

MONTAGU SQUARE GARDEN TRUST

**Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Monday 25th February, 6.30pm
Wetherby Preparatory School, Bryanston Square, London, W1H 2EA.**

CALLING NOTICE

Monday 28 January 2019

Dear Trustee,

Please accept this letter as a calling notice for the Annual General Meeting of Montagu Square Garden Trust to be held at 6.30pm on Monday 25th February at Wetherby Preparatory School, Bryanston Square, London, W1H 2EA.

Included with this letter

- **Agenda for the AGM**
- **Committee Report for 2018**
- **Accounts and Financial Report for 2018**

There will be an opportunity for those attending to raise questions in connection with the Garden and we look forward to your participation.

Yours sincerely,

Luz Perez
Clerk to Montagu Square Garden Trust



MONTAGU SQUARE GARDEN TRUST

AGENDA

Annual General Meeting (AGM) scheduled for Montagu Square Garden Trust at 6.30pm on Monday 25th February at Wetherby Preparatory School, Bryanston Square, London, W1H 2EA (entrance in George Street).

- 1. To consider and approve the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 19th February 2017 (available on our website, www.montagusquare.org, with additional copies available at the meeting)**
- 2. Matters arising**
- 3. To consider and if thought fit to accept the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st December 2018**
- 4. To receive the Annual Report of the Committee**
- 5. To levy the Garden rate for the year to 31st December 2019**
- 6. To elect the Committee for the year to 31st December 2019**
- 7. Open forum**
- 8. Any other business**

Note:

Prior to the Garden Trust AGM, there will be the Annual General Meeting of 'M' members of the Montagu Square (EMS) Limited at 6.00pm.

The Annual General Meeting of the Residents' Association will be held after the Garden Trust AGM.

Step free access is available from the mews behind Wetherby School to the 1st floor Hall. Please contact the garden clerk if you require assistance using this.

MONTAGU SQUARE GARDEN TRUST

Report of the Committee for the year 2018 to be considered by the AGM

The summer of 2018 was the hottest summer in London since 1976. How fortunate we are to live around this marvelous garden and enjoy respite from the heat, with the shade created by the huge canopy of leaves mainly of the 16 London Planes, some of which will be as old as the square, 200 years.

Some of these trees may be near the end of their lives. Our tree management programme is now established with The F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company. There are at least two meetings a year to discuss and inspect all the trees, and keep a watchful eye in particular on the Planes for Masaria virus, fungus & any other problems. In addition, we undertake an aerial inspection each year. The Plane tree in the northeast corner of the square is infected with perenniporia fraxinea fungus. Bartletts are undertaking advanced assessment testing on this tree.

Our trusted gardener, Joseph Jones, is always at these meetings, and as the person who knows the garden best can be relied upon to come up with ideas for keeping the garden looking good. In addition to gardening his team is extremely accommodating with whatever needs to be done, such as putting up Christmas tree lights, erecting gazebos, or clearing the rubbish.

This Autumn three smaller diseased trees have been cut down, and some of the logs generated have gone to create a wood pile which in time will be hidden by foliage. It will provide a haven for insects and small animals, and further encourage our bird population. Nanette Pigaga continues her project with the birds and has donated a special bird feeder from USA. Special work will be done this year to thicken up sections of the holly hedge.

At the south end of the North Lawn we are experimenting with a section of meadow lawn, which hopefully will be a riot of colour in the spring. Peter Loose donated a bench in memory of his wife Judith Loose, which is positioned at the north end of the South Lawn.

The summer garden party and Christmas carols events were again held this year. These raised £3,659 & £1,446 for the West London Day Centre and Early Childhood Centre charities, respectively.

Clerk Position

After 4 years Luz Perez, our clerk, has told us that increased teaching commitments mean she will not be able to continue as Clerk to the Garden Trust after February 2019. Luz has done an exceptional job as clerk and her work and enthusiasm will be greatly missed, particularly by the committee members who worked closely with her. We are very grateful for all her hard work.

