



ST PETER'S RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the SPRA AGM - 6th July 2026, The Carpenter's Arms

Welcome and Introductions

Joanna Edmunds welcomed everyone to the 48th Annual General Meeting of SPRA. We missed only one year, due to Covid, therefore next year is our 50th anniversary. More on this later in the meeting.

JE introduced the Committee, and noted apologies from Charlotte Read, Maria Baharlo, Philippa Vaughan and Philip Back.

JE noted that this is Philip's last meeting as a committee member. She expressed gratitude for his contribution and support over the years including 9 years as Treasurer

Joanna has completed her 3 years as Chair and has formally resigned her post. She is willing to stay in post for up to one more year, while we find someone to replace her.

Many thanks to Anna Frank who has stepped down after many years as Street Rep for St Peter's Villas. Jess Greenwood replaces her.

Approval of 2025 AGM Minutes

Approved: Maggie Dobson proposed and Richard Thom seconded.

Matters arising from the 2025 Minutes

E-bikes: parking and cycle highway. E-bike parking appears to have improved - the bays installed by the Council work well when the bay is in the right place. Steve Askins and JE held walkabouts with our two new Councillors last Friday. Their approach was refreshing: they were positive about improving the cycle lane at the junction by the Artisan coffee shop, where a tree obscures the view for crossing the road. It remains to be seen if they can make change happen.

The walkway from the underpass across North Verbena Gardens has not been replaced with a semi-permeable membrane, thanks to push from local residents.

The outstanding paths in the Square are still to be resurfaced - this is clearly not a priority for the Council, although they have told us that we are near the top of their list.

St Peter's Square Gardens: the heavy lifting is done by the council and SPRA is responsible for general gardening and choice of plants. Oliver Leigh Wood manages this brilliantly, and does a

lot himself, with help from local residents. The Garden Fund has been topped up by extra funds raised from Greek Runner fundraising - an extra £4,400 in total: good news for the garden!

Picnic benches were discussed last year and Nina Joshi Ramsay very kindly put in a new picnic bench in memory of her late husband. Worries had been expressed about attracting late night revellers but so far this has not been a problem. We do not propose to lock the gates.

Cross Keys and School noise are still concerning at times and are being dealt with by the residents who are most closely impacted.

The Carpenter's Arms changes to licensing hours have caused no problems to-date.

Shop under Entwistle Terrace: we still have no news on this.

The Leaning Woman statue was given the Tom Ryland Award for Conservation by the Hammersmith Society due to the careful and sensitive way in which it was renovated and restored.

Greek Runner fundraising was very successful and both fundraising and the renovation itself were completed very speedily, within the year!

Chair's Report - additional notes

See The Chair's Report attached plus:

The council moved suddenly and very quickly on Berestede Road Open Space, after many years of procrastination. Consultation did not take place, despite agreement that it would. Apologies to all those who were not informed in advance.

Shakespeare in the Square: huge thanks as ever to Lou Devonshire for organising this. 2027 will mark the 30th year of Shakespeare in the Squares and so we should consider a celebration.

SPRA archive: has been moved into the basement of the church. Roland Hanbury is kindly scanning the Newsletters as these reflect the story of SPRA. Once finished, we plan for this to be available on the website.

Crime: there is no CCTV at this end of King Street or on our streets which might help protect cars parked here. We are all reminded to report crimes and suspicious behaviour. These reports do not disappear into a black hole (even if it feels like they do!); they really are used by police and the data will determine priorities such as staffing and investment. Report anything via the Met website or phone 101. If you witness a crime in action, you must phone 999.

Following a series of local burglaries, we have pulled together some reminders on home security [here](#)

Planning: SPRA reviews all local planning applications. The most recent application is to put a bank of postal lockers behind the St Peter's Church. This is being strongly opposed by SPRA as it is an inappropriate place for such a service.

SPRA's 50th anniversary celebration in 2027: all ideas welcome. Please email support@spraweb.net

Presentation and Adoption of the 25-26 accounts

Jonathan Cheal thanked Philip Back for facilitating a smooth handover.

