



## Ordinary General Meeting of Plot Holders Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### Trustees Present

Stephen Parsons – Chair of Trustees (SP)  
Louise Haynes (LH)

### Trustee Apologies

### Staff

Tim Cookson  
Janine Kettle  
Lucy Secker

### Volunteers

Paul Rogers

**(SP)** Good Evening and Welcome tonight for this year's Ordinary General Meeting of Plot Owners. This is of course, a private meeting of plot owners and/or their proxies. Firstly some introductions, my name is Steve Parsons, I'm chair of the DPML Trustees. Louise Haynes is here. Paul Rogers is sat here, he's going to be helping with verifying the vote accounting process later on. We also have Tim Cookson, Janine Kettle, and Lucy Secker, They will be counting the votes cast tonight.

The agenda was sent out, it covers the items for accepting previous minutes and approves this year's budget, to appoint trustees and there is one resolution as well. So the budget, appointing trustees and resolution will require votes to be cast as normal. Each plot owner has been given a series of slips, on that slip of paper it explains what the slip of paper is for. So there shouldn't be any confusion about what it is that we are going to asking for.

On each slip is a for, against and abstain etc, there is a separate row for each of the trustees. There is also one white slip, which is bigger than the others for each of those. One apology, if I may first, there were errors on the paperwork we sent you regarding the trustee nomination forms. I can assure you that all the original forms that we received were all properly completed and were fully scrutinised and they were all okay. As has happened in previous years, we're going to do a show hands for voting unless there are 40 or more plot owners requesting a secret ballot.

Can I ask, are there 40 people who wish to have a secret ballot for tonight's vote please? You can show your hands. Not 40. There will be an opportunity to ask questions for various topics as we go along

Tonight the first item is to approve the minutes of the last Ordinary General Meeting on the 26th of September 2024, and the SGM minutes from the 26th of March 2025 and the 12th of August 2025. Copies of the minutes are up on the website. Can we take them as the true record please of those meetings?

Accepted as a true record of those three meetings with a show of hands.

Thank you very much. The chairs report is the next item, you will have received a copy of my report. Are there any questions? Okay, I tried to be open and honest in that report to you and positive about the way forwards. I think we're all pleased that we've got over the issue with the squirrel's Nursery from August, and we're going forward on a positive note with that.

I would like to thank all the volunteers that we've had working across the park, they are helping to make the place a nicer looking place than it was before and all those who are obviously contributing to community groups and trying to put things on for everybody's enjoyment as well.

Those are the main things, obviously thanking the previous trustees for all their hard work and efforts as well. So, if that's the case, we'll move on from that and just note the chairman's report. Thank you. The 2023/24 audit accounts have been published on Company's house. They were the ones that were provisionally put on at the OGM 2024. We are asking you to note that as well. They are the official audited accounts that are being put out and signed up by our auditors, so just covering a point on that one.

We move on to the financial report, which you have received, any questions you may wish to ask upon that own please.

On the 2024/25 part of it to start with. Are there any questions? No. Okay.. So we'll note that. And we now move on to the proper 2025/26 proposed budget, which was in the report to you with the proposed plot fees for next year, but also you received the various spreadsheets of the three or four spreadsheets as well, detailed all the expenditure and the income etc. Are there any questions, answers on this please?

**(David Jones)**

Hello, I'm... I'm David Jones, I've lived here 30 years. I question whether an 11% increase rise in the fees is reasonable, as it may cause undue hardship to people living on the park. It will also cause difficulty, I believe, in people selling their homes at their true value. Should we be looking at the Bank of England, rate of inflation, goods and services as a fair benchmark and utilise other revenue sources together with the expansion other other use of volunteers.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but my understanding is that a plot holder pays an annual fee towards the administration and maintenance of the buildings and immunity land. Can you confirm that our fee, specifically, are used in relation to that purpose?

**(SP)**

Thank you. If I'm understanding your question correctly, Is the increase in fees going to directly benefit the maintenance of the park?

**(David Jones)**

Yeah, I think I'm trying to show two points really, that the increase increase of 11% in one year is unprecedented. It should follow the bank of England rate of inflation. And if you follow that, it would be something like £900, Especially since 2019, but even from last year, it would be £900. The question is, is the money that we pay for the maintenance and administration towards this building and the land? Or has it been used for other things?

