



**Humber Avenue Community Allotments Community Interest Company
Committee Meeting
Monday 16th March 2026 at 6.30pm
HACA Social Hub**

Present:

Terry Smith (TS) Chair
Christine Busfield (CB)
Malcolm Hedger (MH)
Emma Wood (EW)
Anne Garbutt (AG)
Ros Knight (RK)
Andrew Scoon (AS)
Linda Head (LH)
Ian Hamilton (IH)

Apologies:

Peter Davey (PD)



MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies

TS welcomed the committee to the meeting and apologies were noted as above. TS welcomed EW back as Deputy Chair.

2. Minutes from the last meeting

The minutes from the last meetings in November and January were approved as accurate.

3. Matters arising from the last meetings not covered by the agenda

TS informed the committee that, since the last meeting, the accessible ramp and water butts had been installed. A tool grinding service was now available to tenants.

AG reported she was working on social activities for the coming year and suggested a seed swap event at weekends and a talk on biodiversity.

TS reported that bookcases had just been installed in the social hub, a pond had now been installed on his plot and there were two organisations interested in taking on accessible plots.

He informed the committee that he had approached WAGA regarding whether it was still necessary to have the WAGA white cards signed, as tenants now had automatic membership when they took on a plot and he was waiting to hear back.

TS reported that CB and PD were in the process of changing signatories for cheques with the bank.

EW reported that plot inspections had now started. She noted a number of plots without numbers, which made the inspections more difficult and time consuming, and noted that some plots required tidying with areas around the kerbs requiring attention, some overhanging hedges and unfenced ponds. However, the recent wet weather was acknowledged and the committee agreed that the March plot inspections would serve as a benchmark and if there was no further signs were of activity on the plots noted in March in needing work then the tenants will be contacted following the April plot inspections. Tenants will be reminded about plot inspections on Facebook and in the newsletter.

4. Reports

4.1 Treasurer's Report

PD had sent his apologies for the meeting and copies of his report were circulated to the committee. TS noted that PD had been cautious on his estimate for the water bill. LH noted that the cost of the defibrillator battery was £200 not £400. TS informed the



committee that HACA had received £800 from council funds which would be used for a shed for new plots. There were no questions regarding the Treasurer's report.

4.2 Membership Secretary's Report

CB reported that three people had applied for plots since the last meeting, bringing the total number of people on the waiting list to 99.

4.3 Company Secretary's Report

As noted earlier, no notices would be sent following the March plot inspections.

RK informed the committee that, at the advice of the council, the Unacceptable Behaviour policy had been removed.

5. Projects

MH reported that the ramp and water butts had been installed and thanked Paul Barnes for his help. The solar shed is due to be painted, water tanks checked and the generator serviced. He informed the committee that a 4 wheeled cart had been ordered to help those who struggled with the wheelbarrows; if this is successful then the committee will consider ordering more. The committee discussed the heavy door to the social room and polycarbonate alternative to glass will be considered. MH informed the committee that work on the new road started today and is due to take about a week.

6. Website and Facebook

EW reported one new Facebook member and one query on the website on how to apply for a plot. She reported 140 visits to the website this month, which is more than double the usual amount, with the home page getting the most hits, followed by the page for new plot holders then the page for applying for a plot. She informed the committee that she has added a WAGA page to the website so their events and information will be publicised.

TS congratulated EW on the look of the website and commented that it was still a challenge to get more people to join Facebook, and this was the best way to get urgent information to tenants.

7. Newsletter

RK informed the committee that there was now enough information to produce a newsletter for the start of the season and she will aim to get this out before Easter.

8. Health and Safety

LH reported she had done a site walkaround recently and there were no significant concerns. She informed the committee that she will get more plasters for the First Aid box. She reported global issues with the availability of batteries for defibrillators and had spoken to the British Heart Foundation about this, who advised her that there were ongoing



manufacturing issues. Therefore, at the beginning of April, the defibrillator will have to go out of commission as the life of the battery can no longer be guaranteed. She will put signage up and the ambulance service will be informed it is out of commission.

9. Environment and Biodiversity

AS reported that he has been working on the meadows in the corners of the site, with plans to seed the areas with pollinators in April/May. He reported that a pond is now installed on his plot. MH confirmed nothing is to go in the corner in the far right of the site. AS informed the committee that he is looking at organic seeds and will update on this via Facebook and the newsletter in due course. AS agreed to do a talk on biodiversity on site on a Sunday and he will sort out a date with AG. AS informed the committee that Joanne, who teaches Tai Chi, is willing to come back to do a session at Party on the Plot again this year but, due to reasons of insurance, she won't be able to teach regular sessions on site.

TS proposed that the plot vacated by Kim Bowen Wood is repurposed as a dung bay and wood chip bay, providing another area for tenants at that end of the site, with a view to also creating a wild flower area, and the committee agreed.

TS informed the committee that HACA had funds for a further community poly tunnel and the committee agreed this was a good idea.

AS was keen that available areas are repurposed for biodiversity and the committee felt that this had to be balanced with the large number of people waiting for plots.

10. AGM

The AGM will be held on 24th June 2026.

11. Constitutional Changes

TS informed the committee that HACA now has to submit quarterly tax returns as part of the new tax regime and there is a cost implication to this. He noted that the National Allotment Society have advised allotments to consider becoming co-operatives but he felt there was also a large cost implication to this and it may only be a short term fix. CB informed the committee that she is looking at software to help with this tax returns as HACA will need to submit returns digitally as of April next year. AS will share some software information with CB to look at suitability for HACA as well as pricing.

12. RHS Award

Following a discussion, the committee agreed to give the award to Plot 93, in recognition of the large amount of work achieved in a short timeframe.



13. New allotment plot updates

TS informed the committee that the site is currently flooded and the council will not take it over until the issues are resolved. He felt that it would be at least six months before the new plots were handed over.

14. Any Other Business

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 19.45.

15. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday 11th May.

The date of the AGM planning meetings is Monday 15th June.