



KEMP TOWN
ENCLOSURES

Kemp Town Enclosures Limited

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 16th January 2022 at 10.30 am at Badger Tennis Club, Church Place

Those present: Board members and 31 residents

The meeting took place within Covid infection control measures including prior lateral flow tests, mask wearing and good ventilation. The planned link via Zoom for those unable to attend could not be set up as access to the venue was, in the event, not available until after the start time for the meeting. The Secretary undertook to apologise for this to those expecting to join via Zoom.

1. Introductions: Andrew Doig introduced himself as the Secretary and took the chair, introducing board members Amanda Catron, Lucy Graubart, and June Mawby. Matthew Evans was unable to attend.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Chris & Lucy Goss, Herb & Janine Nahapiet, Matthew Evans.

3. Minutes of AGM held 18th January 2020

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising

There were none.

5. Report of the Board for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021

The report had been circulated with the Notice of Meeting and posted on the website kte.org.uk, along with all the meeting papers. Andrew gave a summary of the report. It had been two years since the membership had been able to meet due to COVID concerns. The emergency had brought to the surface conflicts about the use of the gardens during government restrictions but fortunately the community had survived the emergency without lasting division. He spoke of the garden team's staffing which had changed with the loss of Patrick and the arrival of Kyle and then the replacement of James, the contractor, with George as three day a week employee. The workplace conditions of the team had improved

with the installation of a rest hut with heat and light in winter, facilities for washing, tea making and food prep but the WC facilities were still by chemical loo.

The Board had responded to growing interest in environmental issues by ending bonfires as a means of disposing of woody waste while continuing with composting for other green waste. The use of glyphosate had been discontinued and nesting boxes suitable for birds or bats had been erected.

Changing weather patterns had meant warmer wetter winters making for muddy areas where foot traffic was heavy, dry springs with consequent delayed growth of plants, summers with either drought and dying grass or persistent rain. The Board needed to consider ways of adapting to these changed circumstances without detracting from the Regency heritage. Consultation on the options would be conducted with residents on these matters.

The Board had arranged for the replacement of the railings along the north side of Eastern Road, including repairs to the stone plinths. The question of funding the replacement of railings on the other three sides of the North garden was yet to be settled.

It was too early to judge the effect of the rule introduced in 2020 requiring residents to accompany their guests in the gardens. This was because Covid restrictions had probably meant that holiday lets were suspended for the while. The new rule introduced at the same time requiring prior approval of events to which the public were invited had so far resulted in just a Carol Concert being approved for the North Garden and the NGS Open Day planned for 25th May 2022 in the South Garden.

Plans to mark the 200 year anniversary of the gardens in 2023 had been advanced with the restoration of the Secret Garden in progress and the coffee table book, edited by Russell Miller with photography by Janine Nahapiet, now in the final stages of preparation.

Andrew ended by thanking Russell and Janine, the gardens team and Voles and the staff at Jonathan Rolls Office who had been so helpful.

A discussion followed on the design of the replacement railings ordered and about to be installed. Mike Osborne wanted the mild steel railings to bear finials of cast iron of the original design of 1823 that had stood there before the second world war. There was a difference of view about the practicality or the desirability of this. The matter was to be taken up by the Board.

Howard Rush queried whether by weeding the cobbles around the gardens we would compromise KTE's position that the Council was solely responsible for their upkeep. The Board would notify the Council that this action was without prejudice to our case.

Maggie Tattersall noted that the wear and tear on grass had been exceptional during the lockdown period. On dog registrations, it was suggested that the requirement for dogs to display the current year's dog tag be publicised.

6. Accounts: The examined accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021 had been circulated and posted on the website. Andrew introduced them saying that a small surplus for the year had been achieved and transferred to reserves. He drew attention to the deficit between income from a falling number of dog registrations and the cost of providing the dog waste bins. The meeting adopted the accounts as presented.

Andrew went on to report on the period from the end of 2020/21 to the present time. He spoke of rolling over the existing charges for a the year given that holding an AGM was inadvisable. Nevertheless, with some savings, it had been possible to give the staff an inflation increase and to carry on business as normal, and to create a new part-time second assistant post to replace the part-time self-employed garden contractor.

