

The Formosa Garden

Autumn 2021

REMEMBER REMEMBER ..

It's the SIXTH of November!!

Remember life before COVID?

The annual bonfire & fireworks evening used to be a highlight of the social calendar. Well now it's back, after last year's scaled-down version which meant it was fireworks only (though still a very impressive display).

Don't forget unless you have direct access to the Garden you will need a working fob to get in (see over the page for details of the latest fob re-coding exercise). Residents of Castellain Road nearest to the display should ensure all windows & doors are closed. And please observe the following rules for everyone's safety:

- . No personal fireworks in or around the Garden at any time
- . Safe distance to be kept from the bonfire
- . No glass to be brought into the Garden
- . Children to be supervised at all times
- . No pets allowed in Garden to help keep them safe

And last but not least: Please maintain a level of social distancing for the sake of those still nervous about the virus.

Incidentally Crescent Gardens continue to synchronise their display with ours which means that we all get a double benefit, as theirs don't start until 7.30 pm!



TIMETABLE

Saturday 6th Nov 21

6.30 PM BONFIRE LIT

6.50 PM CASTELLAIN ROAD
GATE SHUT

(no entry or exit during display)

7 PM FIREWORK DISPLAY

7.20 PM TREE LIGHTS
ILLUMINATED



To contribute to the Newsletter please contact vivvy.robins@gmail.com

ANSWERS DEMANDED OVER FLOODING DISASTER

Extraordinary Public Meeting

On 30th September the local authorities organised an extraordinary public meeting to review the response to the severe flooding of July 12th & 25th which devastated so many homes across Central, West & North-West London. Among those attending were Ward Councillors & representatives from Thames Water, London Fire Brigade, the Metropolitan police and the Environment Agency. There were also around 80 local residents, among them a number living on the Garden including our Board Chairman Peter Cross, who reported back as follows:

It was a highly lively meeting. The format oddly didn't allow any residents to ask questions in real time which rather irritated everyone.

A finger of blame was pointed at the Council for its delayed response but the greatest anger was towards Thames Water for the abject failure of its recently installed & costly Maida Vale flood alleviation scheme & their perceived lack of care and compassion towards victims. Their executives formally apologised for what they agreed was an unsatisfactory response.

The Fire brigade disclosed that the number of 999 calls on the night of the 12th meant that a major incident had to be declared and as a result they needed to prioritise those whose lives were at risk. Residents were thankful for their efforts.

The key issue of protecting insurance premiums for basement flats was also discussed but not really resolved. The question of compensation for residents was of course raised.

The Council officer said that there had been some reductions of Council Tax and some monies released from the hardship fund. Thames Water did not feel their assets had failed and therefore refused to accept any liability or offer any compensation.

A further independent review will clarify whether Thames Water do in fact have any liability but a date for that is not yet certain.

How to protect homes for the future was also discussed. One area where Thames Water said that they would potentially take some responsibility was where water came in through the sewage system rather than as surface water off the street. Residents of Formosa who were impacted in this way might want to ensure Thames Water are aware of them.

It also became clear that the Met office failed to predict the weather event and this compounded the problem.

There was confirmation that 200,000 homes & one-fifth of schools in London are at risk from any repeat event, so it is an issue that will only increase in importance as climate change gathers pace.

However as residents will recall from past Newsletters the fact that we had recently installed our own new drainage system to one part of the garden ensured the water that fell there did drain away fairly quickly. We do hope anyone impacted by these unique weather events is beginning to see the light after what must have been a terribly stressful couple of months.



GARDEN ACCESS - RECODING CANCELLED

Unfortunately due to technical problems the planned recoding has been cancelled. A new date will be communicated in due course. This will not affect the normal operation of the gate and your fob will remain active.

HOW UNWELCOME VISITORS CAN BE OUT-FOXED



As many of you living over on Warrington may have been unlucky enough to experience there has been an increase recently in the number of foxes getting into the Garden & defecating on people's patios. The problem was discussed by the Board at their September meeting & it was agreed that steps would be taken to reduce the gap under the Castellain Road Gate which may possibly be a point of entry for them. Otherwise there are a number of deterrent products available on the market, although options are slightly limited by the fact that foxes are protected under various wildlife

laws. But probably the biggest single preventative action that individuals can take is to ensure that no food or rubbish is left out on their patio which may lure foxes in.

LOCAL MUSICAL LEGEND REMEMBERED

A blue plaque commemorating the music hall singer Fred Barnes has been unveiled outside 22 Clifton Villas, where he lived from 1926 to 1930.

Fred Barnes was hugely popular on the Music Hall stage where he was known as "the wavy haired, blue-eyed Adonis" on account of his looks & charm. His signature song, *The Black Sheep of the Family*, made him an overnight success when it was first performed in 1907 & his other hits included *Give me the Moonlight* & *On Mother Kelly's Doorstep*.

The unveiling was performed by the comedian Paul O'Grady, President of the British Music Hall Society, which organised the plaque.

