

Allotment Advisory Group Meeting minutes

Purpose of meeting - To discuss progress and issues affecting the allotments.

Date - 14th July 2025 7pm

Venue - Via Zoom.

Attendees - Mark Burgess (MB),
- Caroline Underwood (CU),
- Pauline Butcher (PB),

Absent - None

Apologies - Debbie Leighton (DL)
- Peter Chungui (PC)

PREVIOUS OPEN ACTIONS FROM EARLIER MEETINGS

No	Minute	Action	Owner	Due date
A	Improving Accessibility to the allotments We are aware that while owing an allotment has significant physical and mental health benefits to everyone, some groups cannot participate in these activities due to accessibility issues. We are keen to ensure the allotments are open to all where practicable. We are therefore planning to add a raised bed area at the front of the allotments, behind the new polytunnel. The raised beds will form a U shape and will be constructed using wooden sleepers and raised to the height that a person in a wheelchair could access them. We also plan to put a pathed pathway and path the area in-between the beds so people in wheelchairs can move about unrestricted.	UPDATE FROM MEETING Project on hold pending outcome of lease agreement. We will engage with the care home and the Doctors Surgery in Buckden once the raised bed area has been established.	MB MB	On hold When ready
B	Freds plaque The original plaque that was put by the trees has gone missing and it was agreed that it should be replaced.	Replacement plaque has been delivered to the handymen to install yet has not yet been put in place. Caroline to follow this up with the Parish Clerk.	CU	Carry over to next Meeting
C	Allotment lease An update was provided on the recent letters received from Savills, acting as the Church Commissions agent, in the sale of the Silverstreet development site, which includes the access route into the allotments. As part of these discussions Savills has suggested the Buckden Parish Council (BPC) purchase the allotment site from the Church Commission for a sum of £16,000. The BPC are considering the proposal and entering negotiations with Savills.	An update will be provided later in the meeting	CU / MB	Next meeting

	An update on progress will be provided at the next meeting.			
D	½ plots vs Full plots A discussion took place covering the number of ½ plots available and whether we should create more. It was agreed that analysis is required on the current availability which should be included for discussion at the next meeting.	It was agreed that we would create two additional ½ plots by taking plot 12 and creating 12a and 12b with the current plot holder taking plot 12b and 12a being offered to someone on the waiting list. Mark to contact current plot holder and inform them of our decision.	MB	End August
E	Plot Holder Status An update on the condition of the plots was provided as part of the Plot Inspection Report. A request was made to include an indication on whether the plot holder lives in Buckden or outside Buckden. It was explained that this information is included in the Plot Holder spreadsheet which identifies who is on which plot. At the moment the split is 39 Buckden residents (81%) and 9 non-Buckden residents (9%), with one plot holder who's address is unknown.	There are three problem plots. Plot 10 has recently decided to give up the plot and is now in the process of clearing it. Plot 12 discuss with Plot Holder – see note above. Plot 18. The plot holder had indicated that they wanted to give the plot up. However, they have now decided to retain the plot and will have it back in a good growing condition for next year.	MB	End August
F	Chalk boards for polytunnel. Due to the popularity of the polytunnel there is concern that plot holders using the polytunnel could mix up their plants and this could cause disputes. To prevent this was suggested to purchase some small chalk boards (or something similar) that can be used so the plot holders can clearly identify who owns which pots. It was agreed that there was money in the budget for this.	Identify suitable marker boards and procure them or request an order be placed for them via the Parish Clerk.	PB	When required.
G	Continuing supply to Diamond Hampers. The group was made aware that Diamond Hampers have now obtained their own allotment plot in Huntingdon. There was concern that, once their plot is up and running, that their requirement for produce from the community plot may drop off. Future of the Community Plot It was agreed that while the community plot has been an excellent success it has required considerable effort from Pauline (and Tony) to keep it going and in good order. This was never the intention as, when the idea was first floated, it was expected that a team of volunteers from the allotment and the Buckden residents would support this initiative, however this has not transpired. Based on the outcome of the item above, if Diamond Hampers feel their requirements can be supported from their own plots we will need to have a discussion re the future of the Community Plot and decide whether	Contact Diamond Hampers and understand what their future intentions are. Based on the above response, discuss the future of the Community Plot.	DL ALL	Next Meeting Next Meeting

	to downsize to ½ a plot or give it up completely.			
H	Allotment Notice Board. The notice board at the entrance to the allotments is out of date and needs updating.	Review notice board and remove out of date literature and replace where necessary.	MB	Next Meeting

NEW ACTIONS FROM 14th July 2025 MEETING

No	Minute	Action	Owner	Due date
1	New Pest Controller. Having completed a value for money review it has been decided to move from HFE over to the HDC for pest control. Before the end of the termination period, we need to identify who owns the Bait Boxes.	Contact Ramune and see if we paid for the Bait Boxes	MB	Next Meeting
2	Future of the Community Plot Now that we have been successfully running the Community Plot for 2 years, we feel it is time to take stock and decide if this is something we want to continue with.	When we decided to start the Community Plot, we had a vision that this would be supported by a team of volunteers, and it was made clear that the Community Plot should never become a burden on any one person or on the Advisory Group. We hoped that we would have had a wider engagement. We have had some success with a small additional group of volunteers, but it has tended to fall to one person to keep the plot going. This was never the plan, and we need to take a step back and decide if the current arrangements is sustainable and what can we do to level the burden.	All	Next Meeting
3	Overflowing into neighbouring plots There is concern that Plot 5 is spilling out into neighbouring plots and pathways. We need to contact the Plot Holder and remind them that they must remain within their own plot.	Mark to speak with Plot Holder	MB	Next Meeting
4	Next Meeting Many of the members on the Advisory Group cannot make the August meeting and it was agreed that we would skip this meeting. Therefore, the next meeting will be on 1 st September in the Polytunnel.	The September meeting will start at 10am for a Plot Inspection and the 11am for the Advisory Group Meeting. An agenda item for the meeting will be a discussion for our 2026 / 2027 Operating Plan so please give some thought to what you feel we should look to achieve in the coming year.	All	September Meeting

Date of Next Meeting – 1st September 2025 at 11am in the Polytunnel.