APPROVED

Minutes: Board Meeting of The Field, held in new polytunnel on 2nd July 2026

1. WELCOME & MEMBERS INTERESTS

Present: Dave Amos (DA), David Bee (DB), Sally Bee (SB), Jane Bremner (JB), Gail Chapman (GC), Jim Cockburn (JC), Alan Dobie (AD), Linda Simpson (LS), Raymond Simpson (RS)

APOLOGIES: Elspeth Baillie-Field (EB), Dave Roberts (DR),

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Draft Minutes of 23rd April 2026 were approved.

3. ACTION POINTS, MATTERS ARISING, ANY AOB's for later?

Action points from 23rd April were reviewed as not done at last meeting.

AP1 – Table – carried forward to the future - RS

AP2 - FAQ's – carried forward - AD & DR

AP3 – DA produced an updated list of 83 current members

AP4 - Posters – nearing completion, at size/ paper quality stage

AP5 – Irrigation – improvements successfully undertaken

AP6 – Authorisation – discussed under Item 5 below

AP7 – Jan Osmand fruit trees – resolved

AP8 – Plants for polytunnel – now growing

AP9 - Irrigation – improvements successfully undertaken

AP10 – 2 scout visits undertaken

4. MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

DA produced an updated list of 83 members in 2026 and advised that he would like to hand on the role of Membership Secretary next year. Discussion followed on whether we should be actively seeking to increase the membership.

It was recognised further work is required to update email lists (AP1: AD)

5. FINANCIAL UPDATE

JC updated trustees on the financial situation and reported that the 2024-5 accounts have been cleared for submission to OSCR. AD to provide copies of the 2025 AGM reports to accompany the OSCR Annual Return (AP2: AD)

Discussion followed on whether we should be more proactive in seeking grant funds for capital purchases to bolster existing income sources, DB advised that there are currently significant Scottish Government funds available for sustainability and growing projects. Opportunities to be kept under review.

6. IRRIGATION AND WATER PIPE IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Works have been completed and were agreed by all to be very satisfactory. Trustees collectively thanked GC for seeing this through and expressed their appreciation of Johnny Agnew's work.

7. PLOT REVIEW & FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Big polytunnel – tomatoes, sweetcorn, rocket, spinach & basil all doing well, chillies & cucumber a bit behind. Will get tomatoes going earlier and grow more from seed next year

SB reported that brassicas & cabbages are all growing well with little slug damage to date. Sprouts, kaylettes, broccoli & celery all satisfactory.

LS noted there is unused space available in Plot 7. DB noted that more time than normal has been spent weeding this year

Plot 1 – onions. Garlic compost seems to have helped counter blight. Many are bolting early, it is thought due to temperature variations over recent weeks. Squash & courgettes are flowering well.

Plot 2 – carrots, parsnips, beetroot. Couch grass not too bad, soil is v good. DB mooted that the couch grass appears to be coming in with the dung being used.

Plot 3 – tatties. Sterling plot preparation work by Craig & Michael was commended. RS recommended that we cover the plot after harvesting to counter couch grass encroachment.

Plot 5 – leeks. 18 out of 22 boxes have been planted.

DB reported ground elder in the rhubarb patch.

Plot 5A – spinach has been slow and it was agreed more be sown in other available ground (in raised beds)

Plot 7 – no dig. Has been problematic this year due to grass encroaching as mowing hasn't been possible due to mower issues. This led to a discussion on whether there's a need to purchase a new mower. Rather than invest in a new mower now it was agreed to get the existing mower serviced

(AP3: LS&RS)

Plot 9 – broad beans, runner beans & french beans all doing well and almost ready to pick.

LOOKING FORWARD/ FIELD CHALLENGES

An initial discussion was held on how to best approach the long-term future of the Field given the various challenges in maintaining the status quo.

A wide range of issues were raised, inter alia:

- The principal need to identify what these main challenges actually are before engaging with the members
- Two key practicalities highlighted were (1) the ageing core group finding physical tasks harder; (2) looking forward, how to engender the level of commitment in the 'next generation' required to keep the Field operating successfully
- The importance of framing the future against our 4 principal reasons for having the Field
- The implications of climate change and need to adjust how we operate e.g what we grow, how we store, the importance of education
- The merits of taking a more strategic approach to planning next and future year's cropping
- Practical changes to consider include:
    - Reducing plot sizes
    - Adjusting/ reducing seeds purchased to focus on what we can manage successfully e.g reducing potatoes, onions/ leeks
    - Manage the margins more effectively
    - Employ someone to do the heavy cutting
    - Focus on successful crops

It was agreed that a focus on what are our challenges and how can we resolve them should underpin further discussions.

It was agreed that trustees should hold a dedicated meeting on this, both to pin down the important issues and determine how best to engage members. A meeting was arranged for **27th August, 3:30** in the new polytunnel. (AP4: All)

Trustees were encouraged to submit their thoughts/ views/ ideas in advance to help focus discussion. LS and AD will endeavour to pull together a discussion paper for the day.

(AP5: LS&AD)

8. ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

- Approved Board Minutes – it was agreed that approved minutes will be posted on the website. AD to take forward with John Small
(AP5: AD)
- Safeguarding – nothing to report
- Notifiable events – nothing to report
- Climate Change, Sustainability & wider engagement matters – see above under Item 8

9. <u>SUMMER 2026 – ARRANGEMENTS FOR STALLS AT BIRNAM ARTS</u>

It was agreed that the first summer stall at Birnam Arts will be held on Thursday 16th July. AD to liaise with Birnam Arts re arrangements [Big Bear!]

A request to be put out to members to try and 'spread the load' of the work required (harvesting, transport, running the market etc). AD to co-ordinate (AP6: AD)

10**9.** **<u>SAINT JEROME CHAPEL SITE</u>**

Exciting discoveries were reported. The site is to be covered up again to protect the findings. Further excavations are expected

10. <u>AOCB</u>

Problems with blackthorn suckers in the horse field. DB & RS to pursue (AP7: DB, RS)

12. <u>NEXT BOARD MEETING</u>

30th July, 19:00 in the large polytunnel.

Action Points from meeting

It was recognised further work is required to update email lists (AP1: AD)

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Problems with blackthorn suckers persist in the horse field. DB & RS to pursue (AP7: DB, RS)