

Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust election for new Trustees

The next Annual General Meeting of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust is on September 11, and this year it will be followed by the election of two new members to the Trust Council. As we go to press there are three declared candidates for these seats on the board, and we have a short statement from each candidate for readers.

A trustee has to ensure a charity remains true to its charitable purpose and objects as set out in its governing documents. For us this means that our trustees ensure the Trust does all things possible to maintain and preserve the present character and amenities of the Suburb using the tools at its disposal. Trustees also have to ensure the Trust remains solvent and has the resources necessary to do its job.

We need trustees who will ensure the Trust continues to be properly resourced and not just look to reduce its income and hamper its effectiveness. The management charge has remained in its target range for the last 10 years and remains cheaper than my TV licence or daily newspaper; I would say that is good value for money.

The Trust has the responsibility of maintaining an important example of twentieth century suburban design, and is also our best protector against inappropriate development.

It is worth remembering that Trustees' actions are constrained by the Memorandum & Articles of Association and the Scheme of Management. There are many things the Trust is unable to do, however worthy.

So if you are a member, please use your vote for a candidate who, by supporting the objectives of the Trust, will put the Suburb first.

If you are not a member and have lived in the Suburb for at least 3 years, you are eligible to become a member of the charity; go to www.hgstrust.org to join, and to find out more about the Trust.

Just paying the management charge or your ground rent does not make you a member, and there is no restriction just because you rent from a landlord. Finally it is important for me to say that the above represents my personal views and not those of anyone else or any group.

TERRY BROOKS

Trust candidates' statements

RICHARD TOWNLEY

My name is Richard Townley. I have lived in North Square in the Suburb for forty-two years and am a strong supporter of the Trust's attitude towards preserving the Suburb as a unique environment.

I am a fellow of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and have spent my life professionally as an advisor in commercial property investment until 1990 and thereafter as an investor.

For ten years I was a Trustee of Ambitious About Autism, a charity which supports children with autism and their families. I was Chair of the Steering Group which delivered a £12,000,000 school in Woodside Avenue, which some of you may know.

The role of the Board and Trustees is to support Nick Packard, the Manager, in the formulation of policy and thereafter the execution.

I have been involved in various Suburb projects and, in particular, the introduction of

the Heritage lighting in Central Square and was also responsible for the installation of the new flowerbeds in the Square.

The Trust has a difficult task and deals with matters which materially affect us all. I know that The Trust welcomes constructive criticism and I hope that I will be able to live up to the demands that appointment as a Trustee brings with it.

MARALYN ROBERTS

I have lived in the Suburb for 38 years. Our two daughters went to a local primary school.

Each weekday morning, come rain or shine, my friend and I can be found striding round the Heath extension at the crazy hour of 6.30am. I never fail to be struck by its natural beauty and by the beauty of the built environment - Hampstead Garden Suburb. It's a privilege to live here and I treasure it.

It's for these reasons that I decided to put my name forward as a trustee.

I retired six years ago. I volunteer at a local primary school two afternoons a week and I listen to children read. I

started my working life as a journalist on the Warrington Guardian (I'm from Manchester). When I came to London I moved into marketing communications.

BRIAN INGRAM

My track record speaks for itself. 30 years of senior management business experience with strong finance and leadership skills. A Suburb Resident for 40 plus years, I am currently the elected leader of the Northway Gardens Organisation (NGO), which restored the award winning Rose Gardens. I intend to involve the Trust to take a wider much needed view of its green responsibilities; part of its core business I suggest, and part of the values of the Suburb founders.

The Trust Manager said to me: "Trustees are only here to consider planning applications." Do we agree? Should senior staff be given a high degree of autonomy and lack of oversight? Is permitting the head of the paid staff to work part-time an indication of how little interest the trustees take in the substantive work of the Trust, including the greenery of the Suburb, as opposed to mere internal administration?

To quote the Trust Chairman, from the 2018 annual report: "The staff under Nick Packard's leadership are the mainstay of the Trust and I sometimes wonder if we need trustees at all!" Really? What a complete abdication of responsibility. A management shake up is needed.

The Trustees must involve, recruit and bring on capable residents with actual business management experience to lead the Trust for the next 20 years, not just on the Trust Council but on the joint committees as well. The Trust election procedure is odd and dubious: it needs reviewing.

