

Minutes of the Haringey Allotment Forum – 18 October 2025

Forum website: www.haringeyallotmentforum.org.uk

Present: Alexandra Palace (Alison Liney, Clive Haworth); Aylmer Road (Kim Samman); Creighton Avenue (Lindy Berkman **Chair**, Jeremy Whelan); De Quincey Road (Murielle Porter-Weiss); Elmar Road (Adam Blaxter Patiwala); Franklin Street (Carol Gibbons, Deborah Cawkwell); Highgate (Sally Jones); Mannoek Road (Janet Slater); Marsh Lane (Deborah Brett); Risley Avenue (Colleen McClaren); Shepherds Hill (Juliet Mann, Nicola Woodward); White Hart Lane (Derek Wilmott); Wolves Lane (Iain Drury **Notes**); London Borough of Haringey (Vicky Stones)

Apologies: Alex Fraser (London Borough of Haringey); Geoff Kemball Cook (Highgate); Colin Kerr, Kate Pemberton (Ranelagh Road); John Porter-Weiss (De Quincey Road); Naomi Doran (Creighton Road); Bruce Calderwood, Vivienne Bennett (Quernmore Road); Helen Killick (Shepherds Hill & Railway); Patricia Kelly (Golf Course); James White (Marsh Lane);

1. Minutes of the 12 July 2025 meeting

1.1 Accepted as correct

1.2 Fire Safety inspection re indoor wood burners, stoves and BBQs

- Waiting for Haringey Health & Safety inspection to be carried out.
- Written guidance to be issued on completion of the inspection.
- London Fire Brigade inspection some years ago recommended the banning of indoor wood burners, stoves and restricting the size of gas bottles (butane and propane) that could be used. Large calor gas cylinders should be banned.

Action: Vicki to circulate official guidance once received.

1.3. Maintenance Grants and site association/site secretary expenses

- Will increase in line with rent increases once the 2026 budget has been set.
- Clear records of repairs and maintenance expenditure are required to be kept for audit purposes.

2. Allotment Service Updates

2.1 2026 Invoicing - Aligning with fiscal year

- Explanatory letters to tenants not yet sent
- Finance and Legal have not yet fully thought through their issues
- Forum concerns re lack of consultation, tenant confusion and legal notice requirements.
- Forum unanimously opposed 2026 implementation and recommends deferral to January 2027 if change is the appropriate course of action.

Action: Iain to write to Alex setting out the Forums opposition to the implementation of the change of invoice year in January 2026.

2.2 Invoicing Joint Tenants

- Invoices are issued to the first named tenant on the joint application form
- One email address per tenancy sent to first named tenant

Action: Site Associations to advise joint tenants accordingly

3. Devolved Management Best Practice

3.1 Post Inspection Follow up “Pass” Letter

- Vicky presented a draft of the NCN follow up pass letter following earlier discussions with the Forum Steering Group
- Not to be used if conditions are attached to the “pass”
- Forum agreed the draft

Action: a copy of the letter to be posted on the Forum website

3.2 Post inspection follow up photographs

- Required for all post NCN inspection failures

3.3 Probation periods – when to invoice

- Forum unanimously agreed that the first invoice for successful probationers to be back dated to the start of the probation period with effect from 1 January 2026.
- Site Associations to decide when proof of address should be obtained either at the start of or end of probation.
- Vicky only wants proof of address with the completed application form post probation period.

4. Allotment Biodiversity

- 4.1 The guidance note “Biodiversity and my plot” has been posted on the Forum website Documents page.

5. Forum Steering Group

- 5.1 A vacancy has arisen on the Forum Steering Group which deals with any Forum business between Forum meetings. The Steering Group generally meets once between Forum meetings. Any interested person should contact Iain.

6. Other business

6.1 Dealing with theft of produce on sites

- Ongoing issue on several sites; limited police engagement.
- Importance of recording incidents, obtaining police CAD numbers, and maintaining evidence.
- Avoid accusations without proof; encourage dialogue and deterrence via communication.
- Council can only act where credible evidence exists

Actions: Sites to log and report all thefts and share effective prevention practice.

6.2 Trees on Plot

- Growing number of mature or inherited trees exceeding 3 m rule.
- Forum agreed tenants shouldn't bear full cost for trees planted historically by the Council.
- Maintenance grants may assist with dangerous or oversized trees.

Actions: Clarify ownership/responsibility for boundary trees (Vicki)

6.3 Allotment Insurance

- Need for Site Associations to arrange Public Liability insurance was briefly discussed.
- Reported that NAS membership includes free insurance whether as an affiliated site or an individual member

Action: Iain to circulate existing guidance for discussion at the next Forum meeting

6.4 Wheelbarrows

- Iain to forward the email from Bob Hare about spare wheelbarrows at Alexandra Palace allotment site.

6.5 Media Reports on "Selling Off" Allotments

- Recent media reports described as misleading
- Iain briefly explained the background to the legal safeguards adopted by the Government in 2014 in the publication of "Allotment disposal guidance : safeguards", which set out the statutory and policy criteria council's must meet in order to obtain Government consent to dispose of allotment land including seeking approval from the National Allotment Society for the disposal.
- Forum reassured members that most Haringey allotments are statutory and legally protected.

Action: Iain to circulate statutory site guidance for reassurance

7. Allotment Security & Networking

7.1 Sites encouraged to share resources (tree surgeons, best practice).

Next Meeting

17 January 2026, 11 April, 11 July, 10 October