DOUGLAS CRESCENT GARDENS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF AGM HELD AT 7.30PM ON 18TH JUNE 2026

LOCATION: THE ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE CENTRE - PALMERSTON PLACE.

Present:

Alan Weddell - Chair
Andy Ellis - Secretary
Debbie Ellis - Committee Member

22 Proprietors and one Tenant attended as detailed in the Sederunt document attached. Proprietors are reminded that Tenants do not have voting rights or the right to attend AGMs on their behalf.

Apologies:

Apologies were received from 28 Proprietors as detailed in the Sederunt document attached.

Proxy Votes:

19 proxy votes were received as detailed in the attached Sederunt document.

1. Introductions

Alan Weddell, Chair of the DCGA Committee opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and introducing the other current members of the Committee. Due to the number of apologies for absence the Secretary sought agreement that the list should not be read out, as it would be made available via the completed Sederunt document. There was no objection to this proposal. The list of proxy votes was read out to the AGM, along with the details of what the proxies had directed. This is also detailed in the Sederunt document.

2. Statement on omissions from 2025 AGM

The Chair issued an apology on behalf of the Committee for two omissions at the previous AGM in September 2025. Firstly, no vote of thanks was offered at the AGM itself to Alan Sibbald for his valued contribution to the restoration of existing and construction of reconditioned Victorian benches for the garden along with Ian Dumayne. This was a regrettable oversight which the Committee then sought to partially rectify by including reference to the vote of thanks in the circulated minutes of that AGM.

Secondly the issued AGM minutes did not record the vote of thanks to the gardener and the Committee proposed by Clare Campbell and seconded from the floor. The Committee noted that this item had not been captured at the time and formally recorded that the vote of thanks should have been included in the minutes of the September 2025 AGM..

3. Minutes of the 2025 AGM

The Minutes of the 2025 AGM were circulated shortly after that meeting. A number of attendees subsequently requested amendments or additions. Other than the omissions noted in section 2 above, the Committee did not agree that further changes were required.. The Chair proposed that, in the absence of agreement on the amendments requested the 2025 Minutes should be noted and not put to a vote.

Anne Sibbald proposed that a vote be taken on whether to accept or reject the 2025 Minutes. The meeting discussed at length whether a retrospective vote would be appropriate including the practical issue raised from the floor that procedurally only those present at the 2025 AGM would be eligible to vote.

4. Chair's Report.

Alan Weddell noted that his report on activities since the September 2025 AGM had been issued via email prior to the AGM and did not propose to repeat the content live. Alan Sibbald raised a point of order taking comfort from the information provided, particularly the arborist report and the £10K per annum set aside for tree work.

The Chair expressed his thanks for the many people who had helped him with the work of the Committee during his 14-year tenure, namely:

Alan Sibbald - for his work with the Victorian benches for the gardens;
Christine Craig and Stewart Methven - for their work in the main border, white border and border opposite number 13 Douglas Crescent;
Debbie Ellis - for the planting of the blue and white border, the planting of more shrubs and acers along the top path and also general garden liaison;
Andy Ellis - for expanding and administering the Associate Membership scheme;
Gordon Plews - for his extensive path work;
Adele Nicol and Drew Taylor - for informal legal advice; and finally
Ian Dumayne - for all his work in the gardens and in the planting of many thousands of bulbs.

Alan Weddell apologised in advance if he had omitted anyone.

There was a spontaneous round of applause at the end of the Chair's report in recognition of his outstanding service to the gardens as Chairman.

5. Finance Report

Draft accounts for the year ending March 2026 with estimated budgets were circulated prior to the AGM.

Trevor Fenton raised a point from the floor asking the Committee if they were aware that the amount of money now in our accounts might make us liable to the payment of Corporation Tax, which could amount to as much as £1500 to £2000 per annum. The Committee were not aware of this and had not been advised of any such liability by Simon Maclaren. There was some discussion in the room as to whether any exemption might apply, and/or what the level would be, although Trevor Fenton believes the exemption is a relatively small amount.

The Chair advised that he was not aware of any other garden associations facing such a liability. It was agreed without a vote that the new Committee would liaise with Simon Maclaren to discuss any required action.

Alan Sibbald raised a number of points:

a) thanked Simon Maclaren and Alan Weddell for the detailed information supplied;

b) requested a breakdown of different categories of key holders and the amounts they pay. This is currently: 141 Proprietors who are obliged to pay the Annual subscription decided by the Committee, which is currently £210 or £190 if paid prior to 1st April; circa 15 from Douglas Gardens and Douglas Gardens Mews who are allowed Associate Membership at the same rate as Proprietors as a result of a gentleman's agreement dating back to the 1890s; and circa 70 Associate Members who pay £265 per annum;

c) in relation to Proprietors who are persistent non-payers the meeting discussed the amounts owed, the length of time outstanding, and possible routes for follow-up. The four cases noted related to Proprietors living overseas where contact details were not available, and the meeting discussed whether the City Council could assist where properties appeared to be let; One Proprietor has refused to pay the subscription as they disagree with dogs being allowed access to the gardens or the admission of Associate Members. Both of these have however been permitted since the 1890's. There was discussion on how to recover this debt, potentially via lawyer's letter and/or legal action.