Inconsistency of Trust decisions is a big issue for residents; as is secrecy and lack of transparency. It suits the staff and trustees not to be computerised and accountable. All that is needed is a simple £500 software package. This is something I will look into.

Notice from the Trust

The Trust Manager has asked for Suburb News to publish the following:

The Charity Commission defines trustees as having 'responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that is solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.' The Trust's purpose is to maintain and preserve the character and amenity of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

The Trust's Annual Report & Accounts (available from the Trust's website and sent each year to Trust members) contains significant detail on the Trust's operation and its finances.

Members of the Trust and residents of the Suburb have an open invitation to contact the Trust Manager via the Trust office about any aspect of the Trust.

The deadline for new members being eligible to vote in any election this year is Monday 9 September 2019. Go to www.hgstrust.org/the-trust/membership.shtml for details of who can become a Trust Member and the relevant form to complete, and to www.hgstrust.org/news/events-and-announcements.shtml for details of the election procedure.

JUDITH SAMSON

Life after 70 – an HGS U3A lecture

To celebrate the 70th birthday of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London, Principal Consultant/Researcher, Dr Mannie Sher decided to run a group relations event for people aged over 70 years. It would cover topics such as finances and health, and a realisation that sooner or later we have to face the fact of our deaths. The facilitators and the 32 participants were all over 70; one focus all faced was managing the tension between increased frailty and enjoying one's remaining opportunities in the best possible way.

So our U3A Events Organiser, Daphne Berkovi, thought this might be a good lecture topic and in June over 50 members



turned up at Fellowship House to hear Dr Sher's lecture. All the chairs were arranged in a u-shape,

instead of in rows, so that everyone had people sitting next to them as well as opposite.

For the first 20 minutes, Dr Sher spoke about the changes older people faced – no longer were they important with responsible jobs, but almost invisible in public places. There were a few perks, such as being offered a seat on public transport.

Many people spoke about wanting to continue contributing something to society.

Older people may be less fit and possibly less active than they were, and feel vulnerable and may need carers, which evokes memories of childhood. As all of us probably have lost family and friends, we must try to make new friends and try new experiences, probably more mental than physical, as we slow down and become weaker with age.

After the first 20 minutes of his talk, Dr Sher stopped as he said that was the maximum length of time most audiences could concentrate, so we sat in silence for a few minutes until he continued. In old age, we can decide whether to remain alone or join a group where people can help each other. However, if one prefers the latter, it is important to keep one's individuality.

As another 20 minutes had now passed, Dr Sher stopped his talk again and this time suggested

we chat to our neighbours. The effect was mind-blowing! So loud did the conversations become that the interval extended to about 15 minutes. It just proved what Dr Sher had said – that if you make the effort to chat to someone, you are very likely to be successful and will very quickly find subjects of mutual interest.

Dr Sher said that competition, anger and envy are part of the experience of aging in relation to young people. Deafness can be a great drawback and can increase the sense of loneliness. Some older people choose to move to a smaller home and remain independent, or go to sheltered housing, or to a residential home, depending on their health and income.

Some people find it difficult choosing how to spend their time; others wonder if they will be remembered by the next generation. Some people remain in mourning and urgently search for a new person with whom they can connect, and sometimes feel that they should, and do, remain alive because of important people who are dependent on them.



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



HGS U3A partner with Middlesex University

Our U3A in Hampstead Garden Suburb has now been established for two years with a solid membership and a burgeoning array of interesting subjects.

Over the past two years we have been working on a collaboration with an academic institution and are delighted to announce a partnership with Middlesex University. We are very fortunate that one of our new members, Emeritus Professor Lisa Woolfson, agreed to be our University Liaison Co-ordinator. She has been facilitating the partnership with the present head of the Psychology department, Professor Bifulco.

Since May of this year, our members have been attending

weekly Psychology lectures at the University campus, with a vast array of interesting topics. The last lecture took place at the end of June with a lecture on Memory and the Mind, delivered by Dr Emma Ward, who gave our first monthly topical talk two years ago.

We are now working on a collaboration to bolster the relationship by members of our U3A helping some of the students to enhance their skill sets.

We will continue to expand the programme, as we have had wonderful feedback from our members and the University.

Visit hgsu3a.uk/middlesex-uni to find out more about this project.

DAPHNE BERKOVI

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