

Saintbridge Allotment Gardens Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Monday 8th December 2025 at St. Oswald's Church Hall.

Attendees

Plot number

Stephen Simpson	58B, 64 & 65B, 78A
Helen Dallyn	50B
Karen Franks	63B & 66B
Dave Johnson	89B
Ken Beedon	2
Dave Brown	15B
Chris Russell	10A
Karen Russell	10A
Elizabeth Macdonald	1A
Gordon Melvin	67B
Ros Melvin	69A & B
Andy Hedges	32A & B
Paul Summers	97Ab
Louise Summers	97Ab

1 Welcome and introduction.

The chairman Steve Simpson welcomed those present to the meeting and read out the apologies received as follows.

I have received apologies from:

Faith Howcroft

Louise Barks 141B

Paul & Elly Turner 115Ac

Chris Ellicott 54B – he has asked me to pass on the following message 'Please convey my thanks to the Committee members and volunteers. Thanks to them the site is vastly improved on the way it was when I first took on a plot in 2007.'

Tracey Simpson – I don't want to share my cold with you all!

Rob & Marie Filby 5B – they have asked me to pass on the following words 'Can we please though place on record our thanks to yourself, Steve, the other committee

members and all volunteers for the sterling hard work that you have put in during the last 12 months. It does not go unrecognised and is greatly appreciated.'

Faith asked me to say that she is happy to take any comments or questions after the AGM on behalf of Gloucester City Council.

There were no apologies from the floor.

Steve drew attention to the pre-reading materials emailed to all members prior to the meeting, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

2 Minutes and actions from the last AGM.

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted as a true record of the meeting. The following actions arising were dealt with.

Install anti-climb mesh on the double gates by the balancing pond. This is scheduled for winter 2025.

Put antivandal paint on the tops of the gates, subject to agreement from GCC. This would require warning signs to be put on all the gates, making the site appear unwelcoming. Action on hold, to be reviewed should unauthorised access to the site become a problem.

Cut back overgrown areas at the back of the garages on the Cheney Close side of the site to allow contractor mower access. Action implemented.

Install bench seating around the large Walnut tree. This activity is pending due to financial constraints. Should anyone know of any suitable benches that could be donated to this project please email sagasecretary@saintbridge.org.uk . The aim is to provide a place for quiet contemplation to remember all the plot holders that have passed, possibly including a commemorative plaque. We are all custodians of our plots at Saintbridge allotments, and we should remember those that looked after the ground before us. Action carried forward.

Fruit trees

Tracey to supply further information about fruit trees. Tracey has provided the following information.

The tenancy agreement states 'You must not erect structures, plant miniature fruit trees or put animals on your plot without permission from Gloucester City Council.' But this raises a lot of questions about what is meant by miniature fruit trees. Tracey has agreed the following wording with Faith, that is now in our Welcome pack and reflected in the tenancy agreement.

'You must seek permission before planting miniature fruit trees on your plot by emailing allotments@gloucester.gov.uk. Please include the type of tree, root stock

(e.g. M27), and where you will put it on your plot. Fruit trees must be kept maintained within a height of 5ft (1.5m) and not encroach over pathways or neighbouring plots.'

There are a lot of trees on site that were planted before this guidance was tightened up, so please can you take efforts to keep any on your plot within the height requirements and ensure they don't obstruct pathways. This can obviously only be a best endeavour though as no one wants you to kill fruit trees by cutting back too severely!

Plant new hedging to fill gaps in the newly planted hedgerow on Cheney Close.
Action implemented.

Put up signage to stop usage of grassed overflow parking in wet conditions. Action implemented.

Repair the potholes along the stone track leading to Birch Avenue and areas around the main gates. Action implemented. The drainage ditch for this track was also cleared and extended.

