

Garden Square News

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SERVING CENTRAL LONDON'S COMMUNAL GARDENS VOL 27 ISSUE 2, AUTUMN 2022



Planning enforcement criticized

The planning department at the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBK&C) has come under fire from residents' groups angry about what they claim is a lack of planning enforcement when a building project goes wrong.

The Boltons Association, SW10, and the Ashburn Courtfield Gardens Residents Association (ACGRA) in South Kensington recently expressed their dismay over the way the department is operating.

Friederike Maeda, Chairman of ACGRA, became so frustrated that she filed a Freedom of Information request asking how many enforcement actions were carried out by the planning department between January

continued on page 11

Nomura's idea of a garden square

What's pictured above is not your typical communal garden, but part of the attraction of the annual London Open Gardens weekend, sponsored by the London Gardens Trust, is the chance to see the unusual.

The photo shows Nomura's sixth-floor garden in the sky in the City of London, and birds of prey handler Malcolm Haddon, from Kent-based H F Pest & Bird Control, a firm that provides seagull-scaring raptors for Nomura.

The garden, filling a space the size of eight tennis courts, has won numerous awards for its many features, including a kitchen garden, herb garden, bee hives, biodiverse green roof, water features and rare plants.

It is also the scene of citizen science work, monitoring which flowers are attracting which insects, and the amount of invertebrate traffic coming to that flower (see chart on page 22).

This year's open weekend, featuring more than 100 gardens, took place in June. Next year's opening days are June 10-11.

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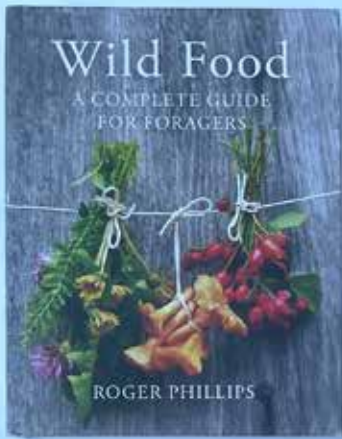
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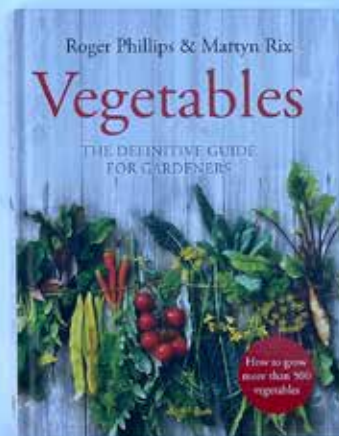
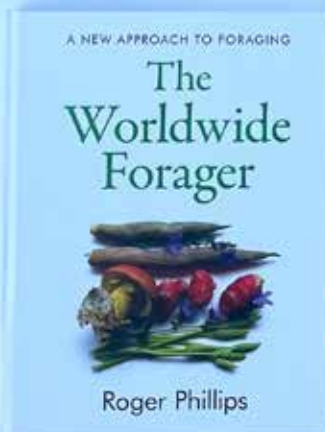
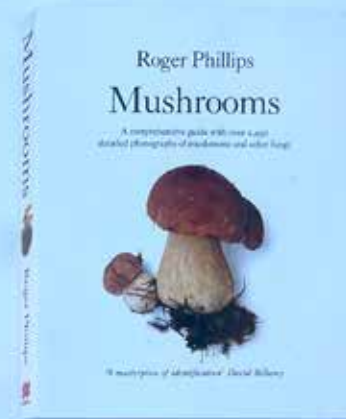
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Redesigning Grosvenor Square – latest news

In June 2022, Westminster City Council's Planning Committee gave unanimous approval for the redesign of Grosvenor Square. This milestone follows several years of collaboration between Grosvenor and communities to ensure the redesign meets the priorities that were most important to local people. The project was backed by 88% of people in the final phase of consultation and two local representatives also joined the committee meeting to speak in support of the application. This included Mayfair Youth Forum member, Georgina, who made the case for giving young people a voice in the designing of places. The reimagined 6-acre garden will celebrate and preserve the square's historic features and introduce new elements including:

- A shaded garden with biodiverse planting
- A central open garden re-instating the original 1720s oval design
- Water features to capture and store rainwater for re-use
- Play spaces and an education building



Grosvenor will share more about what happens next soon, but in the meantime please visit the project website www.grosvenorsquare.org or email the team at grosvenor.square@grosvenor.com if you have any questions.

If you'd like to receive more updates from Grosvenor please sign up to our newsletter at bit.ly/MayfairNewsletter.

Prince's Square sale bitterly fought

Lawyers have now clashed head-on in the Prince's Square Garden battle, sharply raising the temperature in the struggle to control the one-acre garden.

Garden Square News readers will recall (*GSN* Spring and Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022) that Mr Wayne Moretto, his husband Mr Kenneth Cassillo, and Mrs. Jalna Blake, who all live near Prince's Square, W2, put the Garden up for sale for last year reportedly hoping to achieve a £5 million gain.

They asserted that, as the shareholders of Princes Square Garden Ltd. (PSGL), the company which has owned the land for many years, they had the right to sell it and keep the profits. Savills were the agent on the attempted sale, but have since resigned.

Residents and other garden users, banding together last year in a group called the Friends of PSG Ltd. (Friends) countered, saying the Garden is supposed to be held by PSGL for the benefit and use of Garden residents, so cannot be sold for the private profit of the shareholders, according to PSGL's original articles of association.

If it were to be sold, it can only be transferred to another company that will hold the Garden for the residents' benefit. (But the three shareholders recently changed PSGL's articles, removing this restriction, shortly after its existence was pointed out to them.)

The law firm Taylor Wessing LLP, acting for



the would-be sellers, have written a 12-page letter saying that based on what their clients tell them, they have no duty towards residents.

In the most recent development, the Friends have contacted Mr. A.P Mullen, a member of the original group which obtained the freehold of the garden in 1982 – for a token price of £1 – from Norfolk Capital Group, a company which owned a hotel on the Garden.

