

LMAA – Minutes of Committee Meeting 5 June 2026

1. Attendees: Philip B, Chris H, Dorothy R, Tony R, George C, Hilary B
2. Apologies for absence: Sara G
3. Minutes of meeting 1 May approved
4. Matters arising:
 - The issue of seeking confirmation of safety of willow tree to be considered closed
 - Outstanding rents have all be collected
 - Some rat traps have been placed around the site. There are more available upon request
 - Confirmation received from Iain that there are no works needed on the drains, barring a major burst
 - Decision made to order more keys from Thorpes on High St who hold the original template as inferior copies are damaging the lock barrels. Once available, these keys will be held in box in Trading Hut

Action: DR to order more keys from Thorpes – 5 initially then if working well, a further 25
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Action: CH to give copy of key to West Jesmond tree surgeons for use when they drop off wood chippings

5. **Chair's Report:**
 - The new lease has finally arrived thanks to successful lobbying of local councillors
6. **Membership Update:**
 - 3 new people have been allocated plots since the beginning of May
 - 60 on the waiting list

- Applicants for plots have reported difficulty in finding a listing for Littlemoor as we are not listed in alpha order on the Council website. This is because we are not directly managed by the Council, but come under the jurisdiction of the Freeman. Applicants must open the Allotment Application form and when asked which allotment they wish to apply for, scroll down to the bottom of the page

Action: HB to add a note to relevant page of Littlemoor website explaining how and where to find us.

Action: GC to send copy of latest rules to HB for inclusion on website.

7. Secretary's Report:

- New lease has been received but there are issues with the rent and square meterage between the new and old lease. This has been queried with the council to find out why the meterage has increased when we haven't been allocated any more land, as the effect of this is to increase the rent by an extra £350 per year for the years 2022 to 2025. It may be that the council have included the dimensions of the path across Little Moor into their measurements of the site.

Action: CH to query square meterage with the Council

- 15 letters have been sent out to plot holders whose plot has been allowed to get into a state of disrepair, often as a result of ill-health or other mitigating circumstances. Discussion into the options that should be made available to plot holders in these circumstances, given our duty of care to adjacent plot holders.

- **Action:** PB to draft policy statement for next meeting.

8.Communications report:

- Discussion on ways to improve communications with members, included:
 - More use of links to website when sending out emails
 - More interactive activities e.g. photo competitions, recipes, growing tips
 - Use of polls to get instant feedback from members
 - Potential for use of chat board
 - Setting up a Facebook page

Action: HB to investigate options for chat board and polls on website

Action: CH to send out email to members asking for help with website in a training capacity from those with appropriate expertise.

8. Treasurer's Report:

- Treasurer has encountered some difficulty in changing our Lloyds account from limited company to charitable status but this has now been resolved.

9. Trading Hut Report:

- Sales going well in the trading hut, especially on compost. More compost has been sourced at the same price as the previous order.

10.Newsletter:

Items for the July edition will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

11.Tidy Up day 7 June:

Tasks to include cutting back growth that has grown through the fence on Ilford Road, tidying up area around the metal deposit bin and strimming borders down Moorfield edge of site. Weeding under fruit trees in field.

12. Peat-free Compost:

- A discussion on the use of peat-free compost following a request from an allotment holder that the committee could consider stopping selling peat containing compost and also stop using it for the seedlings in the polytunnel as soon as possible.
- At the moment the Trading Hut offers both kinds of compost but this year has sold 500+ bags of Mother Earth (containing peat) and only 8 bags of peat free.
- The view was expressed that the sale of Mother Earth compost is the main income-generator at the Trading Hut and therefore it could not continue to trade if we were to offer only peat-free compost.
- The committee have run trials in the polytunnel in previous years where we have compared seeds grown in Mother Earth and peat-free compost, and the plants grown in peat-free have not grown as well.
- The Chair has carried out research on the supplier of Mother Earth compost and is satisfied that their practices are sustainable and environmentally friendly
- The committee agreed that we would continue to sell and use Mother Earth compost in the polytunnel, but that it was important that we continue to offer plot holders a choice for use on their own plot.

Date of next meeting: 2 July at 10am on the field