COTTONMILL AND NUNNERY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Committee Meeting on

Wednesday 24th June 2026

Held at The White Lion, Sopwell Lane, St Albans.

PRESENT:

Keith Reynolds (Chairman)

Janet Wyatt (Secretary)

Clare Dale (Membership Secretary).

Clare Norman (Sopwell Mill Plot Officer)

Helen Miller (Assistant Plot Officer, Cottonmill)

Martin McCall (Nunnery 1 Plot Officer)

Michelle Mackenzie (Facebook Administrator)

Michalis Palaiokostas (Newsletter Editor and Website Manager)

APOLOGIES

Ed Haworth (Treasurer)

Mark Jones (Nunnery 2 Plot Officer)

1. **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**
   KR thanked everyone for coming out on a very hot evening and welcomed Michalis Palaiokostas and Martin McCall to the Committee.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting on 30th April 2026 were agreed. These will now be placed on the website. **Action-JW/MP**

3. **ACTION UPDATE and MATTERS ARISING**

Bees on site –Having sent the notification to the insurance broker, EH was notified that there would be no additional cost for the CNAA insurance as we were not requesting additional cover but that there was a £25 administration charge. EH objected strongly to this and it has now been notified that this charge has been waived (post meeting update).

Compost-. Prepare accurate plot maps for the sites to enable delivery by Aylett's. JW will send the maps that Terry Beckett has sent her to Plot Officers for checking. **Action** - Plot Officers/JW

AGM – Circulate minutes of the AGM to the Committee. **Action** JW

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

EH sent the end of March accounts to members prior to the meeting and updated the balance figure at 24th June to £6500 as money has been received for compost and some additional membership fees had been paid.

5. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

CD reported that membership is currently at 97 with one honorary member.

5. SITE REPORTS

Cottonmill

HM said that before leaving the position of Plot Office, Margaret Harris and HM had inspected the site and in their opinion 11 plots were in a sufficiently good state to be let and she would ask Phil Bruce-Green again to invite 6 applicants to come to look at them. HM explained that as she works full-time making arrangements for inspections during the week difficult and she was working with two other Assistant Plot Officers to try to cover this. It was suggested that we resume efforts to recruit a Plot Officer and that this could be included in the next Newsletter. **Action** JW/MP

Following a break-in where a number of sheds had items removed PB-G visited with a PCSO who identified the likely entry point as there is no fencing. PB-G-contacted KR to suggest that CNAA should put fencing in this area. The Committee resists this suggestion as it is clearly a responsibility for the Council. It was suggested that hedging plants can be obtained free of charge and this might be an option but no decision was made.

Nunnery 1

MMc reported that he had shown people around 3 vacant plots with PB-G and 2 had been let. KR thanked him for taking over as Plot Officer and remarked on his success in such a short time.

Nunnery 2

No report

Sopwell Mill

Eighteen are on the waiting list with one plot available which was offered to one applicant who turned down. Four Notice to Quit are due to be issued. Matt Fisher, a councillor, is keen on allotments and might be an ally in moving some things forward.

6.COMMUNICATIONS.

MP and Sophie Crockett, who is helping with the Website, have been waiting for a hand-over e mail from Louise Wiseman transferring the formal management of the Website to MP which is now taking place. MP is considering using the website to streamline membership fees. MP is planning on changing how the Newsletter is distributed to Members.

Facebook- MMac reported 112 followers. MP and MMac will work together to make sure the different communication routes stay in line. **Action** MP/MMac.

7.SUMMER SHOW PLANNING

- MMac has produced a poster and will work with CN to produce a more detailed one for use nearer the time. **Action**-MMac/CN
- There will be free entry this year the encourage entries and CN has been working on how prizes can be awarded to those who don't have full plots and maybe have limited produce to show.
- Following comments at the AGM, a decision was made to return to the former scoring system where the top 10 scores are taken to work out the overall winners.
- When the judge, J/P Carter considers the entries if he remarks on a particular entry of merit this will be noted on the entry card.
- Once the three main show winners are selected the CNAA team will then review those entries that received positive comments from J.P. with a view to identifying winners of CNAA awards/Judges special mention (these may not be the final name). These are likely to be for the broad classes such as 'beans', 'potatoes'.
- JP gave a talk at an AGM a couple of years ago and notes from his talk on guidelines for showing produce are available and will be publicized on the website/WhatsApp. Guidelines were published in a Newsletter after his talk. **Action** MP/Plot Officers.
- CN is suggesting prizes of wine or a non alcoholic alternative, she has rosettes and there are some younger children's prizes already in the Show box. It was suggested that prizes suitable for older children could be unusual/specialist seeds. Aylett's vouchers will be the main prizes again (?value).
- It was agreed that there should be a fun category, maybe rudest vegetables.
- Newcomer category should be for anyone who has NOT entered CNAA's Summer Show before.
- A Banksian medal is available from RHS which will be requested and no decision was made as to what it should be awarded for. **Action** ?
- Present of beers for Judge – **Action** -KR offered to get these.

- There will be a raffle with just 6 good prizes. Tickets will be £1. HM offered theatre tickets.
- MMac has agreed to be the judge's assistant.
- The Ryder Cup will not be available on the day for presentation as it is on display at the Museum and Art Gallery. We will take the opportunity to promote the presentation in January at Aylett's.
- CN wants volunteers to help both before and on the day – volunteers to be recruited from outside the Committee to encourage involvement that might lead to people getting involved in other activities. Action-JW email to , WhatsApp posts.
- CN will arrange another meeting specifically for final planning in late July. **Action** CN

AOB

CNAA has been contacted regarding plans to paint a mural on the SubAqua Club wall and organisers are concerned that there may be vandalism and asked if allotmenters on Cottonmill could report any active actions. We will make sure allotmenters are aware that any form of vandalism or antisocial behaviour should always be reported to police on 101. **Action**-Reminder on site WhatsApps and in the Newsletter. **Action** Plot Officers/MP.

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 April meeting	Place on website	JW/MP	
Scarecrow competition	Include on agenda for 2026	JW	
Website hosting	Set up direct debit when new web administrator identified	ED	
Compost	Site maps to be sent to Plot Officers for updating	Plot officers/JW	
AGM	Minutes to Committee	JW	
Cottonmill	Advertise for Plot Officer	JW/MP	
Summer Show	Produce posters	CN/MMac	
	Judges guidelines publicized	MP	
	Banksian medal	??	
	Recruit volunteers	All	
	Beers for Judge	KR	
	Arrange meeting for late July	CN	
Vandalism	Reminder that reporting anything observed should be to the police on 101	MP/Plot Officers on WhatsApp	