

Rosmead Garden

Annual General Meeting

Committee Report

January 2015

Dear Residents,

Happy New Year to all! The Annual General Meeting of Rosmead Garden will be held on Monday 19th of January at 7.30pm. The meeting will take place at 105 Elgin Crescent. You are cordially invited to attend.

A copy of the Agenda and the minutes of the last AGM are attached.

FINANCE

The Garden levy (or precept) was £27,730 for the financial year to 31st of March 2014 and the accounts for the same period, prepared on a cash basis, show a surplus of £14,796, compared to last year's deficit of £4,443. However, the comparison is unhelpful for 3 reasons. First, as you know we agreed to raise donations from residents towards the Rosmead railings project. At the end of that financial year, 31st March 2014, we had collected £15,000 towards the Railings. Second, we had spent £2,010 on fees and survey works on the Railings project. Third, we kicked off a children's fund and had collected £600 at end of the financial year. Adjusting for these 3 abnormal items leaves a 'normal course' surplus of £1,205. Our normal income and expenditure during the year under review followed previous years with garden expenses taking the lion's share of our income. We spent nearly £1,000 on the bench commemorating Stephan Pinter's contribution to the annual fireworks evening. We try to ensure that the Garden Party and Fireworks evening, taken together, break even and I am glad to report that we met this objective again in 2013. We engaged the services of an accountant again to help the Treasurer with the management of the accounts and a copy of the accounts are available from the Treasurer, James Tuckey, at 95 Elgin Crescent.

For the current year to 31st March 2015 the precept was raised to £55,000, following the AGM decision to double the precept in order to help pay for the Rosmead Railings. We anticipate that we will again achieve a small surplus on 'normal course' income and expenditure, and on current estimates we are likely to have cash in the bank at the end of March 2015 of £20,000. For many years your Committee have planned to hold, at any one time, a surplus of approximately one year's precept in order to meet one off expenditures. Any surpluses arising are added to the Reserves which are essential to enable general maintenance projects to be carried out.

For the year to March 31st 2016, as previously agreed at the 2014 AGM, the precept will be maintained at the current level of £55,000 in order to fund part of the cost of renewing the Rosmead railings. Please see the section on the Rosmead railings project, below, for more detail.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT – ROSMEAD RAILINGS

The current status of the Rosmead railing project is as follows:

1. We have full planning consent for the scheme. A number of standard conditions have to be discharged before we can make a physical start on site.
2. Our architect, Susan Walker, has persuaded RBK&C to waive their normal charges for diverting the pavement in Rosmead Road and using 3 car parking bays during the works.

3. The cost of providing fob operated gate locks at both ends of the garden has turned out to be prohibitively expensive and the Committee has decided not to proceed with this item.
4. We decided to delay starting the work until early this year in order to minimise disruption to residents. We anticipate the physical works will take approximately 3 months to complete.
5. We hope to start work next month and we are in the final stages of negotiation with a contractor.
6. We will notify residents when we have a fixed start date.
7. The current budget stands at £147,000, including contingency and VAT. The increase has arisen through general building inflation since the budget was set in June 2013 and additional structural requirements to support Rosmead Road
8. Funding. We have had a fantastic response from many residents to our funding appeal and we have raised £43,000 so far.
9. Adding the £27,000 from the increased 2014 precept increases the Rosmead fund to £70,000.
10. We have spent circa £6,000 on fees and survey work, so we have £64,000 in a separate bank account.
11. We have unfortunately been unsuccessful in persuading The Council to contribute to the cost of the works. They have steadfastly maintained it is solely our responsibility.
12. When we collect the second precept increase in April 2015 of £27,000, the funding total will reach £97,000. The funding requirement is within last year's AGM agreement to double the precept for 5 years.
13. In order to enable us to proceed with the work and provide the balance of the cost which will need to be paid in April or May 2015, (on the current programme), several members of your Committee have agreed to provide a temporary loan to cover the remaining costs, which will be repaid either from current surplus funds or the increased precepts which will be received in April 2016 and 2017.

GARDEN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Email, mail drops and noticeboard notification will continue as per usual, but we would like to remind you there is a basic website where residents are able to find general information about our Garden, including the rules and notifications. The domain name is: www.rosmeadgarden.info . Your feedback and contributions to the site would be welcome.

SOCIAL EVENTS 2014/5

Last summer's "Caravanserai" party, was enjoyed by many and as always expertly organised by Valerie Montgomery. The event was cost neutral to the Garden thanks to the enthusiastic uptake of tickets by Residents. The 2015 party theme is yet to be decided, but it will be held on Saturday June 27th, save the date.

The **Bonfire Night Firework Display** has entered the Post-Pinter era. The 'Fabulous Fireworks Company' was engaged to be in charge of the fireworks and generally well received by all, though a few expressed that the 'frisson' of the Pinter-effect was missing. We will try to lure him back if we can. Thanks to the generous uptake of tickets by many of you, this event generated a profit for the Garden.

PLANTING, TREES AND GENERAL GARDEN USAGE

Long Term Garden Plan

At the previous AGM we discussed the need for a 'Long Term Plan' for the Communal Garden. What should the garden look like in 50 years? And what do we need to do going forward to achieve this? It was also suggested that we should consider the appointment of an external expert professional consultant to advise us.

