



MINUTES

RA Council Meeting 9 September 2025, at 8pm (via Zoom)

Present: Peter McCluskie (Chair), Steve Morris (Hon Treasurer), Helena Benes, Maureen Dor, Colin Gregory, Adrian Hodgson, Revd Emily Koltveit, Dominic Rose, Steven Rowe, Judy Smith, Jonathan Waxman.

- Also attending: Bernadette Rae (Membership Secretary), Shazia Riaz Ahmad (Minutes Secretary)
- Apologies: Francine Barsam, Asher Budwig, Shelley-Anne Salisbury.

RA Finances

1. **Hon Treasurer's Report:**
The Treasurer presented the financial statement for the third quarter and addressed the following matters:
2. **Grants Awarded:**
Steve confirmed that all grants approved for 2025, totalling £12,339, have been paid. A surplus of £7,000 remains.
3. **Grant Application from Henriette Barnet School:**
It was confirmed that the grant awarded to the Henriette Barnett School has been deferred to 2026.
4. **New Membership Secretary:**
An allocation of £625 has been made to the 2025 budget to cover costs associated with the appointment of the new Membership Secretary. (The full year cost will be £1500.)

Biodiversity projects and related initiatives

5. **Management of Biodiversity Projects:**
It was confirmed that biodiversity projects fall under the direct management of Dominic Rose.
6. **Attendance Requirements:**
Revd Emily confirmed that all children attending the Kids Gardening Club must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, which is a mandatory requirement. It was also noted that St Jude's Church maintains comprehensive public liability insurance.
7. **Urban Garden Project Funding Application:**
The Council voted to approve Dominic's funding request of £4,000 to support the upcoming Biodiversity and Earth Watch projects. It was noted that a portion of this funding will be used in 2026, and an additional funding request may be submitted next year.
8. **Future Funding**

The Council agreed that future funding requests for any biodiversity initiatives must be submitted via a grant application form.

Events

9. **Summer Fair 2025:**
The net cost of the Summer Fair amounted to £1,000.

10. **Community use of gazebos:**

As a follow-up from the previous Council meeting, Adrian reminded the committee of the extensive damage sustained to the gazebos during hire this year. The RA provided all gazebos to the Henriette Barnett School, for which the school made a donation.

11. The Friends of the Big Wood have requested to hire the 3x3 gazebo for the upcoming Moth Breakfast event. A hire fee of £25 per gazebo has been agreed, which includes transportation of the gazebo and attendance by a member of the Events Committee. The hire fee is significantly subsidised, covering essential costs such as management, transport, set-up, and repair/replacement. (By comparison, hiring a 6x3 gazebo commercially costs approximately £160.)

12. Adrian will inform the St Jude's Proms Committee and the Henrietta Barnett School of the fees.

Action: Adrian

13. **Halloween 2025:**

A community event will be held in autumn to mark Halloween 2025. Adrian will confirm the event date with his team.

Action: Adrian

14. **New Year's Eve Fireworks - 31 December 2025:**

Arrangements for the New Year's Eve fireworks display are in place. A 10% deposit of £360 has been paid to the company providing the fireworks, and the next payment is due in November. Adrian reported that he has spoken with the fireworks company, who are currently participating in a national competition. If the company wins, the New Year's Eve display is expected to be an enhanced and special event for the community.

15. **Notice Boards:**

Adrian confirmed that a comprehensive inventory of all notice boards has now been completed. It was noted that several boards are in a state of disrepair, and no remedial action has yet been taken. Also certain groups outside the Suburb have been placing notices on the boards without consulting the RA.

16. It was suggested the RA contacts the individuals currently hosting notice boards and offer free membership of the RA in exchange for continuing to host and maintain a board. This will be considered further by the Events committee.

Trees and Opens Spaces (T&OS) Committee:

17. **Current Activities:**

Colin reported that the recent activities of the T&OS Committee are summarised in the latest edition of *Suburb News*. The committee continues to review and monitor all applications for work on trees and open spaces across the Suburb.

18. **Crowdfunding Update:**

Steven informed members that the crowdfunding initiative has successfully sponsored 15 trees, with 5 trees remaining to be funded.

19. **Publicity:**

Updates and notifications about the tree initiative have been shared through *Suburb News*, the WhatsApp groups, and the Association's Facebook page.

20. **Coordination with Barnet Council:**

Peter Falk continues to liaise with Barnet Council to ensure that the agreed number of trees are planted. He is also monitoring progress to identify any gaps or necessary replacements.

21. **Tree Maintenance and Reporting:**

Colin reminded members that Barnet Council is responsible for maintaining newly planted trees for two years following planting. He asked that any instances of dead or damaged trees be reported to T&OS. Colin also noted that the recent hot weather has unfortunately led to the loss of some newly planted trees.

22. Commemorative Tree in Lyttelton:

Dominic advised that a resident had approached him regarding the installation of a commemorative tree in Lyttelton. Colin confirmed he was aware of the request. It was agreed that Colin and Dominic would discuss this further.

Action: Colin / Dominic

23. Community Harvesting:

Steven R confirmed that community harvesting will take place, with further details to be announced in due course.

REACH Initiatives:

24. Trust Event – Retrofit Guidance

Jonathan provided an update on his attendance at the Trust event on Retrofit Guidance, held on Thursday, 4 September 2025, at Fellowship House. The event focused on the Trust's new Retrofit Guidance, offering members an opportunity to ask questions, share feedback, and gain greater understanding of the Trust's approach to sustainability within conservation parameters. Jonathan reported that it was a constructive and informative evening, with both positive discussions and challenges raised.

25. Next Steps and Focus Areas

The Trust is now moving towards supporting residents in home insulation and heat pump installation, while continuing to uphold conservation as its primary priority. David Davidson had noted that the Trust's document refers to preserving the "*character and appearance*" of the Suburb. The correct wording is "*character and amenity*."

26. Overall Impression

It was confirmed that the event was well-presented and well-organised, offering valuable insight into future sustainability initiatives for the Suburb.

Publications

27. Suburb News and RA Highlight Deadlines

It was confirmed that the deadline for submissions to the next edition of Suburb News is 1 November. Any articles for inclusion in RA Highlights should be submitted to Peter by 24 October.

Membership

28. Membership Renewal

Steve reported that an email invitation to renew membership was circulated in August, resulting in 90 renewals to date. A postal mailing will be distributed within the next week, inviting remaining members to renew their subscriptions.

29. Mail Drop to New Members:

Plans are underway to design and circulate a leaflet encouraging local residents to become members of the Association. It was noted that some young people may be engaged on a paid basis to assist with leaflet distribution.

30. Free Membership Proposal:

Jonathan proposed that the RA consider offering one year of free membership as an incentive for new members. The committee discussed the potential benefits and drawbacks of this idea and agreed to await the outcome of the upcoming New Members Mail Drop before making a decision.

Upcoming Meetings 2026:

Dates for Council meetings in 2026 will be circulated in due course.