Resident control of gardens intended

Mr Mullen has signed a formal declaration saying the freehold was acquired so that the resident freeholders and long leaseholders around the Garden, acting together as the Prince's Square Gardens Association, could control the garden. PSGL was created to hold the Garden in trust for the Associa-

tion members. Association members had the right to appoint the directors and shareholders of PSGL, he said. Mr. Mullen, a recently retired barrister, was a director of PSGL until 1995.

Before setting up PSGL, he had set up a company, Leinster Square Gardens Limited, on the same terms for the communal garden in nearby Leinster Square, W2, where he lived. He set it up for the Leinster Square Gardens Association, which manages the garden.

Leinster Square spokesman Claire Tallis has told the Friends: "My understanding is that we as [company] directors could not sell the Garden, we act essentially as trustees managing the garden for the benefit of the surrounding properties."

Mr. Michael Foster, involved with PSGL as a director and secretary from 1997 to 2010, had earlier signed a similar "State-

ment of Truth" saying that the PSGL directors were trustees holding the freehold on trust for members of the Association.

School was turned down for access

Reinforcing this status, he said, was the fact that in 2006, when Alpha Plus Group Ltd., owner of nearby schools, was negotiating to gain access to the Garden for their pupils, the Association members collectively told the PSGL directors to stop the negotiations.

Taylor Wessing, in their 12-page letter, wrote: "Despite the old articles of association of PSGL referring to 'the members of the Committee of Princes Square Gardens Association' we are instructed that no such association was incorporated or established at the time of our client's

(continued on next page)

(continued from page 3)

incorporation. To PSGL's knowledge, no such association was ever incorporated or established."

Backing for the Friends is coming from a group of freeholders and long leaseholders that overlook the Garden.

These property owners have rights to enter the Garden written into their deeds. (The Friends include neighbours living in the vicinity but not directly on the Garden. They have paid an annual fee to PSGL use it.)

News of a possible sale provoked astonishment

Ms Benedetta Ferraro, a 35-year resident of the Garden, told *Garden Square News*: "When we heard that our Garden was being marketed for sale, we were all astounded as we have rights of access in our title deeds.

"We have all been acting individually to protect our access to the Garden but we are now working together with other surrounding owners to protect our access rights and ensure that its not-for-profit status, for the benefit of all of Prince's Square, is safeguarded."

Now it comes down to money. The Garden residents and the Friends are together assessing the chances of winning the legal fight to remove the directors who are claiming the right to sell the land and keep the money for themselves.

If winning looks likely,

they will begin to crowd-source funding for the legal bills, according to a spokesman who asked not to be named.

Mr. Robert Barham of the law firm Forsters LLP, a specialist in garden law, has been representing the Friends.

When *Garden Square News* first wrote about the Garden being up for sale, Mr. Lionel Blake, formerly a shareholder in PSGL, told the magazine he had bought the freehold of the Garden himself for £1 from a hotel on the Garden around 1990.

However, official documents show that Mr. Blake became a shareholder in 1986, four years after PSGL formed and bought the Garden from Norfolk Capital Group.

When asked to explain this discrepancy, he declined, saying only that he had nothing more to do with the Garden.

Well-written "Declaration of Trust" documents sought by garden legal expert Robert Barham

Robert Barham, retained by the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea to help communal gardens with their legal questions writes:

"Part of the process of registering trustees as the legal owners of the freeholds of communal gardens at the Land Registry requires a new declaration of trust to set out the legal basis on which they will hold the garden.

"We have therefore been working on drawing up a model form of declaration of trust. This will combine elements from existing trust documents used in other gardens.

"In relation to this it would be very helpful to see any existing documents already in use by those gardens where the garden is already held by trustees for the residents. If anyone feels able to share their document with us that would be very helpful.

"It is accepted that these documents are private (they are not available from the Land Registry) so they would be treated with the greatest confidence.

"Please contact me by e-mail at Robert.Barham@forsters.co.uk, or by post to Robert Barham, Forsters LLP, 31 Hill Street, London. W1J 5LS."



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Smarter than they look

The Hidden Life of Trees

After reading *The Hidden Life of Trees*, garden square residents will think differently about the giant plants that stand outside our doors.

The book was first published in 2017, and biological science has revealed even more tree secrets since then, but the work is a good place to start for those who would like to begin to appreciate what trees are capable of.

Here are some examples of what author Peter Wohlleben, a forester in Germany, reveals about what trees can do.

Trees can share nutrients through their roots

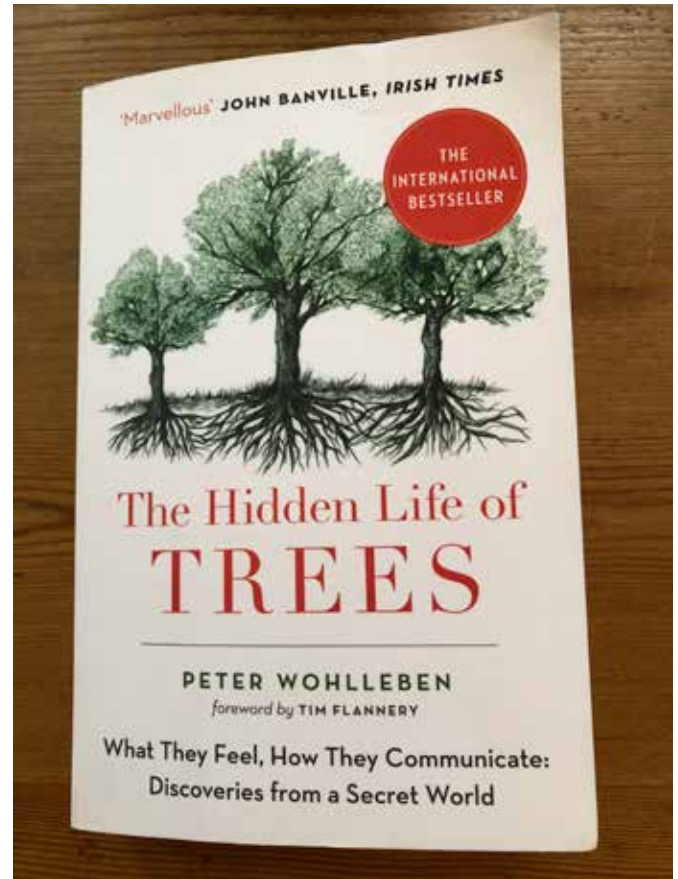
“Most individual trees of the same species growing in the same stand are connected to each other through their root systems.