In order to pursue the 200 year anniversary projects the board had funded the Secret Garden restoration project from reserves, after a private donation had facilitated the proper examination of the flint walls. Reserves had also been used to fund the Eastern Road railings project and to underwrite the publication of the bi-centenary book. This would leave reserves at the year-end reduced from £133K to about £72K and with the completion of the Secret Garden in the next financial year, reserves would stand at around £48K, in March 2023. As the cost of replacing the railings on the other three sides of the North Garden was likely to cost around £125K, agreement would be need on how to fund this.

There was an interesting response from the floor, with the perspective, from Jason Kale, that spreading the cost over a long period could result in cost inflation leaving the railings out of reach and that it was better to collect the cost over say 2 years and hope that cost inflation would not outstrip the estimates in the meantime. Alternatively, Brian Horton felt that waiting a year could see the cost of steel drop from its current peak. The Board undertook to work on these perspectives and come to the next AGM with a proposal.

7. Budget and garden rates for 2022-23: Andrew proposed the draft budget circulated which would see the charge per freehold rise to £1,000. The dog registration fee would rise to £30pa and in support of this, the dog register would be published on-line so that those who paid towards the dog waste service would be known and by deduction those who did not paid could be identified. The proposed budget would allow KTE to give a wage increase to garden staff in line with CPI, to pay the increased rate of Employers National Insurance and to make a contribution to the railings reserve of £10K. The meeting adopted the budget as presented.

8. Appointment of certified accountants: The meeting appointed Peter Chambers & Co to examine and certify the accounts.

9. Election of Directors: The meeting noted the resignations of Ian Clegg, Treasurer, and Mark Harper, Chair, and to acknowledged their contributions.

June Mawby and Amanda Catron had been appointed by the board to fill casual vacancies and they stood down and offered themselves for re-election. Matthew Evans, last elected at AGM 2019, stood down by rotation and offered himself for re-election. Those standing down were re-elected. Michael Osborne was proposed as a board member and this was agreed by the meeting.

Lucy Graubart and Andrew Doig were appointed at the AGM 2020 and remain in office.

10. Rule changes: Amanda Catron spoke to the proposed rule to control the use of drones. After some discussion, this rule was adopted.

11. Head Gardener's Report: Jeremy Mouldsdale gave his report to the meeting, notes of which will be published on the website. Jeremy and the team were thanked, along with the Voles, for their work in keeping the gardens maintained.

11. Issues raised by residents:

i) Russell Miller raised the issue of a resident feeding the squirrels and inadvertently attracting rats. Jeremy had asked the resident to desist and if this did not work, the board would send a letter formally requesting her to desist.

ii) Chris & Lucy Goss asked (via the Secretary) that access to composting food waste be revisited. Andrew said that the board would investigate the possibility of extended to the gardens the local composting scheme that included locked bins accessible only by those signed up and adherent to the regime required.

iii) Chris & Lucy Goss noting the damage to grass underfoot in wet weather, suggested (via the Secretary) that the path around the Lewes Crescent garden be extended around the woodland garden to complete the circuit without walking on the grass. Jeremy spoke at this point about the plan to extend the gravel path from the SW gate along the southern boundary, past wildflower areas and joining up with existing paths by the Secret Garden. The Board would consult on these proposals.

iv) Herb & Janine Nahapiet had sent a message (via the Secretary) saying that they would like to register formally that they regard it as inappropriate to hold AGM's on a Sunday and would like to know if this is a widely held view, even if the reasons are different from theirs. There were no contributions from the floor on this topic. Andrew explained that the previously used venue was unavailable since the start of the pandemic and that the Spire

had only unheated and unventilated rooms. The last resort had been the Tennis Club with its bright and airy room and close proximity to the Estate. Unfortunately, it was only available on Sunday morning. In the circumstances the Board decided to go ahead with a Sunday meeting.

v) Michael Bedingfield raised the question of marking the Queen' platinum jubilee either with an event, a tree planting or the lighting of a beacon. In response Andrew said that the board would be supportive of an event if it could be organised by KTS or others. Mark Eynon suggested a tree be planted to add to the 6 that were planted for the golden jubilee.

END