We have now done so, and we are delighted to report that this Autumn, the Committee appointed Lucy Huntington (of Lucy and Francis Huntington) as our Consultant to deliver said 'Long Term Plan'. Lucy Huntington has been in business for over 40 years, and she has a largely repeat client base, of both private,

and corporate clients. Lucy has been the Planting Consultant for the Hurlingham Club directing all their planting for the last 18 years.

Lucy will work with us on a continual basis, advising us and subsequent Committees each year on the next steps we need to take in order to achieve our long term goals and ensure continuity in management of the Garden. The plan will cover the whole of the Garden, the trees, plants, shrubs, lawns and open spaces.

We have supplied Lucy with all the historical information on the Garden we have in our files, old reports, and up to date reports, including our latest Tree Survey (July 2013). Most recently our own 'Residents Survey' and all the old Garden notes from previous Committee's and any historical references we have.

We look forward to working with Lucy Huntington in the years to come, and as we are completing the planning stage of the 'Rosmead Railings Restoration Project', our focus will now shift towards managing the successful implementation of the first stage of the Long Term Plan.

The first stage of the Long Term Plan will be available at the AGM. If you would like to comment, please share your suggestions and thoughts and send feedback, either by hand to 87 Elgin Crescent, or email to nicolaheywood@gmail.com. We would appreciate all your suggestions and of course they will be put forward to Lucy Huntington.

General Garden Management

Again this year we ran the garden very carefully on a tight budget, covering maintenance only, as we are mindful of the Rosmead Railings Project. Our overall agreed spend was £18,000. With this we managed to maintain the garden, and to continue all the work on the lawns and pathways. Within this budget we allowed as usual for essential Tree Works which we carried out as directed by our Arboricultural Consultant (Report by A.C.S. Consulting/ July 2013). This recommended we focused on our four mature Horse Chestnut Trees (no's 66 78 17 & 83 on the Garden Map). For Central London they are in 'okay' health, but tree no 78, opposite the climbing frame on the Lansdowne Rd. side, is not so good, even though it is safe. We also did more work than anticipated on the Ash tree in front on Liddiard House/Lansdowne Rd side (no 54) a Common Ash. This too does not have a long lifespan. So this year's tree work (which ran slightly over budget) has further clarified the importance of succession planting in the context of our new Long Term Plan.

London Garden Open Squares Day - Once again a successful event, we had over 600 visitors. Thanks to Anita Dent for the fabulous charity 'pop-up' cafe. Please note: the date for 2015 is Sunday 14th June - from 12 - 5 pm. (Entrance gate TBC, dependant on Rosmead Railings Restoration Project).

Rubbish - Thanks to our many fellow residents who helped tidy up the garden this year, taking away rubbish, broken glass and Dog Mess. It's an on-going problem so please help us this year too, bins overflow occasionally (with domestic rubbish?) and an excess of Dog Mess. Whenever possible, please take any rubbish you come across home with you. Our gardener Paul comes just once a week and he has the garden to look after as well as doing the clearing up! Also it would be helpful if you could encourage everyone to take away food too, don't leave it in the garden, it just encourages more foxes, rats and other vermin.

Garden Waste - Please don't put your garden waste into the Communal garden, or onto the pathways as we have no means of disposing of it. Can we encourage everyone to use our Councils 'Green Bag Scheme'. The next collection is on Tuesday 28th January. You can apply for your free 'Green bag' on 0207 361 3001 or email; streetline@rbkc.gov.uk. They also supply Bio-degradable leaf bags in Autumn/Winter at a small cost of £8.10 for a pack of 25. Again the contact details are as above, or you can pick them up from The Market Office at 72 Tavistock Rd., W11 1AN (just off Portobello) Tel: 0207 727 7684. NB: opening times Monday to Saturday 9AM to 1PM.

COMMUNAL GARDENING DAY

It's a Garden tradition for Residents to contribute to the removal of autumn leaves each year the morning

after the Bonfire party. Last year was a total wash-out, but hopefully this year (2015) the weather will be kinder.

COMMITTEE

As at the beginning of January 2014 the Committee comprised of those mentioned below:

Michiel Bakker
James Tuckey
Juliet Wilkinson
Gerard Cunningham
Victoria Fordham
Nicola Heywood
Valerie Montgomery
Michael Staveley

Victoria Fordham has resigned and Stephen Fordham is proposed to replace her on the Committee. I am also pleased to announce that Gabriella Mitchell has been proposed and seconded to join the Committee as the 9th member. To ensure continuity around the Rosmead railings project, it is proposed the Chairman remains in place for one further year, which is two years beyond the usual 5 year term. All other members are proposed for re-election. It is proposed the following three members will hold the role of officers: Michiel Bakker – Chairman; James Tuckey – Treasurer and Juliet Wilkinson – Secretary. Any alternative nominations should be notified to the Chairman by 5PM on Friday January 16th.

DATE FOR AGM

The date for this AGM was determined during last year's AGM. We will propose Monday January 18th 2016 as the date for next year's AGM.

Other important dates for 2015:

London Open Garden Squares Day:	Saturday June 14 th
Summer Party:	Saturday June 27 th
Bonfire Party:	Saturday November 7 th
Communal Gardening Day:	Sunday November 8 th

We hope to see you shortly at this year's AGM on Monday the 19th of January at 105 Elgin Crescent at 7.30pm.

Yours sincerely,

The Committee.