It appears that nutrient exchange and helping neighbours in times of need is the rule...” The trees, in addition to communicating via their roots, can also connect through the extensive fungal networks that begin around their root tips.

Calls for help can be issued

When insect predators attack a tree it can send out a call for help from other insects. He explains: “This ability to produce different compounds is another feature that helps trees fend off attack for a while.

“When it comes to some species of insects, trees can accurately identify which bad guys they are up against. The saliva of each species is different, and trees can match the sa-



liva to the insect. Indeed, the match can be so precise that trees can release pheromones that summon specific beneficial predators. The beneficial predators help trees by eagerly devouring the insects that are bothering them.”

And trees can create chemicals that deliver an immediate deterrent. Wohlleben writes that oaks, for example, carry bitter, toxic tannins in their bark and leaves. This can be used to kill invading insects. And oaks can warn nearby oaks of danger – they send messages via the fungal system using both chemical compounds and electrical

impulses to signal that the neighbours should pump tannin through their veins.

Wohlleben offers readers a way of personally engaging with a tree as it goes about its invisible activities. Shortly before a tree’s leaves open in the spring, get a stethoscope and put it on the tree trunk.

“At this time of year, the author says, “water shoots up the trunk with such force that you can actually hear it.”

The Hidden Life of Trees
by Peter Wohlleben
William Collins, £9.99,
pp. 272



To hear water rushing up a tree just before its leaves open in the spring, put a stethoscope up to the trunk.

Shakespeare in the Squares

The Shakespeare in the Squares project, where the plays are performed in garden squares and elsewhere outdoors, was so successful this summer that the company will be adding more time to their tour next year, according to spokesman Martin Neild.

He recapped this year's achievements as follows: "After two years off for Covid, Shakespeare in the Squares returned this summer with a sell-out tour of *The Tempest*. Our talented cast of actor/musicians gave 21 performances in 18 spectacular venues that took us north, south, east and west across the capital. The weather was exceptionally kind and audiences were generous with their praise.

"And so we turn our

attention to next year. The play will be *Twelfth Night*. It will be loosely set in the 1920's with a look somewhere between *The Great Gatsby* and *Downton Ab-*



Ariel in The Tempest

bey, and feature the music of Fats Waller and George Gershwin.

"Due to demand, we are adding an extra week to the tour next year.

"We still have a few dates open, and would be

happy to consider requests from garden committees."

The schedule will be finalised by the end of 2022.

Contact Martin Neild on martin.neild@btinternet.com

Secret gate culprit slips away

In trying to discover who arranged to have a private gate cut into the perimeter garden railings at Courtfield Gardens West, SW5, in April, (*GSN* Spring 2022) this magazine contacted Leo Rifkind, a developer who was refurbishing an adjacent property at the time. When asked if he was responsible for the unauthorised work, he declined to comment.

The Courtfield Gardens West Garden Committee's lawyer, Robert Barham, wrote to Mr. Rifkind's solicitor, but received no reply.

The Garden Committee has decided not to pursue the matter, calculating that to do so would cost more than the £800 they have already had to pay to have the railings restored.

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f t i p y

New restaurant in the sky being proposed

The Kensington Forum Hotel on Ashburn Gardens, SW7, pictured below from a window in the Natural History Museum, has a commanding view of the



A rooftop restaurant could be in the future for the Kensington Forum Hotel in SW7, pictured in the centre of this photo.

surrounding area.

The new owners of the building, Singapore-based GP Hotel International, are considering taking advantage of that feature with a rooftop restaurant.

Friederike Maeda is one of the many community activists who successfully fought the hotel's previous owners who, until recently, wanted to knock down the building and build a new one twice as large. The battle was extensively covered by *Garden Square News (GSN)* beginning in 2016.

She told *GSN*, "Local residents are cautiously optimistic regarding the latest developments at the hotel. The new owners have de-

ecided to renovate rather than rebuild. The works started at the beginning of March this year and, according to the latest planning application, will continue to at least until April 2024.

"Plans include double-glazing the whole building and creating a two-storey bar/restaurant on the top two floors of the current tower. While residents are broadly in favour of the scheme as it was presented to us, we shall have to ensure that nothing untoward will happen to the Ashburn Gardens community or the wider neighbourhood as a result of the extensive refurbishment."

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In Brief

Adult swings trending, Trust says

Swings large and strong enough for adults to use are going to be a popular item for parks and gardens, according to a recent prediction by the London Gardens Trust. LGT's newsletter said: "Adult swings are big business in some countries and the rest of the world is slowly catching up."



The photo shows a swing from the Oak & Rope company in Kent.

Sharing Notting Hill information

Garden committee chairmen in the Notting Hill area have recently formed a WhatsApp group to share information among communal gardens in the neighbourhood.

The idea of forming the group grew from a May meeting of the Ladbroke Association held especially for Notting Hill communal garden committees. One member said the social media group is an early stage and has had little activity so far.

The Ladbroke Association is a charity whose goal is to preserve and protect the Ladbroke Estate Conservation Area, including its architecture, historic features and character.

Cycle hangars proposed

Planners at the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea have made sure that garden squares are well served when it comes to the placement of new cycle hangars.



The hangars (pictured below) allow local residents to store their bikes on the street in a secure container for a yearly fee of £72.

Consultation on the plans for new hangars ended on November 13. The proposed locations include

streets adjacent to six communal gardens out of the 20 streets on the recommended sites list. The gardens are: Barkston Gardens, SW5; Courtfield Gardens, SW5; Gledhow Gardens, SW5; Lexham Gardens, W8; Philbeach Gardens, SW5; and Redcliffe Square, SW10.