**(SP)**

The answer is, yes, the money is spent on this building and everything that we provide. It's not going anywhere else. other. All the items are in there, every possible line of expenditure and income is explained. I will be utterly truthful and transparent here. There are staff that work in the office for the administration of the club,

**(David Jones)**

Are staff that are employed used to manage the booking policy that you have in place and are staff specifically used for certain clubs.

**(SP)**

Yes. The staff in the office obviously manage the bookings of the rooms here, they manage the bookings by community groups. There is one particular group, a swimming group, where we do employ the receptionist on Saturday morning, for instance, for an hour on Tuesday evening, and they give us a contribution towards that facility. And that's the agreement with the swimming group. That's about the only thing I can think of. Have you got something specific?

**(David Jones)**

Well, that is it. What I'm saying is that I don't see any donations or anything there from any other group listening listed, other than squirrels. and whereas we've got quite a number of groups, the events group that voluntarily give donations, I personally would like to see other groups do the same and it'd be listed and recorded so that we' all aware of what exactly is going on, and where the money is going.

**(SP)**

I'd like to take this opportunity and thanking those groups. I believe the gardening group as well did make donations.

**(David Jones)**

It doesn't seem to be ever listed anywhere. We need the various rows showing contributions and that sort of thing.

**(SP)**

We've got all the details in the office. That's what we keep. So yes, we do keep the records. They're not explained on here. It might be that people want to see that. I don't know. But for instance, we get a contribution of the fireworks, we get contributions when we actually bought the coffee machine, for instance, that came in. Those things have been explained in other places. So if you want a list of every penny that everybody might contribute and that could be arranged but it's all rolled up in one line on here. That's the answer to your question. Okay.

These are the figures that we need in order to actually make it work next year. Now, going back to what, six years, I suppose, 18, 19, 20, a lot of work was done for free by the trustees and that carried on until probably this year. That work is no longer being done by trustees in the same way. We've now have office staff and our staff and everybody else employed are doing the work that they used to do back in the year 2018 when we had a facilities manager, the estate manager the last time. But we've gone back to that, and I don't think we can carry on with unpaid help from trustees spending maybe 15 or 30 years a week, it is just not practical. We're now living in a world where essentially you're having to pay in order to keep this place as a service that we're enjoying at the moment, and that's the honest answer.

**(Gary Spencer)**

Hello, Gary Spencer, On the 10th of February this year when the squirrels debate was still going on and you the SGM was called, it was suggested that the estimated legal cost of process was 30 to 50,000 pounds for each party. What you said was 'DPML are in a position to cover the costs without reverting back to residents to help'. Your now say you have only 36,000 pounds left. I don't understand what's changed between now and February.

**(SP)**

I believe I did refer to this somewhere. Essentially, the unplanned replacement of the main tractor and the powered hand mowers, they failed completely, and they didn't work in order to carry on with the grass cutting and the maintenance, we had to go out and buy new ones effectively, we used some of the reserves to do that. So, yes, we have reserves of about 50,000 back in February, March. That's now down to about 35, 36,000. So there was capital expenditure spent on a new tractor and new hand mower in order to allow the two gardeners that we have to carry on doing the work that they needed to do. We'd been propping up the old machines and they were constantly in the yard being repaired. We have the machinery now and that's where the dropping reserves have gone.

**(Gary Spencer)**

I completely support buying new machinery for the gardeners, I'm not against that at all. You said in February, you had £50,000 and now only 36,000, you're asking for further plot holders support. I don't understand what's changed.

**(SP)**

Those of you who work in the real world in private companies know this. You can't run a three-quarter million internal organisation like this with nothing in the reserve. We have loans, yes, they're quite substantial, they're being paid off. We need some money just in case we don't know what's going to go wrong. There will be a small contribution to that reserve, about 4,000 pounds, I think the figure is in here if things work out the way it we hope, that will increase back up towards 40, which is about 10% of the income from the plot owners. I think it's essential, and we've had this debate all through the years in the 25 years I've been here about having a fighting fund just in case something happens. And that's really what we have. We are trying to just stabilise at the moment. So we had to spend some money, yes, on capital for the plant, we understand that. We may end up with a major issue with the roof on the lodge, we just don't know.

**(Ann Spencer)**

Are we looking into the ways people pay their plot fees, maybe making it easier for them to pay. Maybe paying direct debit without incurring any extra costs.

