



Minutes of the MA Committee meeting – 9.1.18

- 1. Present:** Ricci, Clive, Eileen, Richard, Nicky S. **Apologies received from:** Trevor, Debbie, Bob, Len, Liz, Tom, Rayia and Nigel.
- 2. Announcement:** Ricci informed the meeting that he had received Gareth's resignation from the Committee due to a change in his personal circumstances. Gareth had offered to continue his work as Marchmont Voice administrator, which was agreed. We were reminded that Andrew Cussens had previously expressed a willingness to return to the Committee if the opportunity arose. It was duly agreed to co-opt Andrew to the Committee for the remainder of this year.
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting:** These were agreed as a true record after the insertion of Gareth Maeer as attendee and the date of the next meeting which was confirmed as 9.1.18.
- 4. Treasurer's report:** Nicky reported that we had £4,816.28 at bank. It was agreed that Anne Sutherland be appointed as auditor for the current financial year.
- 5. Ricci's Report - the report was received, with some late items inserted on the circulated copies. The report was noted with the following action points:**
 - **Dairy site:** Noted that Ricci had written to the King's Cross Councillors to request protection for trees along the access and ingress routes used by site vehicles. Noted that the Community Lisison Group had still not met, although occasional letters were being delivered to nearest neighbours advising them of noisy works etc.
 - **Russell Court Storage Centre 'landscaping':** It was agreed to 'close this case' as a lost cause, following the Council's lack lustre approach to ensuring that the site was landscaped to a standard appropriate to its setting on a main road within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
 - **Short-lets:** In addition to noting the contents of Ricci's report, we discussed Debbie's suggestion (communicated via e-mail) to establish a database of properties being used as short-lets. We agreed that this might be problematic in terms of the laws governing data protection, especially when cases of suspected short-lets would need to be proven before they are placed in the public domain. We agreed instead to keep pressing the Council to adopt a high-profile, proactive strategy for 'outing' short-letters, linked to the actions they were already taking in terms of Planning Enforcement and Housing (lease compliance), as well as encouraging local residents to report suspected short-lets to the Council.

- **Street environment walkabout follow-up:** We noted Debbie's written suggestion regarding making the Council's refuse reporting app known locally, and that it was already referred to in MA's Refuse Advisory flyers. We agreed to make this more widely known, possibly via a blog on MV. Also noted that Ricci had yet to receive confirmation from the members who had volunteered at the last meeting to circulate refuse flyers in specified streets that this had been done. Agreed to chase this up.
 - **Oxford Street pedestrianisation proposal:** Agreed to keep a watching brief and to act if further developments appear to be detrimental to our area of benefit and/or the interests of our residents.
 - **Plaques:** Noted that Ricci had submitted 3 listed building applications for the plaques commemorating George Jacob Holyoake, James Burton and the Pankhursts.
 - **MA web site:** Agreed to defer this discussion until the next meeting. Agreed that Ricci would send a link to the Association of Bloomsbury Squares and Gardens Wordpress web site as another example of what can be achieved at minimal cost to MA.
 - **Marchmont Community Garden Partnership:** Noted that MCGP had received a cheque for £340 from Waitrose towards the cost of purchasing the spring bulbs which were planted by volunteers, being MCGP's share of the November Community Matters token scheme customer contributions.
 - **Cartwright Gardens:** We discussed the residents' discount scheme for use of the tennis courts, referring to the postcode map circulated with Ricci's report. It was agreed that restricting the use to residents within the WC1H postcode was both unfair and illogical and that a fairer scheme might be one that defined beneficiaries as those living in named streets within a specified radius of the gardens, as illustrated by the attached map. We felt that extending the discount scheme to residents living north of Euston Road was inappropriate, but that residents within the small quadrant to the west of Upper Woburn Place (e.g. Tavistock Mansions) should qualify. Agreed that Ricci would forward this proposal to the Chair of the Cartwright Gardens CLG for their consideration.
6. **AOB:** None.
7. **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 20th February 2017, 7pm - Holiday Inn Hotel.