The Statements have been circulated by email and the headlines are:

- Income totalled £21,900 compared with £7,200 in the prior year. The increase was largely due to the fundraising for the Greek Runner, a one off. Once the restoration costs were paid, a surplus of £4,400 was transferred to the Garden Fund.
- Income from film companies this year is down by £2,000 to £2,400.
- Membership subscriptions are similar to previous years, but we have seen more members join during this year, so the total received in subscriptions next year should go up.
- Approx. half of the £8,000 regular expenditure in 2025-26 is on gardens locally, principally the Square. We pay for gardening companies, plants and bulbs and this year have bought some gardening equipment for the schools who help in the garden.
- Dog poo bags costs have almost halved to £700. In part due to the timing of orders but the boxes are being refilled less frequently.
- The remainder of our costs is largely for the website, printing and events
- Cash has increased by £1,800 and we have a total cash balance of £13,500. This healthy cash balance more than covers expected expenditures for the coming year and removes the need to appeal for extra Garden Fund monies. We have £9,300 in the general fund and £4,200 in the garden fund.

A big thank you to Richard Thom for helping to review these accounts.

Questions: none

Propose accounts: Alessia Pulieri-Lichtenberg

Seconded: Lou Devonshire

Election of Officers and Committee Members

All committee members are due to be re-elected, except for Philip Back. Re-election was agreed by all present:

Proposed: Jess Greenwood

Seconded: Bill Stevens

SPRA Heroes 2025-26

Brian Paver has provided invaluable help with planning over many years and still does so. His advice and support are greatly appreciated.

Oliver Leigh Wood has been Chief Gardener in the Square for years (decades!) and shows no reduction in dedication and commitment. It is thanks to him and his helpers that we can be so proud of the beauty and usefulness of the Square.

Stefan Czeladzinski is one of the Council's two Park Managers in LBHF. SPRA area falls within his responsibilities, and he has supported SPRA's efforts enthusiastically for many years, helping to protect and enhance our corner of London.

Charlie Pryor - corner of Standish Road: garden which attracts attention and wins awards.

Each received a bottle of local gin as a thank you for their contribution to the SPRA area. A special award of a pair of "Kew Gardens" gardening gloves was made to Oliver Leigh Wood as a personal thank you from the committee for his dedication to the St Peter's Square Gardens.

Questions and AOB

Suggestion: Could we combine the Shakespeare in Square 30th and SPRA 50th anniversaries, or even find more anniversaries to make the total up to 100 years?

Suggestion: A possibility for the anniversary celebration is an event e.g., community theatre, about the history of the square perhaps using Jilly Paver's book as the starting point.

A: If anyone would like to contribute or lead the anniversary celebrations, please email support@spraweb.net

Q: Does the Garden Fund cover only the Square or all SPRA open spaces?

A: It covers all areas, so we agreed to add an 'S' to make it Gardens Fund.

Q: Could the bin removed from Berestede Road Open Space be replaced?

A: SA reported that it was deliberately removed along with the bench because of the anti-social behaviour and fly tipping around it. Both have abated since the bin and bench were removed and so replacement would not seem advisable.

Suggestion: Black Lion Mews is turned into a mess every Wednesday as the Council will no longer go into the Mews to collect. If more people complain to Council about this, they may revert to collecting from inside the Mews.

Suggestion: Someone was spotted going through the bins on St Peter's Terrace, so it is not just the foxes! It was recommended that if you spray your bin bags with Anti-Bacterial spray this will keep the foxes off.

Q: A suggestion was made that the dead tree trunk and branches in Square should be removed as they are not in keeping with the historic nature of the Square.

A: OLW explained that the Council has a deliberate policy of leaving decaying trees in situ for environmental reasons: they are very bug friendly. This is the remains of an ash tree which had been struck by lightning 3 times and eventually died. It has been hollowed out by stag beetles - it is a real haven for them in the Square. Once the dead tree started leaning, it was pulled over for safety reasons, and it will eventually rot away. A new beech tree has been planted nearby and within 10 years it will have taken over.

Conclusion

SA proposed a big thank you to Joanna for her impressive leadership of SPRA. Her command of what is happening locally is amazing and she has added much value during the past three years. Most notably, her ability to galvanise local people into action is remarkable!

Meeting ended 8pm and was attended by over 40 Members of the Association

Minutes prepared by Heather Hanbury, SPRA Secretary, July 2026



ST PETER'S RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

CHAIR'S REPORT TO 48TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (2025/26)

INTRODUCTION

Over the past year the SPRA committee has continued to work to preserve, enhance and protect the local area.

SUMMARY OF THE 2025/6 YEAR

Changes to the SPRA Team

Thank you to the SPRA team for all their hard work in the last year.