After reviewing a number of options the committee propose to appoint Westbourne Block Management Limited to manage the administration of the Trust and take over all roles previously undertaken by the Clerk. Westbourne is an independent business, based in Paddington who specialize in managing London Squares. They currently manage 32 squares, including Bryanston and Portman Squares.

Montagu Square Residents' Association

Over the course of the past year, there has been ongoing discussions about how to streamline the work and responsibilities of the Montagu Square Residents' Association alongside the Trust. Each group has a limited pool of volunteer resources to call on.

It has been agreed that the work of the Residents' Association should be undertaken alongside the Garden Trust committee work. This will be done by welcoming Residents' Association members into the Garden Trust Committee and addressing issues previously taken up by the Residents' Association (those outside the railings) in a separate section of committee meetings. The Trust's statutory responsibilities under the Act of Parliament will remain separated and money from the garden rate levy will continue to be used only on the garden itself. Separate monies will continue to be raised through voluntary contributions for the hanging baskets.

The Committee at present consists of the following Trustees (with respective responsibilities)

David Cruise (Garden Contractor Liaison)
Peter Blott (Treasurer)
Anne Bristow (Trees, Carols by Candlelight)
Martin Bikhit (Garden Party)
Nanette Pigaga (Birds)
Padraig Hays
Julio Castro

Sue Smith, Chris Morris, Noella Hacquard and Sarah Dlubac will be joining the Committee in 2019. Joan Freeman has recently left the Committee.

At present the responsibilities of chairman are rotated between committee members. Peter Blott will be acting chairman for the Annual General Meeting.

Financial Report

The accounts for the year are set out on the next page.

The trust received £44,193 from the garden rate levy in 2018 (2017 - £46,755). This was used to maintain the gardens and administer the trust as well as allocation towards our reserves for tree pruning, Massaria and painting of the railings. Total reserves at the end 2018 were £19,278 (2017 - £19,758). Overall a deficit was recorded for 2018 of -£1,830 (2017 - surplus £2,394). Cash in bank at 31 December 2017 stood at £20,602 (2017 - £25,203).

Garden rate levy for the year to 31 December 2019

The Committee recommends an increase in the garden rate levy for 2019 of 8% (a rate of 0.828 pence in the pound on the annual values taken as 8% of the 2005 building insurance values). This increase is required towards the additional cost of employing a professional management company, Westbourne, rather than a part time Clerk.

Montagu Square Garden Trust Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018

Income and Expenditure - Year ended 31 December 2018

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Income		
Garden rates received	£44,193	£46,755
Misc. income	£796	£800
	<u>£44,990</u>	<u>£47,555</u>
Expenditure		
Gardener & garden improvements	£29,859	£26,690
Clerk's Fee	£4,082	£5,710
Insurance	£735	£938
Water	£1,068	£575
Electricity	£307	£239
Printing / IT /Stationary	£1,109	£1,294
Key refunds & electronic lock damage	£0	£787
Sundries	£660	£929
	<u>£37,820</u>	<u>£37,161</u>
Excess of income over expenditure	£7,170	£10,394
Allocation to reserves		
Painting fund	£2,000	£2,000
Trees fund	£7,000	£6,000
	<u>£9,000</u>	<u>£8,000</u>
Surplus / (Deficit)	<u>-£1,830</u>	<u>£2,394</u>

Balance Sheet and Reserves

As at 31 December	<u>2018</u>	-	<u>2017</u>
Assets and liabilities			
Cash at bank	£20,602		£25,203
Creditors and accruals	-£210		-£2,502
	<u>£20,392</u>		<u>£22,702</u>
Reserves			
Painting fund	£10,697		£8,697
Trees fund	£8,581		£11,061
Total Reserves	£19,278		£19,758
Surplus / (Deficit) Prior years	£2,944		£550
Surplus / (Deficit) Current year	-£1,830		£2,394
Accumulated Surplus / (Deficit)	<u>£1,114</u>		<u>£2,944</u>
	<u>£20,392</u>		<u>£22,702</u>

Statement of Reserves

	<u>Painting</u>	<u>Trees</u>	<u>Total</u>
Opening reserve as at 1 Jan. 2018	£8,697	£11,061	£19,758
Allocated to reserve in 2018	£2,000	£7,000	£9,000
Spending against reserve in 2018	£0	-£9,479	-£9,479
Closing reserve as at 31 Dec. 2018	<u>£10,697</u>	<u>£8,581</u>	<u>£19,278</u>

Montagu Square Garden Trust Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018

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Minutes of the Montagu Square Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2019

Held on Monday 25th February 2019 at Wetherby Prep School, 48 Bryanston Square, W1 at 6.30pm.

