of the application finally being made to the Land registry in 2018, the Land Registry had raised a technical issue in

response which had been difficult to rebut given the arguments made and data provided by our lawyers. While the Committee did consider whether it remained the right thing to do to continue to invest time and resources in pursuit of title, providing maximum security of ownership, it elected to continue with the process and is considering appointing another lawyer, a garden square specialist. The Committee will continue to make the argument and will update at next year's AGM.

8. **Financial report:** Judith Schecter presented the financial situation of the Association: 54 frontages are now members of the Association, all paid up. The business year ending in March 2018 produced c.£36k of income and c.£35k of expenditure, producing a modest surplus. Given investments in the current year in the large and small gardens, as well as the need for further tree work, we may expect to run a deficit for the year to March 2020. Considering this financial situation, it was proposed and agreed (without objection) that the current garden rate would increase by £40 to £640 per frontage, with the two social housing members benefiting from a 25% discount. This is on the back of no increase in the garden rate for 3 consecutive years.
9. **Reappointment of auditors:** Judith Schecter confirmed that she was happy with the service provided by our accountants (Tree Tops) and the meeting confirmed their reappointment for the coming year.
10. **Election of Committee Members:** Simon Glucina thanked committee members for their dedication and commitment over the year, during which there had been significant investment in the gardens and a step change in community activity. Committee members present at the meeting (Simon Glucina, Susanne Gahler, Judith Schecter, Jan Kremer, Jennifer Felderhof, Caroline Egan-Strang, Brigitte Haupts and Jelena Vickovic) were all re-elected.
11. **KGSGA communications directly to residents:** During the course of the year, Simon and Jan had worked to establish a community database, using software provided at no cost (given our not for profit status) by Jan's employer, Salesforce.com. This had proven to be a valuable tool around resident communications and organization of events, and we will continue to use it. The database is far from a complete record of keyholders, given the challenge of maintaining a manual record over many years. The meeting was encouraged to ensure all eligible members and keyholders provided their details so they could join in on activities and events.

The meeting then concluded at around 9.10 pm, with those present enjoying mulled wine and mince pies and pleasant conversation before close.