**(SP)**

You make a very good point. There's an IT improvement plan and the way at the moment, Louise is very involved in that which we see our old systems changing substantially in the next year. Part of that solution should yield the opportunity to do direct debits. It's a very good point. It's not something we can easily manage at the moment, but that's the aim by this time next year. I've been in conversations with Janine and Lucy and we're looking at different softwares, which will be more cloud based and give more resilience and different payment options than we have at the moment. At the moment, our systems are quite old, so hopefully, yeah, with the progress, we'll be able to change how we approach things.

Are there any other questions, please? No, okay. Well, I think the first vote, which is the Pink slip of paper. If you could make your mark and hold them up if you are For firstly please and they will be collected by ladies. Thank you very much.

Same scenario for the Budget of 2025/26 and the provisional budget for 2026/27, may seem a long time away, but we are obliged by the audiences to come up with a budget for the following year. Okay, thank you very much to that.

Next to agree the trustees remuneration.

The election of the vacant trustee positions. You have a white slips in front of you, There are four people and so four slips. Thank you very much.

We now need to vote on a resolution, which is proposed by Wendy Sinfield.

**(Wendy Sinfield)**

This is the proposal that is in mind. It's to allow dogs to come into the bar. Just two afternoon and two evenings per week. I chose the days because on those days which are Sunday and Wednesday, these are days when the coffee bar is open. People can come in and they can have coffee's. People can go with their dog during the afternoon, have a coffee, or they can come in during the evening. I know this is controversial, and a lot of people aren't very keen on having dogs in the bar, and somebody said only yesterday that they have lived here since 1971 and never had dogs in the bar. Well, with respect, things have changed. And you can go into most pubs and cafes locally, and you can take your dog. I'm trying to find a compromise, so I'm suggesting it's not every day. It's two days out of seven. During the summer, somebody started a coffee group which was on a Wednesday afternoon. A lot of people started coming along, and a lot of those were people who live alone are men, and they do have a dog. They come outside, we've had a beautiful summer so we've sat outside on those days. The winter is coming, and we only had to see the weather today to know that that's unlikely to happen now again until the spring. That is a shame because a lot of those people live on their own. They don't have family and what they're looking for is companionship. People need companions and

they're very supportive of each other. At the end of the day, we're here for each other. I want to make sure there's an opportunity for people to get together. If they got a job, the dog is their companion and very important to them.

**(SP)**

Thank you very much, Wendy. Would anybody else I like to speak for?

**(Unknown)**

I'm on my own and I've got a dog. I wouldn't want to bring a dog into the bar. We don't take them into a golf club bar. We're not a pub, we're talking about walking over in the wet. We have wet dogs in which would make more work. There are people who are allergic to dogs or are afraid of dogs, and I just want to put that side of it, because it's all a bit one sided.

**(SP)**

Thank You. Anybody else.

**(Richard Kolodziesski)**

I'm Richard, 6 threeways. I was originally against. However, I think I would like to support it and I think we should give it a try. I think it should be open. I don't think it should be restricted to a couple of days. just going to confuse. I wouldn't bring my dog, but I think what the lady said before was quite relevant in that if you're an owner bringing it in, you will create some mess. So, and I would say there's a proviso. If your dog does a whoopsie, it's down to you to clean it.

**(Ray)**

I'm Ray Cedarwood we've got a dog. I regularly walk the dog around the estate. I often have a beer with the wife, and sometimes we will stop and have a drink. I've been here probably five times, I'm sitting outside of all the benches are taken. There's nobody inside the bar having a drink. So there's nobody that's going to get inconvenience by it. All that's going to happen now is that I'm not going to come in, I'm not going to stop for a drink because it will start to get cold. I just won't come in so what's going to happen is the outside will be empty and the inside of the bar will be empty. We're here tonight, we're talking about plot fees and if we need to make a little money then surely having live business through the summer and the winter is better.

**(Maureen Fowler)**

Hi, I'm Maureen, I live on the stiles and have done for nearly 50 years, I don't agree with bringing dogs into the Bar, I know you said about quiet times. So what about on the Sunday afternoon when the football is on? you bring new dogs in each year. I don't if there is something about bringing dogs into the club. If your dog does something in the club then the smell never goes away, it stays. How well do you know them? You all say my dog is well behaved and everything but it just takes one to kick off. You all know, you could have all the sorts of trouble but I'm just thinking it's the wrong time, you know. I think Sunday and Sunday or Wednesday, there is going to be a lot of people who have to come watch football on those days.