1) To consider and approve the Minutes of the last AGM held on Monday 19th February 2018

The minutes from the last AGM were considered and approved. There were no matters arising.

2) To consider and if thought fit to accept the Accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31th December 2018

Peter Blott explained that a mistake had been made in the narrative section of the pre-circulated AGM report, but that the figures shown were correct. The accounts were accepted.

3) To receive the Annual Report of the Committee

Trees

Anne Bristow explained the findings on the Plane tree in the North-East corner, including the report from Bartletts Tree Surgeons. Westminster Council have agreed that it must be removed within 6 months. The Garden insurance company has been informed of the matter and they will cover the garden as long as the tree is removed within the 6 month period given.

The removal is expected to cost just under £10,000, which the Garden does not currently have in reserve. This will therefore be raised by an additional 20% to the Garden Levy which equals roughly a £45 increase per resident.

The point was raised by the forum that it would be good to add to the reserve so that at some point in the future the garden could add to the children's play area.

Garden Clerk

Peter Blott explained that Luz Perez has received a job offer and will no longer be working as Clerk to the Garden Trust, and that Westbourne Block Management would be taking over her responsibilities and more following the AGM. Personal thanks from the Committee were given to Luz in her absence.

Westbourne Block Management was introduced by Peter Blott, and Oliver Sampson-Bancroft of Westbourne Block Management explained their work with Garden Squares in the area. Peter Blott explained to the forum what the role of the Clerk has been and still will be, and it was made clear that will be both the Clerk & Collector.

Montagu Square Residents Association

Chris Morris explained how the formal Residents Association organisation was going to be wound up but that the work of the Residents Association would be integrated into the Garden Trust Committee.

Minutes of the Montagu Square Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2019

Held on Monday 25th February 2019 at Wetherby Prep School, 48 Bryanston Square, W1 at 6.30pm.

Garden Wildlife

Lynette Pigaga was introduced by the Chairman, and explained her work with the garden and its small bird population. She explained some effective bird feeding and caring techniques and asked the forum to try and be involved with the bird project at Montagu or to spread the word to try and find those we are interested as she will shortly be leaving the UK to return to America. The Committee gave thanks to Lynette for her hard work and initiatives in the garden.

4) To levy the Garden rate for the year to 31st December 2019

Following discussion on the costs associated with the removal of the tree and with Westbourne Block Management, it was agreed to increase the garden rate by 28.0% for 2019 to a rate of 0.9823p in the pound on the Annual Value, which is based on an 8% yield on the 2005 building insurance value.

5) To elect the Committee, the Chairman and the Treasurer for the year to 31st December 2019

The Committee of trustees was elected:

Martin Bikhit	Sue Smith
Anne Bristow	Chris Morris
Nanette Pigaga	Noella Hacquard
Joan Freeman	Sarah Dlubac
Peter Blott (Treasurer)	Padraig Hays
David Cruise	Julio Castro

6) Open Forum

The issue of children in the garden was raised, specifically how they should be approached when playing ball games with or without their parents/an adult present. Oliver Sampson-Bancroft of Westbourne Block Management explained how as a managing agent they deal with these issues and asked that given the sensitivity of the issue residents should contact them rather than approaching the children directly.

A question was raised about the state of the shrubbery in the corner of the garden, and why it is in poor condition. Anne Bristow explained that children had been using it as a den and that the gardening team under Joseph Jones were taking step to reinstate the plants.

The Residents thanked the Committee for their continued hard work and dedication to the Square.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8:30, with thanks to Wetherby Prep for hosting.