



COTTONMILL AND NUNNERY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Committee Meeting on Thursday 30th April 2026 Held at The White Lion, Sopwell Lane, St Albans.

PRESENT:

Keith Reynolds (Chairman)

Ed Haworth (Treasurer)

Janet Wyatt (Secretary)

Clare Dale (Membership Secretary).

Mark Jones (Nunnery 2 Plot Officer)

Margaret Harris (Cottonmill Plot Officer)

APOLOGIES

Clare Norman (Sopwell Mill Plot Officer)

Louise Wiseman (Newsletter Editor)

Helen Miller (Assistant Plot Officer, Cottonmill)

Michelle Mackenzie (Facebook Administrator)

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting on 11th March 2026 were agreed. These will now be placed on the website. **Action-JW/LW**

2. ACTION UPDATE and MATTERS ARISING

Bees on site – The Council has agreed for bee hives to be brought onto Cottonmill at plot 25. We are obliged to inform the insurers if we have bees on site. If there is an increase in our policy it is suggested that we require the Council to cover this cost. **Action** – JW to contact the holder of plot 25 to ask when this is happening. When confirmed **action** for JW/MJ/EH who will draft the notification for the insurer.

Compost-inform Adam Wigglesworth at Aylett's about revised process and then let Terry Beckett know to contact Aylett's. **Action**-JW

Prepare accurate plot maps for the sites to enable delivery by Aylett's. **Action** - Plot Officers/JW

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

EH reported that the balance at the end of the year was approximately £5000. The accounts are with the independent examiners prior to its release to members for approval at the AGM. ED reported difficulty in getting the bank to change its contact address to his as it says one of the signatures to the letter wasn't recognized.

4. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

CD reported that membership is currently at 80 with two being new members. CD will draft a message to chase up those who have not paid yet -CD/JW Also CD to send a list of members by plot to each Plot Officer-action CD. JW and CD will arrange to cleanse JW's mailing list when most renewals have come in-**action** CD/JW.

5. SITE REPORTS

Cottonmill

The site is drying out and MH has agreed with Phil Bruce-Green that he won't make inspections now but Cottonmill will be first in June. Other sites can expect inspections this month. Council contractors has done a lot of damage whilst doing tree work and left the bank in a very unstable state, particularly around plot 25. The contractors have put plugs of chemical into stumps to cause rot which the Committee finds unacceptable.

Nunnery 1

Report provided by Brain Gilson.

Currently there are 2 vacancies on N1. PB-G has sent offers out but no response, BG believes they expire next Tuesday.

Around 20 still on the waiting list.

There is quite a deep hole in the ground just outside the main gate which PB-G brought up. The Council are not responsible for this they only have ease of access. The ground belongs to residents of Sadleir Road, numbers 27 & 29 BG believes. BG has mentioned this to Gary who lives at 29 and he said he would try and fill it but the weather until recently had not been favourable.

Nunnery 2

MJ will contact PB-G to organize a plot inspection. **Action** MJ

Sopwell Mill

51 plot holders. 2 of which have expressed intention to quit. 5 more should get non-cultivation notes as unattended for 12 months and 14 on waiting list.

PB-G stated he is doing a site visit this week and will immediately send N/C notices.

6.COMMUNICATIONS.

No report

7. AGM

The Jubilee Centre on Centre on Catherine St is booked for 17th May from 10-00 to 12-00 and the meeting will start at 10.30, finishing by 11.50 to clear away the chairs and tables. KR is working on his report. The accounts are with the independent examiners and will be circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Action-JW.

The vacancies are

Facebook Administrator-MM willing to stand again and nominated (JW, ED)

Newsletter Editor – Michaelis Palaikostatas nominated (KR, JW)

Website Administrator – MP has offered to do this as a committee position and has been nominated (KR/JW) and we have a volunteer, Sophie Crockett who would like to do it as a co-opted role.

Plot Officer Sopwell Mill- CN willing to stand again and nominated (JW, ED)

Plot Officer Cottonmill – HM has stepped forward for this and been nominated (KR/JW).

Plot Officer Nunnery 1- no nomination to date. Brian Gilson has been providing this function as a co-opted role but wishes to reduce his involvement for health reasons. He is willing to support anyone who steps forward for the role. The Committee is concerned about the lack of representation for Nunnery 1 and will contact plot holders via WhatsApp to see if anyone is willing to take this role.

Action JW

8.SUMMER SHOW PLANNING

The Cycle and Community Centre is booked for 23rd August, and the judge has been booked for this date. One of the outstanding issues is how to expand the prizes to allow those with a modest range of produce to enter with the expectation that excellence will be rewarded. MM/JW/CN discussed this and CN put down some proposals in an email that was circulated to the Committee before the meeting. The Committee also looked at some points made by Alison Shipperlee after the Show last year.

The discussion that followed was lively and summarized here. **Action**-CN to develop process further

- CN asked for approval for a reasonable budget to ensure that the prizes would be worth having and EH immediately approved this as he is concerned how much surplus we are carrying forward.

- Ed also suggested that for this year, to encourage entries from a greater range of members, that there would be no entrance fee. This was endorsed by the Committee.
- The idea of these prizes being termed 'CNAA' awards was generally accepted although the criteria were debated. ED advocated a light touch discretionary approach to provide maximum flexibility whilst KR still would like to reflect the classes of produce i.e. root veg, legumes, brassicas, fruit. This would be aiming for 4 prizes rather than 3 as CN proposed and the Committee thought they should all be of equal value.
- How these awards would be selected has proved problematic previously but if one/two members from the Committee who do not enter produce were to go around after the judging to find those cards with first, or maybe second stamped on them that don't belong to the overall Show winner and runners-up then this would indicate that the judge deemed that plate worthy on merit. Clare Dale said that this happened to her last year, she won 1st for her French beans. JW wondered if the value of the overall show winner/runners-up might be increased but this was not discussed, to be considered.
- We mustn't forget the Newcomer prize and children's prize.
- There was a huge appetite for reintroducing some fun categories e.g. rudest veg, longest weed, most exotic veg or fruit, with just rosettes as prizes.
- We looked at the suggestions made by Alison and thought they made good points. We perhaps need to be much more explicit on posters, what the Show is about and what it entails for those new to the world of showing produce. We need to clearly promote CNAA prizes. She queried the raffle, we had great prizes but the tickets were cheap – so why were we running it. Something to think about, raffle or no raffle as it does entail quite a bit of work.

AOB

MH said that there is to be another JAM meeting soon which is planned to be held on the Cottonmill site, although the practicalities if the weather is bad need consideration. She cannot attend and is flagging that someone else may need to attend to represent CNAA.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING TBA

Action Summary

Affinity Water information	Arrange for the Affinity Water Engineer, Ilias Karapanos, to do presentation to a wider audience	KR	On-hold
Minutes of March meeting	Place on website	JW/LW	
Scarecrow competition	Include on agenda for 2026	JW	
Website hosting	Set up direct debit when new web administrator identified	ED	
Bees on site	When on Cottonmill draft notification to insurer	JW/ED/MJ	
Compost	Aylett's contacted and Terry Beckett asked to start the process .	JW	
	Site maps to be updated	Plot officers/JW	
Membership list	Send out reminder that fees due and update the email list	CD/JW	
Site inspections	Arrange date for N2	MJ	
AGM	Circulate accounts to members. Re-advertise vacancies via WhatsApp	JW	
Summer Show	CNAA prize process to be set out and promotional material developed in line with item 8.	CN	