**Laura Ireland**

I am Laura Ireland, I've been here for about six years. I. I don't really want to say anything here because I don't want to upset anybody, and I do want to respect the fact that obviously there are lots of people who don't want dogs in the bar, but I just want to give my honest opinion as a dog owner. I do understand that not everybody sees it this way, but me and my friends and people that are I know, we see dogs as truly part of the family. And honestly, this discussion is so amusing. I will expect my dogs to behave like anyone else in the bar, really. And if it wasn't, I would take it out like I would a child or anybody else who wasn't behaving. The only point I want to make is that I would spend more time in this bar and more money if I could bring my dog on his walk or on his Sunday walk into the bar.

**Peter Hudson**

Can I ask the question of, I guess, Tim? Is there liability insurance, if a dog should bite, let's say, a child, that responsibility falls on Delamere Park.

**Tim Cookson**

I'm not too sure. I have asked the question. and they are getting back to me. I believe the responsibility is the owner, we will continue to look into it.

**Peter Hudson**

The final thing is, OK, If we vote for it today, and it proves to be an absolute disaster, people are bitten, dogs Barking, all sorts of things, is there any roadback? Can we not allow it for, say, a month and trial it? If it works and you see the bar profits expodentially growing through the roof? great. I spent £6,000 in here in 2023, 2024. Dogs come in, I can't come in. I hate dogs. I'm fearful of dogs.

**Catherine Cernik**

I'm a primary school teacher. I work at school in Knutsford and we have a lot of children with behavioural and emotional needs. Our dog Nelly comes in with me. So I have written policies around having dogs around not just one or two people, but like 250 plus people plus adults. Some of who are allergic and some of whom are very fearful. So if anyone would like to borrow the paperwork to adjust to suit Delamere Park, just making your aware. But yeah there are things that you can do. There are a lot of procedures that make it a lot easier. Certainly for allergies, it's things like cleaning and that kind of thing. If it's two days a week, I think most people can probably manage their fears generally speaking if the dogs are on a lead.

**Steve Parsons**

Wendy, you put the resolution forward, there's been a very serious proposal made to have a trial, maybe we should try six months over the winter period and see what happens? I mean, would you like to amend your resolution?

**Wendy Sinfield**

I'm very happy to amend to a six months trial and you know, the lady mentions about Sundays being particularly.. I chose those days because I wanted the days when I thought the coffee bar would be open, which is the weekend I thought Friday, Saturdays were definitely busy.

**Steve Parsons**

OK, thank you, in case you didn't all hear that the suggestion was that we tried for six months. There are going to be issues about cleanliness, clearly all was mentioned, perhaps not an issue in some people's minds, but we want to include as many people as we can, but equally, we don't want to exclude people.

**Recess for voting**

The first vote was the approve 2025/2026 budget and Plot Fee contributions, that was passed. 96 for to 45 against to 12 abstentions.

The draft budget for 2026/2027 was 97 for 50 against 7 abstentions.

The approve the auditors was 123 for 12 against and 18 abstentions.

The resolution to allow dogs in the bar, albeit, as a six month period. That was 76 for, 72 against and 5 abstentions. Just to make a point that as a result of you voting for the resolution, there will now have to be a slight amendment to the Bylaws, where the Bylaw is currently from 2021 version, saying no dogs are allowed in the bar.

That will have to be slightly amended accordingly and we will put that update on the website.

So the question has been raised about what happens at the end of six months, I think leave that with the bar staff on the Tim, Tim will report back to everybody at the end of that period.

Regarding the trustees, all four trustees were voted in. There's nobody going through the actual numbers, but they were all four and seats were filled by the full nomination, so I'd like to

welcome all of those people. So Karen Greenfield, Louise Haynes, and Julian Key and Zoe Glendinning.

The award of the Fitzsimmons trophy. This year, we are awarding this to Alan Shaw and Ella Magnus for the contributions to the events committee and particularly for their work to allow film nights to take place, which have been enjoyed by so many of the families.

I would like to bring the meeting to an end, I'd like to thank you for your attendance tonight and for your contributions and we bring us to a close for 2025. I thank you very much.