Land Registry shows house sale prices

The Land Registry announced this spring that it has revamped its website, and sent out a statement to past users noting that customers can look up the price paid for a property, its address, and whether there are restrictive covenants on it, all for free. The address for this information on the website is: www.gov.uk/search-property-information-land-registry.

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Visitors to Rosmead Garden, W11, during the London Open Gardens weekend in June would have noticed this set of dog rules tied to a tree. It is recreated in the adjacent text for any garden that might want to have a ready set of rules on how furry friends should be handled.

Rosmead lays down dog rules

Below are the rules the Rosmead Garden Committee has set out for residents with four-footed friends.

Please can all dog owners adhere to the following guidelines:

- keep dogs on leads as much as possible – we all know that even with best will in the world it is hard to keep an eye on an unleashed dog at all times while also looking at a phone or chatting to a neighbour – this is even harder if you have two or more dogs
- never let our dogs out of our sight
- only let dogs off the lead when we are pretty sure they have just done a poo and are unlikely to do another
- never let them off the lead after sunset and before sunrise
- keep our private garden gates shut whenever our dogs are playing in our private gardens
- pick-up any dog poo that we find even if it is not from our own dog
- politely and respectfully point out to our fellow dog owners when one of us is not complying with the above and when it has been pointed out to us, react politely and respectfully in return
- ensure there are no “guest” dogs in the garden at any time
- all dogs in the garden need to be registered and wearing their green tags.

Thank you,
The Garden Committee



LGS London Square Competition 2022

SMALL PRIVATE SQUARE 1 st Egerton Crescent 2 nd Montpelier Square	LARGE PUBLIC SQUARE 2 nd St. James's Square LARGE PRIVATE SQUARE 3 rd Courtfield Gardens
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The many forms of Barkston's camperdown

Garden Square News has followed the trials of the rare camperdown elm tree in Barkston Gardens, SW5, since it first suddenly turned brown (photo 2) in 2018.

The reason for its change was never confirmed, but it seemed to be linked to strong lights used during an open-air performance.

Gardeners hoped it might grow back but eventually had to cut it down earlier this year (photo 3)

Recently they have made the branches stable on the ground (photo 4).

Resident Annette Barnes said: "The gardeners have now finished their transformation of the remains of the camperdown elm into a feature in Barkston Gardens.

"Newly planted turf, lavender and pettosporum now surround the remains."

She had written a poem about the tree previously and added this final stanza:.

The gardeners say you're dry, so you'll not rot.

Safely stabilised you'll stay in your spot.

A memento mori forget-me-not.



Barkston Gardens resident Annette Barnes has photographed the fortunes of the camperdown elm tree in her communal square (photos 2, 3, and 4) over the years. Photo 1, from the *GSN* archives, is the original condition of the tree.



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continued from page 1

and mid-September this year. She was told that out of 793 reports of alleged breaches of planning control, there was just one enforcement notice served.

A further 40 cases were closed because “the breach was remedied informally”, the planning department said. The department did not explain to her what has happened with the other 752 cases.

Ms Maeda was informed that the planning enforcement team consisted of five officers and one team leader, and that they work from home half the time.

The Chairman of The Boltons Association, Calvin Jackson, told members, through the Association’s newsletter earlier this year, that planning enforcement is almost non-existent. He said: the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea seems to have “outsourced part of its operations to local residents”.

Planning requires effective enforcement

He added: “The point we keep making is that for RBKC the granting of Planning approval carries with it the corresponding obligation for effective Enforcement.”

He said there are frequent infractions with regard, for example, to basement digging and traffic management around these digs, but “it can be extremely difficult to mobilise Enforcement’s efforts.”

Part of the problem, he

wrote, is that “Planning does not take into account the ‘cumulative effect’ of multiple ‘basement digs’ being carried out [near one another] at the same time.”

When *Garden Square News* checked with him to see what the current situation is, he said there had been some improvement: “I have got several Enforcement procedures in progress at the moment. Enforcement has rather come to life.”

Meanwhile, Ms Maeda said her frustrations continue. She said she had trouble even reaching the planning enforcement staff when she tried to phone and e-mail them to find out what had happened with three long-standing cases she had been following, even when she escalated her queries up the line.

Garden Square News asked Cllr. Cem Kemahli, the Council’s lead member for planning, if he could comment on the issues raised by Mr. Jackson and Ms Maeda.

He asked Carolyn Goddard, Team Leader Planning Enforcement, Development Management, Planning and Place for RBK&C to respond.

Regarding the enforcement cases, she said: “This does not mean that of the other 752 reported allegations of breaches of planning control that no action has been taken. There are a number of other reasons why an investigation is closed that is not an enforcement action, for example, that no breach has occurred, that planning permission is subsequently granted, it is permitted development, or that no

further action is taken because the issue is referred to the appropriate team within the Council to respond.”

Breaches can take time to investigate

She added, “Not all breaches are straight-forward and can take some time to investigate and resolve which will mean that some of those 752 cases remain open investigations.”

Regarding traffic management problems highlighted by Mr. Jackson, she said:

“The Council introduced a Code of Construction Practice in 2019 which requires applicants seeking planning permission to excavate a basement to sign up to the Code. It also introduced the Construction Bond. The scheme requires particular categories of construction work to pay a bond fee to cover the cost of any monitoring that is required.

“A Construction Management Team (CMT) was established to create a multi-disciplinary approach to the regulation of these bond sites, with officers from Planning, Environmental Health and Highways Enforcement working together to provide a co-ordinated approach to the control of construction activity, ensuring compliance with the Council’s requirements.

“The focus is on pro-active monitoring to achieve compliance. Initial site inspections are carried out, including a meeting with the site managers where breaches are identified and an opportunity is

given to correct them.

“The combined impact of the bond scheme, the emphasis on pro-active enforcement and continued engagement between developers and their neighbours has reduced complaints about Construction Traffic Management Plans. The system works well, with most breaches resolved before they are reported to the Council.