Joanna Edmunds continued as Chair and Steve Askins as Vice-Chair. Heather Hanbury assumed the role of SPRA Secretary and Jonathan Cheal took over the role of SPRA Treasurer, both early last year.

Lou Devonshire coordinates Shakespeare in the Square. Oliver Leigh Wood continued to manage the Gardens in St Peter's Square, Charlotte Reed coordinates with the PTA at St Peter's School.

Philip Back, Alessia Pulieri Lichtenberg, Maria Baharlo and recent joiner Phillipa Vaughan are all General members.

We met formally as a committee 6 times over the year

The current committee are all standing for re-election for 2026/7 with the exception of Philip Back who acted as SPRA Treasurer for 9 years. Thank you, Philip, for all your contribution.

Joanna indicated her planned resignation as Chair in Feb this year having completed 3 years in the post this summer. As no one has stepped forward she will remain in place for up to another year, with your approval.

We continue to be supported by Richard Thom, who reviews the Accounts, Brian Paver who provides expert input into Planning issues and Phil Pritchard, Liz Lang and Fabien Gilles who replenish the supply of the Poo Bags in the Square.

We also have a number of Street Reps who help welcome new Residents to the area and distribute the printed Newsletters. Our thanks to Anna Frank who steps down after many years in this role and to Jess Greenwood who is taking on her 'patch'.

Thank you to all those who are involved. Each contribution makes a difference. We would actively like to increase the breadth of the Committee and specially require a new Chair, so If you are interested in joining us we'd love to add to the team. Say hello on the 6th or email support@spraweb.net

Local Project and Events

The year kicked off with the 2024/25 **AGM and Summer Party** which was held at The Carpenter's Arms in June last year.

Each year we organise **Autumn Bulb planting** for the Square and more recently around the Leaning Woman statue. We were delighted to welcome two different schools to help with this. Our thanks to the pupils and their teachers at St Peter's School and St Paul's Girls' School and the SPRA team who make it happen, particularly Oliver Leigh Wood and Steve Askins.

We launched the fundraising for the restoration of **The Greek Runner** at the AGM last year and the work was completed by the expert conservation team, Rupert Harris Conservation, in November of the same year. The budgeted cost was c £12,000 with any monies raised over this going to the Square's Garden Fund. In total we raised £16,400 and fortunately the work was completed without need for any of the contingency fund. Thus, a transfer has been made to the Garden Fund of £4,400.

The SPRA **Winter Party** was hosted at the Carpenters Arms in January 2026 with over 70 people joining us for drinks and a delicious light supper. The Carpenter's Arms were kind enough to close for the evening and allow us to take over their ground floor.

This time last year we mentioned ongoing discussions with the council about **Berestede Road Open Space**. To our great surprise the council suddenly moved very quickly and without the planned local consultation. Apologies to all those whose viewpoint was not taken into consideration, this was not what had been agreed,

The Cypress trees had grown very tall blocking much light and moisture but with only their tree trunks blocking the road. Many were not in good health and were an invasive, non-native variety. The council had tried in the past to underplant the trees with a yew hedge but this had failed due to the dry terrain. The trees were cut down (the stumps remain to help with carbon management) and yew trees planted, which should grow to provide a visual barrier to the road, as at the bottom of Black Lion Lane. Further shrubs were planted adjacent to the yew trees to fill any gaps and provide some more decorative planting.

To ensure the yew trees thrive, an automatic watering system was designed and installed by Steve Askins and Rak Sethi in April. The infrastructure was paid for by SPRA and the water is kindly being supplied by Raj and Asha Sethi, for this first year at least. We were delighted to welcome about 40 students and their teachers from St Paul's Girls' School to help with weeding and mulching in May. We hope to host them again in the autumn for some bulb planting. We welcome any further suggestions on improvements for the Space.

The Celebration of the Greek Runner on the first Bank holiday Monday in May was a great event. Over 150 people joined in the celebration with many children, whose tenacity with the tricky Treasure Hunt was much to be admired. The first ever SPRA BBQ was a big success as were the specially designed postcards and games for children. The local info boards are always fascinating and this year we ran a Greek Runner Challenge, in cooperation with St Peter's School, for work inspired by the Greek Runner. Our thanks to Charlie Pryor for the trumpet serenade to start the celebrations.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of **Shakespeare in the Squares** and we were delighted to welcome them back with Love's Labour's Lost. As ever, thanks to Lou Devonshire for all her hard work in coordinating this. Next year will mark the 30th anniversary of performances in the Square.

