

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Courtfield Gardens (West) Garden Committee**

Meeting was held in the Burns Hotel, Barkston Gardens, on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010. 18 people attended.

### 1. Apologies

The Chairman mentioned that some key holders were not able to attend the meeting and mentioned their apologies.

### 2. Last AGM's minutes

The minutes of last year's AGM were made available. No questions were asked.

### 3. Committee's reports on the past year

The Chairman's report was given and accepted. This included an overview on progress of the re-invigoration of the garden and presentation of a plan of development areas for the coming year, and the garden maintenance. The re-invigoration included working in of 36t of manure into the soil, taking out of 27t of green waste, and bringing in 120kg of lawn feed. We achieved big progress within the 5 year view of improving the garden. Given limitations on funds, bringing in more gravel on the paths, improving the edging, and installation of more benches will be part of future plan. The garden was used for various parties subject to the agreed rules. The summer party arranged by the Courtfield Gardens West Residents' Association was a success and was mentioned to have shown a small profit.

The Treasurer's report was given and accepted. This included the expenditure made over the past year, explanation of the accounts, and the rationale for the GBP60.000 proposed garden precept. The garden precept was unanimously approved.

The Secretary's report was given and accepted. This included an update on residents' good acceptance of the new fob key system, the various social events that took place, the allowing of parties in the garden, and potential cooperation with the Earls Courts Residents Association for their festival. We agreed to participate in the Open Gardens weekend this year.

The following issues/questions were raised and discussed:

- Lesser degree of privacy due to less/lower plants: This would be addressed by doing more planting of shrubs and plants growing. The Committee would discuss with the Gardeners as to how quite areas could be developed.
- Sandpit needs more attention: This would be addressed by ordering fresh/more sand. We couldn't find a proper solution for a cover of the pit.
- Cover the hole in the big tree: This would be addressed by getting a 'Little Door' for this hole made and installed.

### 4. Election of Officers for the coming year

The current committee resigned. Mike Osborne, Matt Scammell, Thomas Schneider, Lindsay Hampson, Roma Ashworth-Briggs and Paul McNeal were proposed for re-election. All were voted in unanimously and formed the new committee.

### 5. The proposed Budget for 2010

The budget as presented by the Treasurer was approved unanimously. The Committee's proposed to shift the focus and more spending on the garden management and development showed substantial improvements in the garden in 2009. The Committee recommended to increase the spending for the Gardener to GBP33k and to have GBP12k for plants and

additional projects. This was approved by the AGM. In order to preserve any future investments in plants, the installation of a water irrigation & tank system for GBP30k (GBP15k reserve was approved last year) was suggested and then approved by the AGM. A bore hole was deemed to be too expensive (GBP70k). Given ongoing issue with one resident trying to establish a squatter's claim, a GBP10,000 reserve for required legal action was recommended to remain and then approved by the AGM. It was agreed to have a Christmas tree in the garden starting this year.

#### 6. Major Projects

Mrs. Hampson provided an overview on the intended works in the garden including the range of new plants to come in, soil improvement work, and required tree pruning in February. In more detail she explained the development of a tropical plant, planting of herbs in some beds, and creation of a small wildlife section. The AGM approved the projects.

#### 7. Garden Management

The Chairman noted the significant process that was made and that gardener Robert Player and his team had achieved good progress.

Two specific issues were mentioned, to which the AGM agreed:

- People disturbing in the garden: It was agreed that Mr. McNeal would act as warden as a when required.
- Erection of scaffolding: The Chairman mentioned that the process of giving permission and to control the erection of scaffolding was very time consuming. It was suggested to take a GBP2k deposit to avoid damages and to put specific rules for builders on our website.

#### 8. Legal Dispute

The Committee had to mention that a resident Collingham Road 27 wasn't removing a foldable table and deck-area, despite being using land that was property of the garden. The Committee was concerned of that resident to try establishing squatter's rights. The Committee would pursue this case in the coming year. The AGM approved the Committee's approach on this subject.

#### 9. AOB

Some residents asked for re-instatement of the garden walk. The Chairman suggested to possibly have a walk in August 2010.

The meeting was concluded with social get together over wine.



Thomas Schneider