

Minutes of TGAA Committee Meeting
Held: 2pm on 29 September 2025
At: 23 Chalfont Road, OX2

Present: Tony Hollander (Chairman), Neil MacLennan, (Vice Chairman), Julie Brannan (Secretary), Bob Crabtree (Treasurer), Michael Wheale (bonfires and compost), Robin Nicholas (water)

Apologies: Richard Gordon, Dorothea Maraki, Andrew Van Hamel Parsons and Karen Walker

1. TH welcomed the committee members. Noting the number of absences, it was agreed that in future the secretary would send out an additional reminder of committee meetings.

Matters arising

2. The minutes of the last meeting were signed. There were no matters arising.

OCC template lease

3. The committee considered the terms of the proposed lease. It was noted that the document is simply a template and that individual negotiations to agree a specific lease based on the template will be held with each allotment organization.
4. The committee also noted that the question of whether we would incorporate or become a co-operative was independent of the proposed lease: OCC could contract with us on the basis of us being an unincorporated organization. The committee considered whether it would be advantageous to us to incorporate: there were advantages in terms of limiting the liability of individual members (although there were protections in the lease) but possible disadvantages in terms of additional administration. It was therefore decided to maintain our current status.
5. The committee was generally content with the terms of the proposed lease template, although it noted the administrative burden of needing to issue fresh sub-leases to all plot holders. It noted that the termination provisions were simply a reflection of the statutory position and that, overall, the new lease was not intended to make substantive changes to the current position. The committee welcomed the proposal to make the documents available electronically. However this meant that we would need to establish an electronic repository for allotment documents.

6. RN raised the question of the indemnity to OCC contained in the lease template. The request for clarification in the questions and answers circulated by OCC had not provided any further information.
7. It was therefore decided that we should write to ODFAA to ask whether they can provide clarification and pending their reply to write to OCC with our agreement to the proposed lease template, subject only to satisfactory clarification on this point.

ACTION: JB to write to ODFAA and OCC

Finance

8. The Association currently has £20,000 in the Bank. Our financial position remains stable. The annual OCC rent is now being regularly paid, as it should.

Plot allocation

9. The waiting list remains short, with only two people on it. The demand for allotments which increased during the pandemic seems to have declined.

Pest control

10. The apple trees have recovered well from the recent outbreak of the Apple Ermine moth. Richard Gordon was due to investigate cost and feasibility of buying pheromone traps to hang in the trees. The committee would still like to hear back about this as next year may see an even worse outbreak.
11. Badgers seem to have eaten through the wire barrier recently installed at the Burgess Mead side of the allotments. There is little we can do about badgers – they are a protected species.
12. The Japanese knot weed seems to have gone because weedkiller has been used. So no further action is required here.

ACTION: Richard Gordon to report back to the next committee meeting on the cost and feasibility of buying pheromone traps to hang in the trees.

Machinery

13. The machinery is all working well. The carburetor leak on the sit-on mower has been fixed. The switch for the cutters has been replaced.
14. Medhams, who have been providing the repairing service for our machinery, are closing down. So we will need to find an alternative supplier. The committee wondered whether Aladdin Oxford Ltd on Hayfield Road might be willing.

ACTION: Andrew Van Hamel Parsons to source an alternative machinery repair service.

Bonfires and compost

15. Bonfires over the summer were held on 19/05/25, 25/06/25, 18/07/25 and 08/09/25. The fires were managed well on the whole with little complaint about smoke.
16. Compost bins were cleared and turned on 08/06/25 and 25/06/25. However, the long dry spell has meant the compost has become very dry. So all the contents from the end bin were moved onto a nearby low-lying plot which has suffered from regular flooding and is unoccupied. This allowed inspection of the timbers which have been rotting. On advice from David Haynes, we will bring forward about 600mm the end bin (the worst) and add two telegraph poles at the front. The sides could then be renewed as necessary. This will allow periodic clearing of the compost behind the back of this bin. This plan should give us a useful few years more at modest cost.

ACTION: Michael Wheale

Trees

12. NM has drafted some rules designed to clarify to plotholders what was and wasn't permitted. There was some discussion about the wording, as some of the rules required the exercise of discretion. It was agreed that JB would have a go at re-drafting with a view to seeing whether specific and enforceable rules could be written. She would circulate the draft round NM and TH and then on to the committee.

ACTION: Julie Brannan

Shop

13. The shop is running smoothly. September has been a quiet month, with no reported problems, and the shop remains well stocked.

Water

14. RN will set up a working party to cut down the growth which threatens to obscure the solar panels and also makes the panels hard to access. Robin will also look at the pipes on the western path to see if any need burying. The committee expressed their appreciation of the system which had been vital during the long hot summer.

ACTION: Robin Nicholas

Larder

15. Nothing substantial to report from Mary Gurr, who continues to administer the scheme. The larder remains very appreciative of our donations. JB will send out a reminder of Mary's email address to ploholders who might wish to volunteer to collect and transport donations to the larder. The reminder will also ask people to leave their contributions in some sort of container. JB will email Mary to ask her to return containers to the allotment c

Harvest supper

16. Committee members approved the invitation email, subject to a minor addition about labelling food content, for those with allergies. JB will send out the email, and will check that Jonathan Clark will again host the photo competition.

AOB

17. **The committee noted that after nearly 40 years, TH had decided to stand down as chair at the next AGM. It was agreed that he would announce this at the Harvest Supper and then send out a message to all plot holders so that interested parties had sufficient time to consider whether or not to stand for election at the AGM**

Future Dates

- **Harvest Supper November 15th 2025 - SMI is booked**
- **AGM: 24 March 2026 – SMI is booked**

Next Committee Meeting

- **11am on Monday, 17 February 2026**

The meeting ended at 3.45pm.