



## **TAMWORTH FARM ALLOTMENT SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 7.00pm, 10 November 2025**

Attendees: Phil Smith (PS), Steffi Backhouse (SB), Elisabetta Costantini (EC), Julie Mallett (JM), Anthony Redpath (AR), Jo Rodgers (JR), Rob Rudfelt (RR), Craig Sisterson (CS), Bev Stansfield (BS), Kathleen Stevens (KS) and Katy Willison (KW)

### **Apologies and Welcome**

1. No apologies.
2. Phil Smith welcomed all to the meeting. He expressed his honour to be elected as President and offered a particular welcome to Craig and Kathleen as new members.

### **Minutes and Actions**

3. Minutes from October meeting were agreed. Steffi noted the actions

### **Distribution of Committee roles**

4. At the AGM on 9 November, Phil Smith was elected as President and SB, EC, JM, AR, JR, RR, CS, BS, KS and KW were all elected as Committee members without specific roles assigned. Further to this and a discussion as to what roles were needed, it was agreed:  
  
SB to be Chair  
RR to be Treasurer assisted by SB and KW  
RR to be Site Manager  
CS to be Secretary  
JM to be Lettings Secretary  
AR/ KW to be joint Membership Secretary and  
BS to be Rose Avenue site rep  
EC/ JR and KS to be Farm site reps  
CS to be Horseshoe site rep
5. There was a discussion about potential new roles. In the past, we have had a Comms Secretary and an Events Secretary. For the last couple of years, no one has stepped into these roles. After a short discussion, we agreed that significant additional social media is not necessary as we are not seeking to promote the site or attract new members, but that it would be helpful to try and get our Instagram account back up and running. **Action: JR and KS to work on Instagram account**
6. We agreed that we use WhatsApp and emails effectively to communicate simple events and activities to plot holders. We would benefit from a more overarching approach to Comms, for example, thinking strategically about how we communicate messages to members about major issues, such as water use or composting. We agreed that, rather than have a dedicated officer, instead, when we discuss new projects or approaches, we would develop a dedicated communication strategy. JR and KS would take the lead on this together.

## TFAS priorities 2025/26

7. AR presented a paper setting out proposals for priorities for the year ahead. He explained that the Committee had in the past chosen to focus on a small number of areas which it had the expertise and capacity to deliver. This was a deliberate strategy to avoid over promising and under delivering, and to avoid placing undue pressure on a small number of Committee members.
8. He focused on last year's priorities and noted that some of these were ongoing and should probably continue for the year ahead, for example, improving security through the planting of spiky hedges and rigorous crime reporting; ensuring that water is used wisely on site and encouraging composting on site. He invited the Committee to take stock and consider whether the existing priorities are important and should be continued, and also to decide whether there are any new priorities for the year ahead.
9. There was a discussion as to whether we should invest in CCTV cameras to improve **security**. To date, we know a fair number of plot holders have cameras on their plots. So far, none have produced any evidence that is useable in terms of identifying perpetrators, but they may have a deterrent effect. We should seek to foster a deeper sense of community and encourage plot holders to get to know their neighbours and look out for each other. There has been a major improvement in security this year from the fence heightening project and early indications are that the number of thefts and incursions have reduced over the last year. On that basis, it was agreed that we should take some time to monitor the position before making decisions on further investment and actions in this area.
10. **Water use** will continue to be a priority, at present the plans for a borehole are on hold because of the high risk and expense. We should continue to encourage all members to capture as much water as possible.
11. **Manure/ composting:** There was a discussion of whether the purchase of a chipper would support reduced green waste. It was noted that, if we got one, it would need to be a heavy duty one as cheaper ones break often. It would have to use petrol or diesel, and there would be questions about its sustainability. It was agreed that we should link such a decision to whether Merton stop collecting our green waste, we should not make the decision in advance. In the meantime, we should encourage members to compost as much as possible and use green waste to make natural habitats, supporting biodiversity. It would be helpful to know how much it would cost to have the full green waste bay removed. **Action: JR to provide information on possible costs.**
12. In terms of new priorities, there was a discussion around a number of **common areas of the site**, including the Horseshoe shed and kitchen area; sorting out the area under the trees at the cemetery end of Rose Avenue; tidying up the path next to the Southside of the Farm and trimming the wildlife hedges outside the Horseshoe and the Farm. It was agreed that there was a common theme here around ensuring that **the common areas of the whole site are in good shape, we are using them effectively and getting value from them.** We should also

ensure that our community days were linked to this priority and were focussed on these key areas.

13. It was agreed that **the plant sale** should also be a priority, as a major community event and a positive connection to the outside world. It is useful for people to kick off their growing season and a good revenue generator.
14. The Committee agreed the priorities above were the right ones, avoided over commitment, were achievable within the financial and manpower resources available to us and that the priorities should be communicated to plot holders in the monthly email. It was agreed to try and plan community days around targeted priorities. **Action: AR will produce a priorities document to capture what was agreed and think about milestones and planning**

#### AOB

15. KW let the Committee know that bank charges would be applied to the account from December 2025. She recommended that we do not move account, very few bank accounts now offered charity account (and those that do would also be likely to impose charges) s and the Metrobank account details were now well known to members and the services they offered were what we needed. The Committee agreed.

#### COMMUNICATIONS ACTION FOR NOVEMBER

To:	Format of communication:	Topic/Issue:	Action:	By:
All	Email	New Committee and priorities	KW	27 Nov
All	Whatsapp	Site reps to introduce themselves	BS CS JR, EC, KS	

#### ACTIONS IN NOVEMBER

Item	Action	Name	Target date/ Completed
2 June 2025	Investigate and historic use of land with Charity Commission	AR	July 2025
7 April	Look at the work needed to the Horseshoe shed, consider what would be a suitable replacement for the decked area and whether this should be done by volunteers or we should pay for professional help.	RR	Ongoing
6 May	Prepare a list of 15 minute jobs to do across the site to encourage plot holders to do communal activities.	JM/ SB	Ongoing

1 Sep	Consider purchase of emergency plumbing tools to assist ad hoc repairs	RR	31 Oct
10 Nov	Try and get Instagram account working	JR/ KS	31 Dec
10 Nov	Investigate costs of clearing green waste bay	JR	30 Nov
10 Nov	Produce a priorities plan	AR	30 Nov

### **Dates for the Diary 2025/26**

**(all on Monday unless otherwise stated)**

2 December 2025

5 January 2026

2 February 2026

2 March 2026

Tuesday 7 April 2026

Tuesday 5 May 2026

1 June 2026

6 July 2026

3 August 2026 (may not be needed)

7 September 2026

5 October 2026

AGM Sunday 1 November 2026 TBC

2 November 2026

7 December 2026