

Minutes of the Allotment Committee of Hanslope Parish Council, held on 14th
April 2025, 2pm
at the Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Hanslope.

Present:

P Cook (Chairman)
I Laurie

Cllr R Simpkins
F Scott

Clerk: G Merry

0 Members of Public

25.09 Apologies for Absence: None. Cllr Pacheco will be taking a step back from the council and it was agreed that another Cllr should be asked to join this committee. The clerk will ask one of the new co-optees.

25.10 Declarations of Interest

Mrs Cook, Ms Scott and Mr Laurie declared an interest as allotment holders.

25.11 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on January 9th, 2024:

The minutes were PROPOSED by Mrs Cook SECONDED by Cllr Simpkins and AGREED

25.12 Public Time: No items

25.13 Admin:

- i **Payment and budget situation:** The clerk advised that the new budget year has started at £4350 with £549 c/f from last year. There is £3129 in the deposits account, although it was agreed that approx. £2500 is held in returnable deposits and cannot be spent. Recently relinquished plot 68B is in good condition and the deposit can be returned.
- ii **Vacancies/waiting list:** Cllr Simpkins advised there were 2 vacant plots. However, the clerk advised that there were 4 evicted tenants in January, making a total of 6 vacant plots. The clerk has posted this on social media.
- iii **Risks and Risk Assessment:** The clerk circulated the last version of the R.A. dated January 2024. Mr Laurie suggested amending the 'vehicles' section, to "only driven on site to make deliveries", and to stipulate driving on site must be strictly a maximum of 5mph and only for delivering. It was agreed copies of the updated R.A. would go on the noticeboards to encourage safer practice from all on site. The clerk will provide a single-sided, larger copy. Remove the section in 'Further Action', as the signage had been installed and amend contact details – also to be placed on the noticeboards. Mr Laurie confirmed there is an accident book on-site but this cannot be monitored. Plot 75 was discussed and it was agreed the pond is still not safe.
- iv **Progress on CAD and new numbering:** Mr Laurie confirmed this was complete and he had implemented the new numbering. He will supply Cllr Simpkins with a revised spreadsheet and the clerk will need to word invoices carefully, if there is an increased rent due to plot resizing. The posts are being repainted with the new numbering.

25.14 Maintenance:

- i. **Condition of site and vacant plots:** 68B and 72B have been tided and are ready. Most tenants had been to the site since it re-opened and 30 new wooden posts had been delivered and are being installed.
- ii. **Tree Management:** Mrs Cook advised the large willow in the communal area needs some attention and a branch is down & fallen onto the hedge just outside the site. The clerk will

obtain a quote from the contractor. Cllr Simpkins advised that the parish council is seeking to engage an arboricultural assessor, who is insured to assess risk. The allotment site will be included in the scope for this. The '4 fruit trees per plot' rule was discussed. It was agreed no retrospective action could be taken if trees have been removed. It was agreed the rule would be amended to state 'no trees other than the 4 fruit trees to be planted on site i.e. no native trees pine trees etc'. New tenants will be asked not to cut down existing fruit trees and the wording of 8.15 will be changed to "No more than four fruit trees may be grown on any one plot and such trees should be grown as dwarf or half-standard only. No other trees should be planted on the plot". This would apply from next year's rules/invoices.

- iii. **Update on machine servicing:** Mr Laurie had arranged for Ace Machines to collect and service the faulty rotavator and cultivator. These would be around £150-170 to repair and this was agreed. He will source a video on how to use the cultivator and any hirers from now on, will be required to watch this, to reduce incorrect use. Cllr Simpkins advised that the Bucks Best Kept Village volunteer group will be doing a clean-up at the churchyard on 17/5/25, and it was agreed that if an allotment holder books out a mower/strimmer, this can be used at the churchyard.
- iv. **S106 Project – back fence:** This had not yet been started but now it was drier at the site, could be started imminently.
- v. **Increasing water points and quotes for new taps:** Cllr Simpkins had not yet been able to organise the re-quote or the survey and will get onto these now.
- vi. **Any other maintenance issues:** It was agreed a skip would be needed again for July 18th and the clerk will arrange this.

25.07: Plot Inspections/issues:

- i **Updates from plot inspections:** Plot 75 has had a large area weed killed and this has spread outside of the plot. Additionally, there were several pallets at the plot, in addition to those spread over the pond and there was concern as to what these were for. The instruction to fence the pond and cover it in mesh had not been implemented and these matters were discussed. It was agreed to invite the tenant to a meeting with the committee on site, to discuss the above and failure to attend, will result in eviction. The letter will be sent by recorded delivery.
- ii **Overgrown and problem plots:** Plot 47 was not being well kept and will be monitored. Plot 68 and 68B need levelling and Cllr Simpkins will ask Mr Grey to do these. It was agreed that one or both of these plots may be developed into a turning circle and this will be considered once they are both levelled. The committee will carry out inspections W/C 7/5/25 and this will be published on the tenant's WhatsApp group.

25.08 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday June 5th 2025

Signed Date