

Minutes of the AGM held at 18.30hrs on Thursday 15 October 2026 in the Garden Building.

Present: Karen Gilmour (Chair), Rebecca Chee (RC), Philippa Slatter (PS) representing the Allotments, Liz Cox (LC), Bruce White (BW), Jane White (JW), Frank Missler(FM), Serena Michell(SM), Carol Wright(CW), Brian Cox (BC), Annie Shaughnessy (AS), Howard Stearn (HS), Michael Phillips (MP), James Hems (JH).

Apologies: Susanna Colaco (SC), Carol Holloway (CH).

1. KG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. The minutes of the last AGM held on 16 October 2025 were agreed and there were no matters arising.

3. Annual Report: CW presented the Annual Report, which is attached to these minutes. She reviewed our activities during the year and future activities – the hedging and the bog garden. Vistry has still not handed over the Garden to the City Council, although there are rumours that it will be soon. The issue of a food bin for the Food Trucks was raised and PS kindly offered to donate hers as she will not need it. BW agreed to talk to the waste disposal group about waste collections. It was noted, with gratitude, that the regular volunteers had been essential in keeping the plants alive during the challenging summer conditions.

There was some discussion about future plans for the Garden, and it was agreed that the order of work should preferably be as follows:

- Pond - Guy Belcher to be reminded again by KG about the soil delivery.
- Fencing - LC to continue to remind Sarah Morrell of the timetable.
- Hedge planting - LC has arranged for a work party on Saturday 28 November using some Wildlife Trust volunteers to assist with this. If the fencing has not been done, then the volunteers could be used in the proposed dry Garden area. BW pointed out that this was a huge amount of work and suggested that volunteers might visit the Beth Chatto Garden to see how that dry garden had been achieved, over several years. KG and PS agreed to ask their new contact Eric? to look at the area and give advice.

4. Financial Report: CW presented the Financial Report, which is attached to these minutes. The balance 31 August 2026 was £3799.76 (including £441.72 held on behalf of Clay Farm Food). Expenditure totalled £2295.92. CW emphasised the importance to the Garden of the income from the Food Trucks as applying for grants has become increasingly restrictive. Future extra expenditure will include £100 per machine for the mowers' maintenance and a minimum of £500 for fencing the vegetable patch.

5. Maintenance plan: we have heard nothing further about this and the Council are now suggesting a Memorandum of Understanding rather than a license for us to occupy the Garden.

6. Future events and fund raising: There are no events planned yet. There was suggestion that Network Rail might be approached for a contribution to the Garden because of the disruption recently. CW agreed to ask her contact at Waitrose about the green token scheme and whether the Garden could be a beneficiary. HS suggested a table in the Waitrose foyer might be possible,

but it was thought that Waitrose restricted this to the British Legion. LC reminded the committee that it had been agreed to consider fund raising when we had a specific project in mind.

PS would like the Allotments and the Garden to get together to push things forward with the Council. She asked for an ex-officio member from the Allotments on the Committee. LC thought we had this already. PS asked if she might be able to add things to the agenda in future.

#### 7. Garden planting and repairs:

- Regarding possible gates in the Garden, Guy Belcher has an idea about automatically closing gates which he thinks will be okay to erect, despite the gas pipeline.
- The fencing project is in hand and BC reported that we had several bamboo stakes for the hedging and KG offered some ties. SC also has some hazel stakes, but we must be careful that they do not sprout. We also need some chippings and some bags of Mycorrhizal Fungi. BW will ask Ed Nugent for chippings and Coton or Oakington Garden Centres could be approached for the fungi.
- Pond will become a bog garden, and KG is in contact with South Cambs environmental group to do the planting.
- The mulberry will replace one dead tree and the cherry from the Japanese Embassy will replace the other.
- The vegetable garden has been laid with green manure in the interim.
- KG has drawn a scale plan of the flower bed in the West Garden which is to become our drought resistant section.

There was a discussion about how best to use volunteers. Currently the Garden was divided into sections, and a particular volunteer was responsible for that section and could explain to new volunteers what was needed. Some need help with identifying weeds. There were sometimes volunteers who just wanted to come and do something when they had a spare hour, and they needed to be directed to the most useful tasks. JH suggested a video, but this had been tried and was unsuccessful. BW said that if regular volunteers trust each other and can rely on each other then when new volunteers arrive, they can ask them to come and help in their area. BW will be changing his day from Thursday to Wednesday because it will suit him better so volunteers should be encouraged to come on Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday mornings.

8. Election of the Committee: Chair JH, Treasurer CW, Secretary SM. Committee members: KG, SC, MP, JW and PS ex officio representing the Allotments.

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 20.30hrs.

Elizabeth Cox

Secretary

## **Clay Farm Community Garden Accounts 01 September 2025 - 31 August 2026**

Balance 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026 £3799.76 (including £441.72 held on behalf of Clay Farm Food )

General and regular donations – including birthday parties, employment volunteers, and events (Pumpkin carving, Christmas Party)

Event Donations: £52.71

Individual donations £673.92

Christmas : £338.14

Employment Volunteers:£125.49\*

Food trucks £1650.00

**Total income £2840.26**

### Expenditure

**£1832.03**

including

- Supports for table shading
- Garden supplies
- Maintenance machines/tools

### Insurance

**£463.89**

**Total outgoings £2295.92**

### **Future commitments**

Insurance – approx. £470.00

Repairs/servicing, maintenance, supplies, , tools

### **Projected additional costs as compared with 2024-2025**

Mower(s) £100 per machine?

New fencing and metal post holders for veg patch. e.g. cost per post holder £7.00 each  
Netting and wooden posts and gates £ 500 minimum based on previous costs –N.B.  
prices may have increased.

**Thank you to our regular donors your contributions make a big difference.**