“There are sites where, despite these interventions, breaches continue. This has been the case at a site in The Boltons, where a Temporary Stop Notice and a Breach of Condition Notice were served to stop lorries waiting in the Borough, which was contrary to their Construction Traffic Management Plan. Since then, no further breaches have been identified.”

As for staffing of the enforcement department, she said two more permanent planning enforcement officers were hired this year, so the section is now fully staffed.

In a separate but related story, see page 22 for details of the Ladbroke Association’s complaint about recent planning decisions involving Rosmead Gardens, W11.

Cooling effect of garden squares shows from the sky

Satellite images taken over the past three summers vividly show the cooling effect offered by clusters of communal gardens in central London.

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and the City of Westminster experienced a record-breaking 40°C (104°F) daytime temperature on July 19th this summer. The satellite data shows that temperatures that day would have been significantly lower in areas including the 16 Notting Hill communal gardens and the group of roughly 15 gardens in South Kensington and Earls Court, compared with areas that are not as green. Gardens in the Onslow gardens, SW7 area, and around Cadogan Place, SW1, also show up as cooler (see pages 14 and 15).

As the adjacent map shows, the W9 area of Westminster that includes Triangle Garden, Crescent Garden, Formosa Amenity and other nearby communal gardens, creates yet another cooling cluster. *Garden Square News* readers can study the maps and see if their garden shows up as a cool spot.

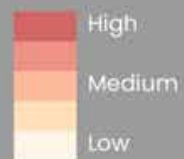
The data was gathered by a satellite analytics company called 4 Earth Intelligence, which measured the average land surface temperature over a sample of summer days over the last three years in Great Britain.

According to company spokesman Chris Burnett, a green space would have to be above 100 square metres in size before a heat-dissipating effect would be visible on the photos.

(continued on page 15)

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Heat Hazard by postcode

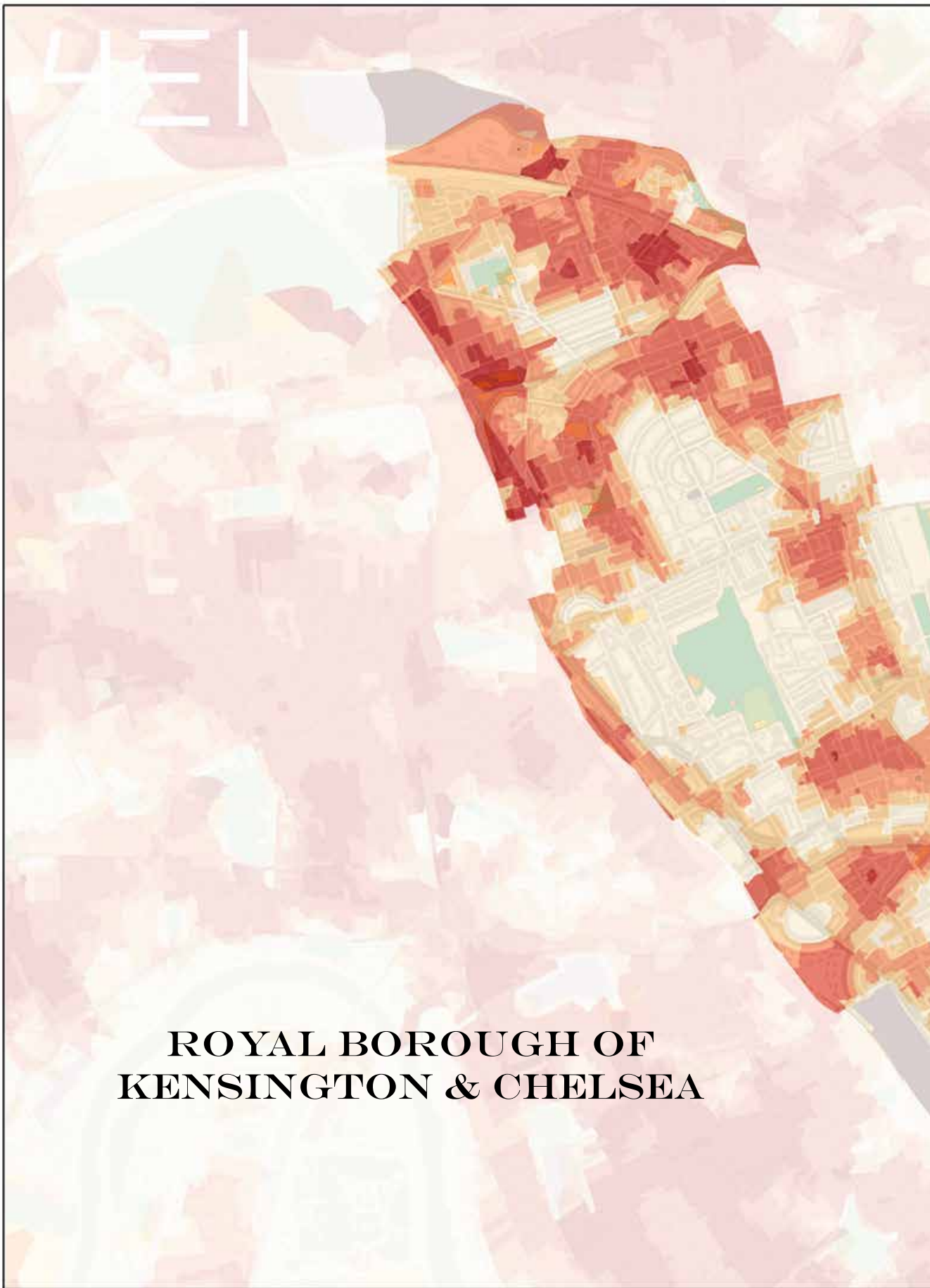


OS Green Space function



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www.4earthintelligence.com

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**ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA**

