

## SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first Newsletter of the post-lockdown era! Apart from the lifting of restrictions residents of the Garden have enjoyed mixed fortunes since I last wrote in April. Here is a quick resumé:

### THE GOOD NEWS....



Saturday June 26th saw the first social event in the Garden since the pared-down Bonfire Night celebrations of last November. More than 70 people attended a wine-tasting kindly organised by the Winery on Clifton Parade. Despite the need to abide by COVID restrictions there was general agreement that the renewal of face-to-face contact with friends & neighbours made for a special experience.

THE BAD NEWS....



Monday July 12<sup>th</sup> saw some of the worst rains in 40 years in West London, with water forcing its way into many of the basement flats on Sutherland Avenue & Warrington Crescent. Much of Formosa Garden was also flooded.

By the following morning the water had drained away thanks to the new pump and drainage system installed by the Committee, but then began the long wrangle to get insurers to underwrite the remedial work which in many properties is still going on.

As regards trying to get answers as to how this happened from the authorities - - in particular Thames Water – there've been moves to set up various WhatsApp groups on social media & revive a fighting Committee called Maida Flood Action.

...AND THE DOWNRIGHT UGLY



There is no delicate way of putting this, but the rise in the number of dogs on the Garden since the beginning of lockdown led to a big increase in the amount of dog poo that owners left lying around on the grass. Not only was it unsightly but a big health hazard, particularly to children.

The Board decided to threaten tougher action against offenders – not just those who failed to pick up after their dogs but also those who left them to bark unattended on a patio or in a private garden. Anyone found guilty on either count would be fined & for repeat offences their dog banned from the garden for a length of time ranging from a period of weeks to a permanent exclusion. But since this more draconian approach was publicised things have improved considerably and thanks to most owners' co-operation the nuclear option of a total ban on dogs in the Garden has happily receded.

IS IT A PLANE? IS IT A BIRD??



....no, it's that Air Ambulance again! For the third time in 12 months it put down in the Garden on Saturday July 31<sup>st</sup> to bring urgent medical help to a nearby emergency. And despite it having become a semi-regular occurrence the sight still brought out the crowds.

BUSINESS (ALMOST) AS USUAL

After last year's virtual AGM this year's meeting on Monday 26th July was back in a physical location, at St Saviour's Church on Warwick Avenue. Residents were able either to attend in person or to join in via Zoom, & the Board would like to thank those who did so at a time when we were still emerging from a difficult period.

### RULES: BORING BUT NECESSARY

We do have rules for all those who live on the Garden but they are liberal ones and we want to keep it that way. For that to work it's important that everyone follows them responsibly so that one person's enjoyment of the Garden isn't to the detriment of his or her neighbour. The rules have recently been revised & expanded slightly & can be found on the Formosa Amenity website. Please do take a look, especially if you are a free-holder whose property is tenanted as you have a duty to ensure your tenants have read the rules and abide by them. If they commit any breaches then the buck stops with you!

### A HISTORICAL NOTE

Looking back through the files it's amusing to see that many of the problems facing us now were an issue even as far back as 40 years ago – fouling by dogs, disorderly conduct, climbing trees & damaging plants etc etc. Some things do change however -- I am indebted to Crispin Sampson-Bancroft at managing agents WBM for the account of a couple who fell foul of the rules while walking together in the Crescent Garden. Turns out they were not married (or at least not to each other) but what really prompted outrage – plus a fine – was the fact that the lady's ankles were bare!

### THE FOB IS THE KEY

As residents will know access to the Garden is only possible through a fob which is issued via our managing agents and is periodically changed for security reasons. The next re-issue will take place at St Saviour's Church on November 1<sup>st</sup> – further details to be announced in due course. As always personal ID and recent proof of residency will be needed & there is no additional charge for the recoding.

### REMEMBER, REMEMBER...

We are on course to hold another Fireworks Night party this year, with a welcome return for the bonfire that was deemed too COVID-unsafe last year.

The date is Saturday November 6<sup>th</sup> so put it in your diary & keep an eye on the website for further details.

Meanwhile can I wish you all a very happy Autumn (or happier than last year at any rate...)!

[vivvy.robins@gmail.com](mailto:vivvy.robins@gmail.com).