



## MINUTES OF THE MONTAGU SQUARE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) 2022

Held at 6:30pm on Monday 7th March 2021 at Wetherby Prep School

**ATTENDEES** Peter Blott (Acting Chair), Anne Bristow, Julio Castro, Sarah Lang, Sue Smith, Chris Morris, Salvatore Giorgio (WM), Mary Hicks, Anne Methlen, Robert Bramwell-Jones, David Lane, Sara Lane, B. Lewis-Powell, Alan Bristow.

Peter Blott opened the meeting by greeting all the attendees and saying that it was nice to be able to meet in person again after last year's virtual meeting via Zoom.

**1. To consider and approve the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 1st March 2021**

The minutes were approved.

**2. Matters Arising**

No matters arising from the last minutes.

**3. To receive the annual report of the Committee**

The report of the Committee had already been circulated with the mailings and published on the garden website.

Anne Bristow started by giving a report on what was happening in the garden. The garden had lost a tree during the storm a couple of weeks earlier and that had been swiftly cleared by Bartlett, the tree company employed by the Trust. In addition, two cherry trees, one on the SW and the other on the SE side of the garden have died and these will be removed. She was very pleased with the work that Bartlett were doing in maintaining the trees. There has been an effort this year to increase the autumn colour to match the wonderful spring displays

A new bench has been donated to the memory of Tommy Healy and installed on the east side of the garden.

Annabel and Nick Walker, longtime residents of the square, are donating £30,000 towards to creating a Gaze Burvell seating area for the garden.

Anne then outlined the play area project by showing plans and drawings and explaining all the improvements step by step. A newsletter describing the project had been circulated with the AGM pack. Phase one should start in Spring.

Phase two of the project will see the repairs and repaving of the substation. The proposal includes the installation of two Georgian pedestals to dress the area, a couple of temporary matching planters and climbing plants.

Peter Blott expressed his gratitude, on behalf of the Committee and all the Trustees, to Anne Bristow for the immense amount of effort put into the project. He then added that



the Trust had the funds available at this stage to undertake phase one of the project but not yet the money for phase two.

One of the Trustees praised Anne for the project, but he asked if anything could be done to improve the privacy of the garden. He is a long-term resident and he remembered that the garden use to be a much more concealed and cozier place. She replied that more mature hedges had been planted but it would take time for them to grow. She assured the meeting that the Committee and the gardeners will work together to create a much more private environment.

**4. To consider and if thought fit to accept the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

Peter Blott outlined that the format of the accounts had been slightly changed to better itemise the funds. In the new format, the funds for the hanging baskets and the voluntary donations towards the play area project are kept separated. Expenditure was broadly in line with the budget and the main concern had been the large amount of people in arrears. He praised Anne Bristow and WM for the effort put into collect the arrears, but he also outlined that still a significant amount of money to be collected. He also mentioned that the problem with the arrears is most often due to misunderstandings by new residents or out of date contact information.

The accounts were approved.

**5. To levy the garden rate for the year to 31st December 2021**

It was proposed to increase the rates by 25% to allow for inflation and the accomplishment of the aforementioned projects for the improvement of the garden. This was approved. The levy for 2022 will be set at 1.265 pence to the pound on the annual values taken as 8% of the 2005 building insurance values.

**6. To elect the Committee for the year to December 2021**

The Committee was re-confirmed but Peter Blott invited any Trustee who wanted to join the Committee to step forward as help is always welcome.

Sarah Lang thanked Anne Bristow for all the effort and time she put into the accomplishment of the project of the play area and the improvement of the garden.

**7. Any other business**

It was mentioned that some foxes are wondering about the garden and some people feel intimidated by their presence. Peter Blott outlined that it was a long-standing issue. It was possible to get rid of the foxes for some time, but more foxes would move back into the garden eventually. The secret was to keep the garden free of rubbish to avoid attracting them.

No other business was discussed.

The meeting closed at 7:20 pm with Peter Blott thanking all the attendees.