The **SPRA Archive** has been very substantially edited and the remaining files will now be stored in the crypt of St Peter's Church. Thank you to the church for offering this solution. We are in the process of scanning the Newsletters dating from 1994 and we hope to find a way to

store these digitally so everyone can have access. These include the newsletters with the marvellous Ann Page illustrations.

SPRA continues to represent the area at the local Ward Panel Meetings where the local community meet with the Police to determine **crime priorities** and at a Community Crime Fighting event in December. Across the Ward the key concerns are around car crime (break ins and thefts), drugs use and dealing, e bike speeding, shoplifting and the extent to which the local police team are seconded into central London. Whilst the number of burglaries in the Ward is considered by the Police as relatively low there have also been several burglaries in the SPRA area over the last year which is concerning,

The Police have launched a new service called **Met Engage**, which allows you to sign up and receive information about how our local area is policed as well as give tailored crime prevention advice and updates. It also allows you to tell the Police what is concerning you most.

Core anti-crime advice remains the same

Car break ins: leave nothing visible in your car. Switch off Bluetooth on any devices. Ideally empty your glove box and boot and leave them open.

Car theft: keep keys in a faraday box and, for certain car models an old-fashioned steering lock is recommended.

Shoplifting: new visual identity recognition technology has recently been launched which allows the Police to catch individuals across multiple dates and locations and prosecute once, which has very significantly increased prosecutions for shoplifting

Burglaries: double door locks are recommended but need to be placed sufficiently far apart so the door can't be forced, window locks, letter box screens, nothing too visible in the windows, etc. Lots more advice [here](#)

The **repairs for the paths** in the Square are still outstanding despite our best efforts. The **new vehicle access** which has been installed will make this and other maintenance to the Square easier. We understand we are 'next on the list' and so hope this might be completed this year.

SPRA continue to review all **planning applications** made in the area and comment as appropriate.

Whilst recognising that some progress has been made, there continue to be concerns over **noise levels** at Scott Hall and at the Cross Keys. SPRA tries to facilitate progress where appropriate, but these are sensitive issues with discussions led primarily by those most affected.

Future Projects

Next year will be the 50th anniversary of SPRA, it was founded in 1977. We missed one AGM during Covid but otherwise we have gathered as a group each year since then. We would welcome any suggestions of how best to celebrate the anniversary. Please email support@spraweb.net with any ideas or offers of help.

Finances

Thank you to Jonathan Cheal for preparing the accounts which have been finalised and audited by Richard Thom.

The accounts are made up of three parts, the unrestricted "General Fund", the designated "Garden Fund" and the restricted "Greek Runner Fund". The Greek Runner Fund was for the fundraising. The Garden fund pays for planting and additional gardening for the Square and receives any income dedicated to the maintenance of the Square gardens. The General Fund is for everything else.

SPRA Income after expenditure totalled £1,800 (LY £1,100); of which the general fund accounted for net income of £600 (LY £3,000), the Garden Fund for net income of £1,200 (LY - £1,900).

During the year, the Association together with LBHF raised £16,400 to fund the centenary restoration of the Greek Runner statue with £4,400 surplus funds contributed to the Garden Fund.

Reserves total £13,500 (LY £11,700) of which £4,200 (LY £3000) is allocated to the Garden fund.

SPRA is fortunate that our income is frequently boosted by donations from filming in the area. This is not guaranteed but does allow us to spend considerably more than our membership income would allow. This year for example we raised just under half the amount raised last year. Our thanks to Steve Askins who handles these discussions with the filming companies and works hard to minimise the disruption.

Annual costs are £4,300 (LY £3,700) whilst Membership income is £1,200 (LY 1,100). We therefore have provision for c 3 years at current rates of spend should filming dry up.

Members total 130 household's vs 110 last year, thanks to the efforts of all those involved in the membership drive.

Other ongoing costs include the website, the printed newsletters and welcome info and of course SPRA events such as the AGM and Winter Party, which are funded in part by SPRA.

The provision of poo bags for dog waste in the Square continues to be a key cost though the timing of orders this year along with some prudence in refilling the dispensers means the cost has reduced to just under £700.

SPRA Heroes

Noted in the AGM Minutes

Joanna Edmunds

Chair 2025/6

July 2026