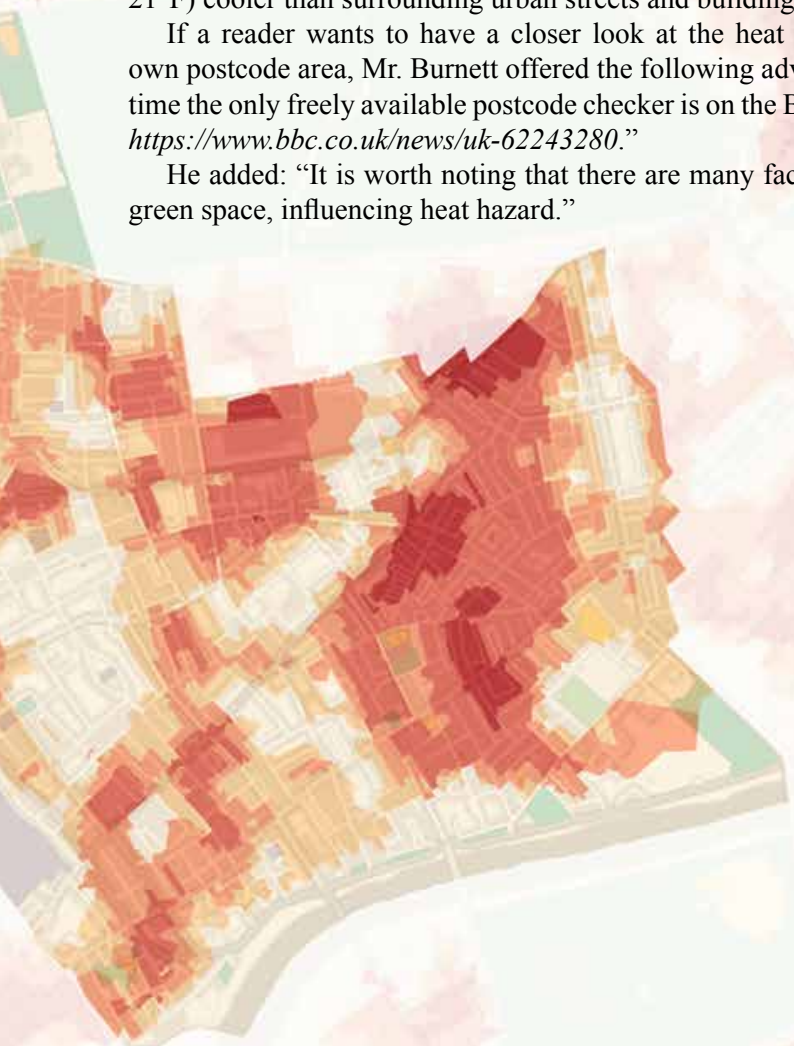
(continued from page 12)

The maps here and overleaf, supplied by 4 Earth Intelligence, offer readings by individual postcodes. A score of one (a white block) on the maps' legends means the postcode was in the lowest 40 percent of potential heat hazard areas, (*i.e.* coolest) and a score of five (a red block) put it in the top 1 percent of potential heat hazard areas. The maps don't give heat ratings to public parks and playing fields – they are simply coloured green. Unfortunately the mapmakers don't always have a firm grasp of where all the public parks are, since large communal gardens such as Eaton Square, SW1, and Ladbroke Square, W11, are incorrectly designated as public parks.

The clusters of gardens reduce heat in the summer because the trees, grass and shrubs provide shade, move water from the ground into the atmosphere, and deflect radiation from the sun. Studies of urban heat effects show that it's not enough to just have a grass-covered area – the space needs to have trees on it to produce cooling. The type and density of trees in the garden make a difference too – some are more cooling than others. A garden can be as much as 12°C (about 21°F) cooler than surrounding urban streets and buildings.

If a reader wants to have a closer look at the heat map in their own postcode area, Mr. Burnett offered the following advice: "At this time the only freely available postcode checker is on the BBC website: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62243280>."

He added: "It is worth noting that there are many factors, beyond green space, influencing heat hazard."



Mapping data © Ordnance Survey, 2020
Mapping data © Crown copyright and database rights 2019, 2020. © 4EI and USGS 2022
Contains Royal Mail data © Royal Mail copyright and database right 2020

Youngest-ever Westminster mayor tours five of the City's gardens

This year the City of Westminster, which now has a Labour-majority Council, appointed its youngest-ever Lord Mayor, and its first Muslim mayor.

As Editor and Publisher of *Garden Square News* I offered to give him a tour of some of the City's communal gardens, and he readily accepted.

Hamza Taouzzale, The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Westminster, is 23, and was born and raised in Westminster, living mostly in the north of the City. He represents the Queen's Park ward.

One gardener told the Mayor of her land hunger

On September 28th the Lord Mayor and I travelled from the south to the north of the City, taking in Eccleston Square, SW1, Hyde Park Gardens, W2, Queen's Gardens, W2, Kensington Gardens Square, W2, and Sutherland North Amenity, W9.

He was enthusiastically received at all the gardens, and was shown special features such as the ancient mulberry tree in Hyde Park Gardens; one of the first Wollemi pine trees planted in the UK, now thriving in Eccleston Square; and the free book hut at Kensington Gardens Square.

Steve Busby, Chairman of Queen's Gardens, took the Lord Mayor through

the long, narrow, heavily shaded land and explained how the current funding rules make it hard to generate sufficient money to make the Garden look attractive. Cllr. Taouzzale said he would find out who in the Council might be able to help have the rules changed.

At prize-winning Sutherland North Amenity, gardener Riina Cattermole, pictured below, buttonholed the Lord Mayor and

asked him if he could tell her where she might find some small patches of land she could improve. "I love growing things," she explained to him, a fact that was obvious from the lush flowers and vegetables growing in the garden. He gave her his card and said if she contacted him he would be glad to see what the Council could do for her.

She paused for the photo below in the Sutherland

North Amenity children's play area she created.

Here youngsters are encouraged to use the large sticks (visible in the background) she's provided to construct their own forts. Ms. Cattermole said the children love to build structures then take them down and build them back differently.