Action: the new Committee should review outstanding Proprietor payments and determine the appropriate follow-up route;

d) in relation to the level of funds held in the current account, are we being too cautious when we could spend money on projects. The current Committee noted that that decisions relating to the allocation of funds to new savings accounts or projects should be determined by the new Committee, particularly as the long-term deposit account does not mature until 12th November 2026.

Tiana Sidey queried why the amount in the accounts for the gardener's salary was lower this year despite his hourly rate having been increased. The Committee advised this was attributable to the number of hours worked, as Ian's contract has no fixed hours requirement and the hours worked are also weather and season dependant. The Association also benefitted from the work of Finn Makin who initially provided volunteer hours under the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and has subsequently returned to perform ad hoc paid hours on Saturdays.

Funds in the bank today total £105,264 comprising £38,221 in the current account, £15,260 in the 30-day notice account and £51,783in the fixed term deposit account.

The annual insurance premium has been paid (£1,954) which is the same amount as last year.

There are no further outstanding bills to pay.

The annual beech hedge trimming has been booked for 20th August 2026. The cost will be £1,056 which is a slight increase from last year. Anne Sibbald queried whether competitive quotes had been sought for this expenditure, as she felt all contractors should be subjected to a regular tendering process. The wisdom of this approach in relation to long-established contractors was challenged by a number of attendees including the Chair, Debbie Ellis, and Ginger Reece .

In view of the funds in the bank the Committee propose to freeze the current maintenance charge for 2026/27 at £210 and retain the £20 early payment discount. The fee for external key holders will also be held at to £265.

6. Elections

Courtney Black advised via email that she had withdrawn her nomination. All three existing Committee members have also decided to withdraw their nominations.

a) **Proposal for collective election of the Committee**: Clare Campbell proposed that all of those nominated be voted for, and that the new Committee then be free to elect office bearers. This was seconded by Liz MacLachlan. Following a discussion, this proposal was not voted on as it was pointed out by the Chair that office bearers have always been nominated and voted on by the AGM prior to other ordinary Committee members. **NOTE:** This would also be a requirement for the change of signatories for the Association's Bank Account with the Bank of Scotland.

b) **Chair**: Anne Sibbald proposed Alan Sibbald for the position of Chair, seconded by a proxy vote from Peter Brutin. This was accepted by a show of hands.

c) **Treasurer**: Trevor Fenton was proposed by John Lee and seconded by Gill Macaulay via nomination form. This was accepted by a show of hands.

d) **<u>Secretary</u>**: Lucas Nightingale was nominated by Trevor Fenton and seconded by Anne Sibbald. This was accepted by a show of hands.

e) **<u>Ordinary Members</u>**: The four remaining nominations (Anne Sibbald, Robin MacLachlan, Jean Hamilton and Richard Bogle) were all elected by show of hands. Richard Bogle sent his apologies prior to the meeting so was elected in absentia. (Note that Richard Bogle has also subsequently decided to withdraw from the Committee).

<u>7. Committee Proposals on Update of existing Rules & introduction of a Polling facility.</u>

The proposed update to the Rules and Regulations was discussed at length, alongside the list of queries raised by Anne Sibbald. Due to time constraints, no vote was taken on either the Rules and Regulations update or the proposed polling facility. However, the meeting indicated general support for introducing a polling facility. As neither Committee proposal was put to a vote, Anne Sibbald agreed that her proposal to discuss the Rules and Regulations was no longer required at this meeting and should instead be taken forward as business for the new Committee.

Action: The new Committee should review the proposed Rules and Regulations update and the proposed polling facility and determine how any outstanding queries should be addressed before any future vote.

Outgoing Committee's view: The outgoing Committee noted that no alternative proposal to the Committee's proposed update of the 1964 Rules and Regulations had been tabled before the AGM. In its view, this meant Proprietors had no prior opportunity to review or consider any alternative proposal before the meeting, which contributed to the discussion becoming unproductive.

The outgoing Committee strongly recommends that any major changes to the Rules and Regulations should be subject to a poll of all 141 Proprietors.

<u>8. AOCB</u>

A vote of thanks to the Committee was proposed by Robin MacLachlan.
There was a round of applause.