

**BROOKFIELD ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026**

11TH OCTOBER 2026

Attending: Adrian Harrison (Chairman), Dave Hawkins (Treasurer), Alastair Thomas (Secretary), Margaret Almond (Committee member), Orla Flood (Committee member), Sue Bowell (Committee member), Chris Ludlow (Committee member), Tony Grundy (Plots 22B & 34B), Gill Harrison (Plot 24B), Chris Hawkins (Plots 13 & 14A), Suzanne Wildebore (Plot 15), Julia Butcher (Plots 10A & 30), Gillian & John Roberts (Plots 1 & 33), Helen Middup (Plot 44), Martin Rabenau (Plot 18 & 24A), Nicole Heredge (Plot 8), Claire Rees-Sunak (Plot 27A), Gemma Wilson & Andy Robson (Plot 48).

1. Welcome and Apologies: The Chairman welcomed everyone, and noted apologies from: Peter Rowe (Membership & Plot Lettings Secretary) Vanessa Tenn (Plots 22B & 34B), Patricia Wisefield (Plot 29), Jayne Merton and Orville Rowe (Plot 40), Roy Rogers (Plot 43), Alex and Angeiszka Lorenzetti (Plot 16), Maria Oestropolski (Plot 21B),

2. Matters arising from Minutes of AGM 2025: The minutes were agreed with no matters arising.

3. Treasurer's Report: Dave circulated a summary of the accounts for the year ending 30 September 2026. These showed total Expenditure of £3754.78 and total Income of £3762.33, with an excess of Income over Expenditure of £7.55. Fundraising from the Arts Trial and Barbeque had raised a total of £263.60 after expenses. In addition, a National Lottery Community Fund grant of £6280 was received, of which £3630.62 remained in the current account. Total Financial Assets were reported as £11,147.50.

Rents due for 2026/27 have been paid, with the exception of three plotsholders who risk losing their lease if not paid by 31 October. After the increase in 2025/26, the Committee had agreed rents would remain the same for the year ahead.

Trading hut income and profit were up compared with last year; there are annual variations in these figures in which there is no clear pattern. The efforts of Chris Hawkins and the rest of the trading hut volunteers were greatly appreciated. We were billed for actual water use in December, with a further charge in July based upon an estimate of usage. Our water use is volatile, so annual expenditure is

variable regardless of consumption (and we did have a hosepipe ban as a result of summer heatwaves).

The Committee had agreed to keep a ringfence on one seventh of rent income to help fund the dismantling, removal and refurbishment of the old trading hut. This decision will be revisited by the Committee as the SMT develops a plan for the old trading hut, which LBWF agreed must be demolished in the next couple of years.

There was a suggestion that we seek a higher rate of interest for our savings account. Dave explained the trade off between interest rates and access periods, and that the range of savings accounts available to not for profit community organisations is much more limited than those for personal savers.

4. Secretary's Report: Alastair presented a report which gave a summary of activity and developments on the allotment site since the last AGM. It covered governance, information sharing, membership and plot lettings, site maintenance, fundraising and events.

There were questions about progress in taking down the Old Trading Hut. Alastair explained that LBWF has asked that this be done over the next couple of years, and that some initial work has been done by the Site Management Team (SMT) to clear its contents and assess options for demolition. Ringfenced funds were used to pay for a skip to dispose of the contents. Depending upon the condition of the concrete foundations, options for future use include a new space for social gatherings with a safety rail and pergola, and storage of equipment within a smaller shed. Plotholders will be kept abreast of developments, and given the opportunity to salvage timber from the building wherever possible.

5. Election of Officers: The Chairman reported that three members of the Committee had decided to stand down, namely Sue Bowell, Linda Bondy and Christine Ludlow. An invitation was sent on 14th September to all plotholders to consider standing for the Committee or to become part of the SMT. No responses have been received. There were six members of the Committee who wished to continue serving as follows:

Chairman	Adrian Harrison
Treasurer	Dave Hawkins
Secretary	Alastair Thomas

Membership & Plot lettings	Peter Rowe
Social & Fundraising	Margeret Almond & Orla Flood

Martin Rabenau moved a motion of thanks for the three outgoing Committee members, and a further motion which proposed these six people form the Committee for the coming year. Both these motions were approved unanimously.

A further motion was moved that the current SMT members (Adrian Harrison; Orville Rowe; Peter Rowe, and; Alastair Thomas) continue to serve for the coming year. This motion was also approved, with a reminder that anyone can put themselves forward to join the SMT at any time.

6. Allotment Rules & Regulations - annual review: The Chairman explained that our rules and regulations are subject to annual review. The rules and regulations are sent to all plotholders with their rent renewal notice, and must be accepted as a condition of renewal. The Committee is required to review the site rules after the AGM and consider any suggestions for change.

There were suggestions for firmer enforcement of standards following plot inspections, along with an acknowledgment of the need to take a compassionate approach where appropriate. These will be considered by the Committee.

In addition, the introduction of equipment and tool sharing arrangements was put forward. Rather than address this in the rules and regulations, it was suggested that any equipment or tools sharing be done informally through the WhatsApp group.

7. Wilder About Highams Park project: Margaret reported on progress since our success in securing a National Lottery Community Fund grant of £6280 in partnership with the Highams Park Planning Group and the Ching Action Group. The broad aim is to improve the local environment, including using felled timber from our site and its locality. The grant must be spent by 31 March 2028.

This funding has been used to commission five toadstool seats that have been installed in Brookfield Meadow, and three large sculptures which will be installed in the Highams Park and on Montalt Avenue. A bat monitor device has been purchased to support evening bat surveys, which have been well attended. A set of bat boxes has been commissioned from Age UK's Shed in the Chingford Hub, and The Shed will also be making at least one owl box to be installed on our site. Installations will involve working at height, so tree surgeons will be hired to do this

work safely and without any need to extend the Association's insurance cover.

The project had originally planned to use timber cut from the veteran oaks in our car park, but delays at LBWF and changes to their assessment of those trees meant none of this timber has become available to date. A further three carved benches have, however, been made recently for installation on our site. The timber from which they were carved was part of a large oak felled alongside Forest Glade. Following discussion led by Margaret, it was agreed the project should look to install one of these benches on the allotment side of the car park gate, and the other two as a pair in our community area where plot 7 was located. This installation work is to be done at the earliest opportunity.

A motion of thanks for Margaret's leadership of this project was approved.

8. Any Other Business - The following issues were raised:

There was a request for clarification of the position regarding bonfires on site. The Committee will consider this as part of its review of the rules and regulations.

There was a request for more skips to be hired to enable the safe disposal of unwanted metal, plastic and wood from the site. Skip hire does incur costs, but as we are a not for profit organisation with sound finances the SMT will look to provide at least one skip for plotholder use in the coming year.

There was a query about the future of the pond. Due to the weather, water levels in the pond have remained very low this year and this has hindered its renovation. We believe that we are permitted to fill the pond from the Ching, yet that assumes there is sufficient flow of water in the river to do so. The SMT is seeking advice about pond maintenance from the Waltham Forest Food Growers Network project based at OrganicLea.

To follow up on plotholder interest in training and advice sessions, the Committee is also in discussion with the Waltham Forest Food Growers Network Coordinator about the potential to run some events on site in the coming year.

[ENDS]