See opposite for photos of some of the garden residents who turned out to greet the Lord Mayor.



Sutherland North Amenity gardener Riina Cattermole sitting in the play area.



Hyde Park Gardens – Left to right: Aaron Landeryou, garden manager from Westbourne Management; Haydn Turner, joint Chairman; Kenneth Ibbett, joint Chairman; Lord Mayor, Barbara Altshuler, garden committee member, Sam Nathan, gardener; Mel Altshuler, garden committee member; and gardeners Dave Fairman and Pete Shaw



Kensington Gardens Square – Left to right: Simon Glucina, Chairman; a committee member who asked for his name to be withheld; Lord Mayor; Judith Schecter, Treasurer; Emma Fulton, Community Engagement; and Susanne Gahler, Small Garden manager



Eccleston Square – Left to right: Pavel Votapek, Garden Manager; Beryl Bye, resident; Nicky Foy, garden committee member; Lord Mayor; Caroline Gandy-Brown, garden committee member; Saeeda Akihali, resident.

Gardeners harvest awards

John Gilbert, a noted contributor to *Garden Square News*, is this year's Master of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners.

He gave out many of the awards at the annual London Gardens Society trophy presentation evening at the Guildhall in the City of London on October 6.

Mr. Gilbert was a widely-respected journalist for more than two decades after graduating from Worcester College, Oxford, but then dramatically changed course to build a reputation and a business as a garden designer.

He specialises in urban gardens, believing that no space is too small or unpromising that it cannot provide an oasis of greenery in a busy city. He studied at Capel Manor College, and later taught at the institution.

Also presenting awards that evening was Adam Frost, an award-winning garden designer and a presenter on the BBC's *Gardener's World*.

He handed out the communal garden squares awards and first prize in the small square category went to Egerton Crescent, SW3. Second prize went to Montpelier Square, SW7, and third to Coleherne Court Garden, SW5.

In the large communal squares category first place
(continued on next page)



John Gilbert, Master of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, giving out awards at the Guildhall.

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Pupils from Christchurch and Holy Trinity schools help to plant a forest on Pont Street



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was scooped up by frequent winner Eccleston Square, SW1. Second was won by Warwick Square, SW1, and third by Courtfield Gardens West, SW5.

The award winners were selected by The London Gardens Society, a charity whose mission is to “improve the lives of Londoners by encouraging and supporting them to achieve horticultural excellence.”

Separately, in the competition sponsored by the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea Scheme, the November 7th Presentation Award Evening was held at the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea’s Town Hall.

Garden squares were divided into three categories: North, Central, and South. In the North section the winner was Pembridge Square, W2, with Royal Crescent, W11, winning second and Norland Square, W11, coming third.

In the Central category Coleherne Court, SW5, took first place, with Wetherby Gardens, SW5, nabbing second place and Kensington Gate, W8, winning third.

In the southern part of the Royal Borough the winner was Carlyle Square, SW3. Coming in second was Egerton Crescent, SW3, followed by Egerton Place, SW3.

The awards were handed out by The Worshipful The Mayor of Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Cllr. David Lindsay. He thanked the participants, adding, “including obviously those who organise the awards, not least my former ward colleague and fellow councillor, Julie Mills.”



Gardener’s World TV presenter Adam Frost, above, handed out some of the awards given at the Guildhall, including this prize to Montpelier Square, tended by gardeners who include Linda Donaldson. She is shown here accepting the award.

The logo for 'The Tree Agency' features three stylized trees of increasing size from left to right. The text 'The Tree Agency' is written in a large, elegant serif font. Below it, two columns of services are listed: '(iTree consultancy)', '(eTree planting)', '(eTree surgery)', and '(iPlant landscape)'. The name 'darryl parkin' is written in a smaller, lowercase font. At the bottom left, contact information is provided: 'The Treehouse, 25 King Edwards Grove, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9LY, Telephone 020 8274 0107, Mobile 07960 123580, Fax 020 8274 0119, info@thetreeagency.co.uk, www.thetreeagency.co.uk'. The background of the bottom right corner shows a large green tree with a person climbing a ladder.

An artwork titled 'Snowflake Tree' by Andrea Hamilton. It depicts a dark, silhouetted tree against a black background, with numerous white snowflake-like shapes scattered around and on the branches. The text 'Snowflake Tree, 2022. Archival pigment print.' is at the bottom left, and '© Andrea Hamilton' is at the bottom right. Below the artwork, the contact information for 'Andrea Hamilton Studio' is listed: '68 Kinnerton Street, SW1X 8ER, Open Studio M-F 10:00am - 4:00pm or by appointment. Tel 0207 245 6664'.

*Deck the
halls!*

*scenes
from
SW10,
W11,*

*and a
New
York
City
garden
square*





Christmases past: Opposite page, upper photo, a house in The Boltons, SW10, wrapped and ready for the holidays, and above, another house in The Boltons with a traffic-stopping balcony tree.