3 Chairman's report.

Steve presented the Chairman's report to the attendees and it was accepted, a copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

4 Treasurer's report.

Helen Dalyn presented the Treasurer's report, a copy of which is attached. Helen explained the report covers the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. The report was accepted by attendees. Andy Hedges asked what proportion of keys are not returned after the tenancy is ended and what is the future for the maintenance grant going forward given the financial situation of Gloucester City Council. This is something that it is not possible to predict and we will just have to wait and see.

7 Election of Officers and Committee members.

Steve explained that nomination forms were received for all the existing committee members, so all will stay in role for 2025/26. Members agreed that rather than reading out all the names of committee members, nominees and secondees they will be included in the minutes.

The nominations received were as follows:

Chairman – Steve Simpson (58B, 64, 65B & 78A)

Nominated by Ken Beedon (2A & 3)

Seconded by David Brown (15B)

Secretary – Tracey Simpson (58B, 64, 65B & 78A)

Nominated by Marie Filby (5B)

Seconded by Karen Russell (9B & 10)

Treasurer – Helen Dallyn (50B)

Nominated by Andy Hedges (33)

Seconded by Ross Owen Beamish (52A)

Dave Johnson (89B)

Nominated by John Merrick (90Ab & 90B)

Seconded by Steve Simpson (58B, 64, 65B & 78A)

Karen Franks (63B & 66B)

Nominated by Gordon Melvin (67B)

Seconded by Antony Hwer (70A&B, 71Bb and 98Bb)

In the absence of any other nominees, they were elected en bloc.

8 Future activities and any other business

Steve briefly outlined SAGA's routine activities of hedge cutting, coppicing Hazel for bean poles, and making plots ready for re-let.

Action – Steve to arrange a working party to trim and bundle the sticks.

Carried forward from 2023 the double gates by the pond need reinforcing with anti-climb mesh. **Action – Steve to arrange a working party.**

A raised bed for the community garden was installed using reclaimed paving slabs stood on edge with one third buried in the ground. Steve proposed SAGA reallocate £200.00 originally donated for this raised bed to be used for fencing. Steve outlined the plans to put up badger fencing on the community garden to allow a wider range of crops to be grown. This will use reclaimed materials and the reallocated £200.00. The motion was agreed unanimously. **Action – Steve to arrange a working party.**

Clarification was requested on plot holders' responsibilities to display their plot numbers and look after paths around their plots.

Here is what the tenancy agreement says:

You must 'ensure your plot number is always clearly displayed.'

'Pathways and borders

- You are responsible for half the width of the pathway around your plot. It is your responsibility that these are kept trimmed and well maintained on a regular basis and there are no obstacles left on these pathways.
- Pathways should be kept to a width of at least 18"/46cms wide.
- You must maintain the inside of any hedge bordering your plot
- Do not kill grass paths, they should be cut or mown
- You must not block access paths or tracks'

The area measured as the size of your plot includes half the width of the dividing pathways, but not the wider perimeter paths.

Common obstacles on paths include discarded piles of weeds that rot down and make the path irregular and hazardous.

The problem of plot marker posts rotting was discussed and Elizabeth Macdonald suggested using a length of plastic guttering for a marker post. She also mentioned that she was unaware of the age concession rates for rent as it was not in her original tenancy agreement and urged other plot holders to check with the city council if it was an issue for them.

A member asked if there are any rules around fencing your plot. Steve said there are no specific rules but if putting up a fence please locate it at least 30cm/one foot from the edge of the path to allow passage of loaded wheelbarrows.

The theft of tools from a shed and hose pipes left connected and running was raised. Steve reminded the meeting that the unattended use of hose pipes is not permitted and not to leave items of value on site. It was noted that the level of opportunist crime has reduced significantly since the gates were locked but it would be impossible to make the site 100% secure.

Dave Johnson reminded plot holders not to put rubbish or locate composters in or alongside the boundary hedgerows as it interferes with maintenance. The grass paths alongside the hedgerows are mowed to stop any suckering from the hedge into the allotment site.

No further issues were raised, and Steve thanked everyone for their attendance and their contributions and brought the meeting to a close at 7.40pm.