

Thornhill Square Association

Meeting 7:00 p.m. 1 December 2021

St Andrews Church Hall, Bridgeman Road, London N1 1BQ

1 Attendance

1.1 Present

Joey Attawia, Karen Bison, Olivia Bright, Victoria Buhler, Frances Burnett, James Burstall, Barbara Firebrace, Patrick Firebrace, Marianne Fox, Robert Fox, Julia Groves, Stephanie Hartog, Brian Keating, Anna Longman, Roz Marston, Anna McKane, Christopher McKane, Claire Milne, Robert Milne, Mel Myers, William Newton, Shamus Rae, Philip Rutnam, John Simons, Lindsay Simons, Toby Taper, Sarah Vandegerde, Julian Williams and Oliver Wright

1.2 Apologies

Isobel Morton

2 Previous meeting

2.1 Notes

The notes for the meeting of 8 April 2019 had been posted on the web site and were formally approved.

2.2 Matters arising

Nothing was discussed.

3 Operations

3.1 Election of the Committee

The following were appointed without objection:

- Chair: Anna McKane
- Secretary: Robert Milne
- Treasurer: Stephanie Hartog
- Event co-ordinator: Roz Marston
- Fundraising officer: Joey Attawia

3.2 Use of funds

Stephanie Hartog summarised the accounts for 2020 and 2021. As at 23 November 2021 the main account held £3,112.13 (received occasionally for filming, mainly in Thornhill Crescent) and the gardening account held £591.22 (received regularly for maintaining two beds).

4 Activities

4.1 Gardening

Anna McKane mentioned how fine Thornhill Square Garden had looked throughout the summer and now still looked. The next stage in its improvement was to replace the defunct rose beds with wild flower meadows. The Council seemed to have forgotten that it had undertaken to provide six trees to help with this. [Moreover, though the Association was now looking after several beds the Council was paying for only two.]

4.2 Railings repair

Patrick Firebrace recounted briefly the tale of the railings over the past forty years. This year there had been meetings with Councillor Rowena Champion and the Council officers, but these had not produced proposals for future involvement. Section 106 funds (which are obtained by the Council as compensation for disruptive developments) would be allocated to other causes, such as the improvements to Bingfield Park.

The estimated costs of repairing the railings might by now have risen to £500,000, and could rise well beyond that if the National Lottery Heritage Fund required various ancillary works, as it had done at Caledonian Park. This sum might look less daunting if expressed per section or per upright. [Even so, with 63 houses in Thornhill Square and 33 houses in Thornhill Crescent each household would need to pay several thousand pounds to cover the cost of enough sections or uprights for Thornhill Square Garden.]

However, the sum for repairing the railings was dwarfed by that needed for repairs to the church spire, chancel arch and east window, which was believed to be £2,000,000. Philip Rutnam pointed out that this would be a particular concern of the new vicar, who is due to arrive in spring 2022 and who is married to the Canon Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral.

Karen Bison remarked that the Association could approach The Cast Iron Shop (in Caledonian Road), which had worked economically for residents in the past. [The Association did so when the railings were broken by the falling ash tree; then Metalcraft Tottenham was appointed to perform the repair.]

5 Any other business

Drug dealing in Thornhill Square Garden appeared to have diminished. However, fighting dog training was continuing from time to time, with the offenders, who are thought to be professional, moving from park to park.

Julia Groves and Shamus Rae were giving two new goals for the pitch.

Marianne Fox-Ockinga was giving two benches designed by Jack Woolley and built by him and Lucien Clothier to go around the silver birches.

Anna McKane was thanked for organising the gardening.

6 Actions

There will be separate further discussions on fundraising, the railings and future events; people interested in taking part should contact thornhillsquare@antelope.org.uk so that they can be included. All are welcome, regardless of whether they attended this meeting.