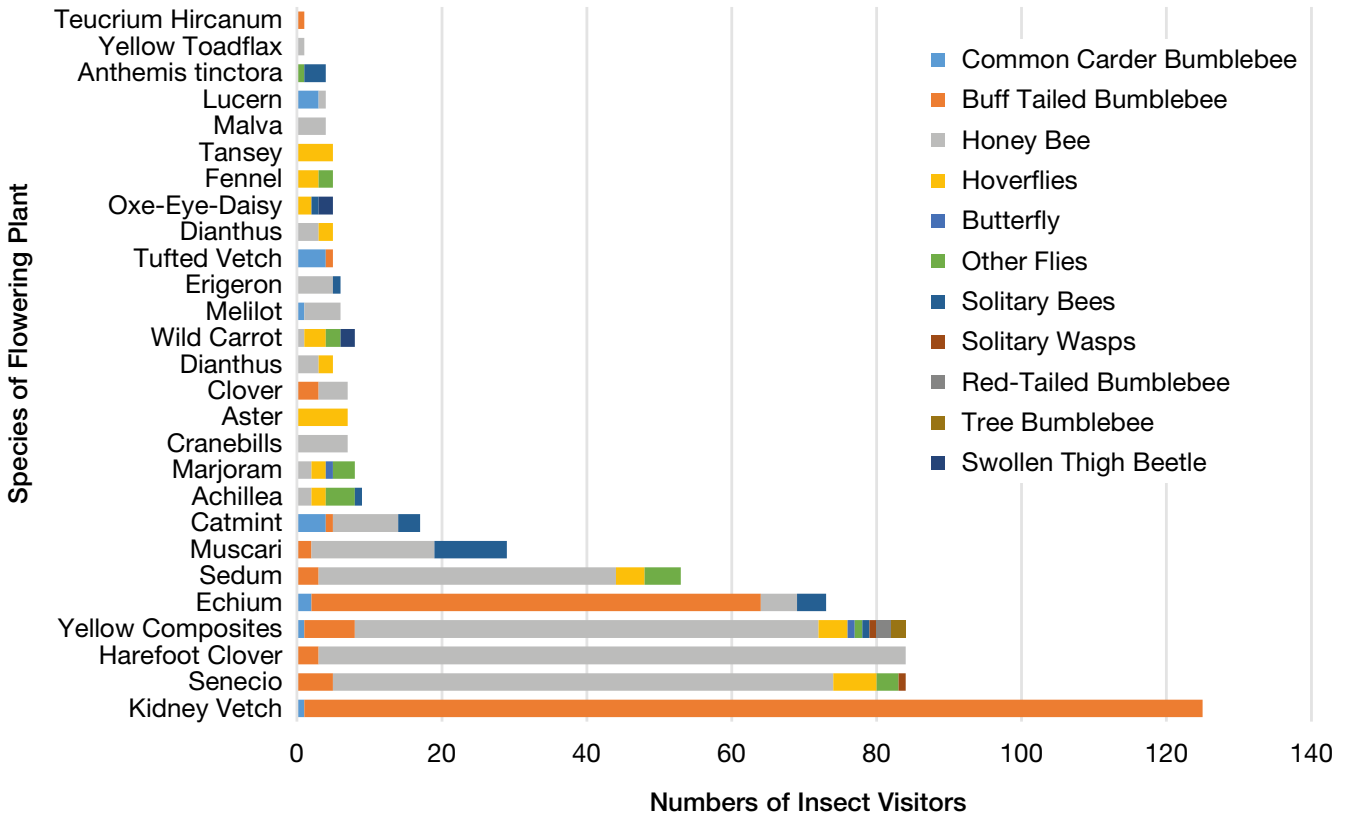
Below, Gramercy Park in New York City in a recent Christmas celebration, where participants had

the carol lyrics pre-loaded on their mobile phones. Photo by Sean Brady.

Christmas future: Opposite page, lower photo, Madeline Regulla and Paloma Cestar during Ladbrooke Square's, W11, open day, selling the garden-themed Christmas cards shown above, right.



(continued from page 1) **Most Visited Flowers by Pollinator Type March 2021 to April 2022**



Results are in -- Kidney Vetch tops the chart

As explained on page one, Nomura maintains an elaborate rooftop garden at the top of its building, and carries out citizen science work there. Experts from the garden explained that from March to October, a monthly pollinator count is carried out, documenting all insects seen visiting flowers and the species of flower they land on, as shown on the chart above. The results help to guide the development of the garden.

Planners have lost the plot in Rosmead Gardens, says amenity group

Ladbroke News, the newsletter of the Ladbroke Association, recently carried a long article criticizing RBK&C’s Planning Department for its approach to the rear elevations at Rosmead Garden, W11, a place where the backs of the buildings were de-

signed to be as important as the fronts.

Two out of three rear extension applications have recently been approved, the newsletter said, which will, in the Association’s view, significantly degrade the look of the terrace of buildings they are part of.

“Even more seriously, it will now be almost impossible for the Council to resist further similar applications, with another bit of our heritage gone. We

are very much afraid that the Council has recently downgraded the attention that it gives to heritage issues and are taking this up at the highest level.”

Mega-mansion’s owner

A mansion considered to be London’s most expensive home, 2-8 Rutland Gate in Knightsbridge, is owned by Hui Ka Yan, once China’s richest man, according to an article in the *Financial Times*. He is the head of Evergrande, a Chinese real estate giant that is currently struggling with massive debt.

The building was previously thought to be owned by his friend Cheung Chung-kiu, a Hong Kong-based property tycoon.

The 45-room, 62,000 square-foot mansion is now reported to be back on the market with a price tag of £200 million.

The building overlooks Hyde Park and is flanked on its east side by the communal garden known as Rutland Gate (upper garden).

Garden Square News is an independent publication designed to provide garden committees and garden square residents with information about communal gardens and their surrounding areas. All articles, except where noted, are written by Holly Smith, Editor and Publisher. Letters, subscriptions, and advertising queries should be sent to:
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THE URBAN NATURE PROJECT



Photo by Stephen Busby

Lime tree collapse brought changes

The visit of Westminster's Lord Mayor (see page 16) prompted Queen's Gardens, W2, Chairman Stephen Busby to tell the Mayor about problem trees from the past, and to provide this salutary photo to *Garden Square News*.

He explained that the pictured lime tree had unexpectedly fallen over on June 19 last year and damaged the adjacent property.

No one was hurt, but

the surprise of the event caused the garden committee to make sure the garden's trees are inspected by an arboriculturalist every year from now on, and are scrutinized more intensely than was earlier the case.

The lime had previously been leaning, he said, and investigations showed the cause of the fall was a disease in the roots that had weakened them.

Inspiration came from Eccleston Square



Greek photographer Agorastos Papatsanis won first prize in the plant and fungi category in this year's Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition sponsored by the Natural History Museum.

He credits the late Roger Phillips, the prolific botanical author and long-time Eccleston Square, SW1,

manager, with launching his fascination with mushrooms.

“When I started my study of mushrooms, Roger Phillip’s book was the first book I got my hands on. It inspired me at the beginning and I thank Roger for that!”