

Capel St Mary Allotments Association
Minutes of General Committee Meeting
Monday 2 March 2026

Present: SB, CH, MD, ML, GC, DS, RB, DA, AA, MR, TS

Apologies: WR, PH

ACTION

1. Matters Arising from General Committee Meeting – 19 January 2026

- There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

2. Treasurer and Membership Secretary

- GC's report was taken as read.
- Grand total cash £20,263.15 Total available cash £16,786.65
- Rotovator fund £1,395.97 Site Capital fund £1,536.56
- Mower Fund £6,416.00
- Membership
 - Membership Year started (Sept 2025) with 369 paying and 3 honorary members. There have been 22 new members to date and 39 resignations, therefore current numbers are 352 paying members and 3 honorary.
- Hut sales 2025
 - Sales to date £1,954.0 Hut Purchases £10,646.00

3. Reports

- **Chairman**
 - SB's report as taken as read.
- **Site Manager**
 - ML report was taken as read but the following points were discussed:
 - It was agreed to send welfare letters to some ploholders who are currently unable to tend to their plots due to illness etc . If needed we will cover these plots temporarily.
 - ML requested he relinquish part of his role as Site Manager and this to be discussed later in the meeting.
- **IT**
 - Report taken as read
- **Stores Manager / Growing Group**
 - Report taken as read.
 - RB confirmed Whatsapp group now set up for Growing Group and messages to be sent out as and when volunteers required.
- **Seed Scheme / Capel Capers**
 - Report taken as read.
- **Village Show**
 - Report taken as read.
 - CH confirmed we have new sponsors for 2026 and the entry form is to be removed from schedule and replaced with two adverts.

4. Website Proposal

- MD had produced a summary of the document relating to the change of hosting provider for the Capel St Mary Allotments Association website and went through this with the meeting.
- MD answered any queries regarding the new proposed hosting company, future development of the site , new content and any issues surrounding us leaving our current host, Suffolk Cloud.

- Following a discussion the Committee agreed to go in principle with Fonant as our new provider and MD to go back to them and then the matter further.

5. AGM

- TS requested that any Committee Members that had not yet submitted their reports to do so by 13 March.
- All members agreed to continue in their present roles but ML expressed a wish to give up the part of his role concerning site maintenance but continue with the plot tenancies and management of the plots. A discussion ensued on how best to manage this. In summary, it was agreed:
 - To look to our members to see who had skills we could utilise on site and call upon these people as and when required which would also make members feel more involved.
 - DS to continue to attend to any electrical and plumbing issues, with help where needed.
 - ML/DA to share co-ordinating of site maintenance until a permanent arrangement for site maintenance is in place.
 - An email to be drafted and sent by MD to all members asap regarding our need for more help, and inviting them to an Open Meeting onsite where interested people could then let us know what skills they had and gain a commitment to help. Meeting to be arranged.
 - A Whatsapp group to then be set up for these volunteers so when we need help we could ask who was available and arrange any necessary materials they may require.
 - ML said he was happy to continue along these lines if he had the support of other Plotters.
 - The above proposal re Site Maintenance to then be put to the AGM.

SB then summarised the situation saying that it was apparent that, given the change in the circumstances and availability of members, a different approach would be required in future. He explained that site maintenance had always been delivered through a considerable team effort; as examples SB referred to DS and his work on tech issues, DA and GL for their mowing regimes, and RB for his work on the poly tunnel. The work ins were always a success, and an opportunity for all plot-holders to help out.

However, the future 'model' would require a move from a 'Site Manager' role to the site maintenance workload being shared more widely. To do this it was important to know who was willing to volunteer, their availability, and what skills they could offer. Acknowledging that ML would, in future, focus on the admin for letting / managing plots SB also stressed the need for one or more members to co-ordinate site maintenance to ensure that work continued to be done.

The meeting agreed that a similar arrangement to that used for the Growing Group would work, and that the first step would be a meeting of those interested in helping out. This would be supported by a WhatsApp group. DA offered to share the co-ordinating role with ML until a more permanent arrangement had been decided. AA suggested that help may be available from Association members who did not have plots, but nonetheless may be willing to help; this was agreed.

SB said he thinks we need to move away from the Site Manager title if we are going for this new team based approach. If someone, in due course, decides to fully retire and are willing to be the Site Manager, then we can revert to what we had before.

SB thanked ML for what he had done as Site Manager, and stressed that everyone understood why the change was necessary.

6. Any Other Business

- ML informed the meeting we had now missed the cut off date to have the perimeter hedge cut by Andrew Vellacott.
- A new battery has been purchased for the defibrillator and JH getting a price to replace pads.
- DS has carried out some site repairs and replaced info board in the Wildlife Area.

- Furniture for plotters retreat – although we missed out on some on Freecycle ML said he may be able to source some.
- It was confirmed that the PC will not allow the site to be locked at all times as it is a public area.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Date of next meeting: 19 June 2026

Circulation: General Committee Members and notice board.

Signed.....