

Minutes of EWAA Committee Meeting

13th November 2025

1. **Apologies:** Jon Willis, Janita Good, Harriet Akkouche
Present: Mo Leen, Vicky Bell, Amy Douglas, Lydia Wainwright, Michael Harloe, Michael McNaboe, George Liddell.
2. **Approval of minutes of last meeting, 11th September 2025**
Approved.
3. **Matters Arising**

Chris was supposed to send the software to George M.

Action point: Jon Willis pursuing public liability doc from children's allotment.

Action point: Claire contracted to clear plots and tidy up car park.
Both these points to be carried over to the next meeting.

The committee had looked at the memorandum and articles document and sent it to Janita, Janita replied. Somewhere in the ether. Talk more about this on point 5.

Rent rise done.

A member wilfully regularly leaves the shop lane gate open (it is a nuisance to close). **Action point:** Lydia W to speak to them with George L. Lydia to speak to George M for name.

4. Co-option/Resignation of Officers/Members

One resignation: Bridget Wheatley.

Co-option: George Liddell as Deputy Chair. Amy Douglas proposed, Michael McNaboe seconded it. Carried.

Co-option: Vicky Bell (member, shop rep) as member of committee. GL proposed, LW seconded. Carried.

Co-option: Michael Harloe as committee member, GL proposes, MM seconds. Carried.

5. Memorandum and Articles of new Constitution

To be dealt with as a subgroup rather than committee: MH and GL volunteer as part of a subgroup with Janita.

We have no timeline on when the council will get in touch about a new lease. Good to get this incorporation done first.

Timeline: subgroup meeting, committee, then extraordinary general meeting. Must make sure the memorandum has been open for amendments, then proxy votes and nomination of directors before EGM.

Action point: MH suggests we do a draft before the next committee in January. MH to email Janita.

Action point: Amy to add MH to the committee mailing list.

Discussion of the job role of being a director of a company of limited liability - not too onerous. ML pointed out we don't know who would be keen to be directors... We need more info on what the job involves.

6. OCC Lease update.

GL: a well-represented meeting at the Town Hall Council Chambers. Chair wanted to create a non-binding template that all the allotment associations could move forward with. Went to a vote, done. A template is being created. Council will then meet with each association to tailor the template to each allotment site.

We now need to figure out what our specific needs will be, e.g. no one knows who is responsible for the Howard Street end car park (it is definitely not ours). If we can make it our responsibility we can remove the abandoned car. It used to be custom to lock the gate, no reason why this stopped. The bungalow has no rights of access using this Howard Street car park but they are cooperative i.e. will lock the gate. ML was told that if we got the car park we would have to pay business rates - would need to confirm this. No one knows who put the external gate up. The lease needs to clear this one up.

Trees along the footpath along the back of the allotments - a couple of weeks/months ago someone (someone contracted from the council) came to do a tree survey (**Action point:** LW to ask GM who let him in and and Dan Thorpe who spoke to him to see if we can get a copy of the survey) - a plotholder got the impression that there was more to it than tree surveys.

ODFAA have asked how many vacant plots have we got?

Lease will be 25 years.

Originally council meeting wanted a paper-based system, now going forward with an electronic system. Chris will be handing over the software to LW soon. Oxford City Council want membership list. Never previously shared membership list with council. Clause in lease regarding individual plotholders, now creates a relationship with

council and individual plot holders - ML unsure on the implications of this. Can Jane/Janita explain? Can council be challenged on this? Any data-protection issues with this? **Action point:** Please can GL and MH ask Janita about the legal relationship between the council and plot holders?

7. ODS Works

Chris before he left the committee organised ODS to do a quote to do works regarding water pipes, knackered baths etc. Quote totals £2200 inc VAT for everything - except whole new run for shop lane £1745 +VAT. Offer Chris the opportunity to carry it on if he is amenable. Otherwise we will need someone to have another word with ODS to clarify and lead on this job. Total £4500 - is the committee happy with this? VB: yes but we need to check on that £1745 - seems steep.

Action point: ML to contact Chris to see if he wants to lead, if not then ask Dan if he wants to take over.

8. Treasurer's Report

Jon sent it: taken as read.

9. Membership Report –Plot 131a

Since the last Committee meeting 8 people on the waiting list have been invited to a series of allocation meetings and we have welcomed 3 new allotmenters.

The waiting list now stands at 32 with the oldest name on the list being June 2025. We have 7 vacant plots that are in medium condition totalling 20 poles. There are a further 7 plots totalling 35

poles that have been abandoned and are now very overgrown and vacant for over a year.

MH suggests a period of rent relief for taking on an overgrown plot. ML and GL say there is precedent for this.

Proposal- Refundable deposit idea - what does the committee think of charging new plot holders a deposit of £50 to pay towards getting plots into a rentable state? Fully refundable if the plot is left in a suitable state. JW. <- MH points out the last bit is a real hassle to administer - who decides what a suitable state? E.g. before and after photos? Could get tricky.

In London new ploholders are asked whether they want to clear it or whether they pay the council £100.

VB suggests the London option works.

LW: Goodgym? VB but then someone has to organise it.

MH: suggests a combination of rent relief and the option to clear it themselves or pay.

LW: When we decide can we post this on the website?

Let's defer this until Jon is back.

MH suggests membership sec LW report maybe highlighting some successes e.g. plot of the month!

10. Shop Report

VB: 1. I'm part way through handover of Shop duties with Jane.

2. Just finishing the potato order with ISF. Same number and selection as last year, except Swift has been replaced with Casablanca due to poor harvests. Should come to £379.50 and will be delivered in February. I will need help with deliveries next year as I work 4 days a week and can't always be available for calls/deliveries.

3. Just 3 more EWAA Shop openings before the winter closure!

4. Jane ran a Zettle sales report for me this week: Shop earnings from 1 September to 11 November (10 Sundays) were £978.19 before vat, £1174.11 with vat. Seems to be roughly £100/ week sales.

5. I agreed with Jane that I'd run the shop on a temporary basis for 6 months, up until March 2026. This should give the committee time to identify a longer term Shop officer for the summer period onwards.

6. I'm also looking into obtaining a shop officer laptop with Microsoft office (£50) to help manage the paperwork. Doing everything on an android tablet is challenging, though not impossible!

We need to find a shop person for six months' time. Suggestion of a transferable laptop?

Action point: VB to contact Jon Willis re contents insurance.

Committee to help VB with finding a person to take over.

Main thing is finding someone who is ok with excel etc. Can the job be divided into smaller specific roles e.g. stock, volunteers? VB will suggest something once she's got her head around it.

11. AOB

GL: wants to find the prizes and cups sent to Oxford Museum. They're looking through their inventories. Let's celebrate some things all together as an allotment! Get youngsters involved. Bring food. Celebrating different cultures and foods. Lots of fun dates in the horticultural calendar! Chris and Stewart might know.

Reminder from Amy to let them know if we need anything added to website. Thank you Amy!

Publicity: should we share our presence elsewhere? E.g. Flo Pa newsletter? LW to design some ads.

12. Date of next meeting

8th January 2026. Bring woolies and hot water bottles.