



Minutes of Friends of Cammo General Meeting held in Cammo Lodge on 2nd September 2026

Present: Simon Gillam (Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Barbara Braham, Thornton White, Grahame Whitehead, Katherine Thomson, Sheena McRobie, Jayne MacGregor, Rhona Paterson, Peter Scott, Douglas Adamson, Mike Young, Christine Shaw, Marian Allen.

Apologies: Michael Roe (Chairperson), John Jeffrey, Carol Smith. In the absence of Michael, Simon chaired the meeting and Barbara assisted with minutes.

1. Membership update: Barbara reported that there was a total of 299 members of which 31 were new and 12 had rejoined. 3 new members joined in July bringing the total of new members to 34. Targeted emails were sent to 59 members who have not yet paid this year. We will see from the next bank statement see how many have renewed their membership.

2. Treasurer's update: Lynn reported that General funds are £8705, up £1804 in the year. Annual subscriptions and donations have come in at a satisfactory rate. We have received generous donations from Cirrus Logic and Wood Mackenzie. Expenditure so far has included £528 on equipment, £260 on bird boxes, £730 on annual insurance, £211 on slabs etc for our new storage unit and £154 on computer costs. Higher expenditure including Victorian garden to follow later. We still have £215 restricted funds for information panels.

3. Action Plan and Vision: Friends of Cammo Committee had prepared an Action Plan for 2026 and are using it as a tool to monitor progress. The latest version reporting progress, including time estimates for work done in the first half of 2026, had been shared with members as a paper for this meeting, along with the updated 2030 Vision that underlies it. The Committee were congratulated on having produced the plan, which shows the large amount of work being done by the Friends.

Peter asked about the vision of seating by the water trough that is in the Vision but not in the 2026 Action Plan. It is still viewed as desirable, but there is difficulty in delivering flowing water to it, and trees are growing around it. It will be considered for inclusion in the 2027 Action Plan.

4. Recent progress on Action Plan (in the order that they appear in the Action Plan)

- The remaining apple tree labels have been received from Colin Wren of NTS and attached to the trees; all 20 apple trees now have labels.
- The Victorian Garden area is now free of weeds. Planting is expected to start in September/October, and Lynn's son will assist in laying the brick outline. An overall plan for the garden is still needed.
- Bird boxes for kestrel and tawny owl had been purchased and put up in High Meadow. The possibility of cameras had not yet been pursued. It was recalled that in the past there had been a buzzard camera, with viewing at the Lodge. No further work is planned this year on installing bird boxes received from Brownies.
- Following checks on few-flowered leek, Barbara had checked for Himalayan balsam and only found a few to remove. Newly identified invasive species to be tackled were mare's tail (horsetail) near the first pedestrian gate on Cammo Walk and snowberry beside the path along the Bughtlin Burn. It was noted that there is a trip hazard from a part sleeper at that gate.

- The borage planted near the well in the walled garden has not been seen, in an area where other vegetation has grown strongly. We should review it in spring 2027.
- The Council Tree Officer has recommended that some of the Elms planted by Scouts in North Field should be moved, as the high density could make disease more likely. This will be proposed to the Scouts who planted them.
- Work has continued to weed inside the ruins. After doing the Enclosure and Cottages, we have done one section of the Steading and gone back over the Enclosure.
- The two plum trees have been pruned and fruit thinned from the overlaid apple trees.

5. Honeybee update: John had provided a written report. "There are 4 active hives and I have already one full super ready for honey extraction. I will be taking the remaining supers off next week and the honey harvest will take place. I estimate I will have around 4 full supers in total so about 30kg of honey in total. I have had to re-queen one hive and another hive was closed down due to having a drone laying queen. I have spent around 5 hours attending to the bees over July and August."

6. Wildlife update: Barbara reported on this, including information provided by Michael.

- The Butterfly Citizen Science team who report weekly, between 1st April and 30th September, were joined this year by Dougie and Kellie and reported to Michael, who sends the findings to the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. 2026 has been a good year for butterflies except for Meadow Brown, for which numbers were down.
- There are many birds who either make Cammo their home or who are seasonal visitors, at least 44 species have been noted so far. The summer visitors, Swallows, Martins and Swifts are getting ready to leave for the winter. It was great to see a large gathering of Swifts in Cammo this year as Swift numbers have been dropping in the UK generally. Hopefully the introduction of Swift nesting bricks in some new homes will help to reverse this trend.
- We have thriving wild flower meadows which include Orchids, mainly in South and North Fields. We aim to note the varieties of the wildflower as another way of championing the biodiversity of Cammo.
- To protect the wildlife in the Wetland area it is planned to put up some notices requesting that dog owners keep their dogs out of the water. Jen has agreed that signs can be put up, but wording not yet agreed.

7. Cammo Management Group (CMG) and Advisory Committee (CEAC):

Jen had organised a site visit on 7 July for CEAC members, but only one NTS representative (Colin Wren) and no councillors had been able to come. Colin had found it interesting and had provided some useful advice, but the visit did not achieve the desired objective of updating CEAC members. It is believed that the next formal CEAC meeting will be in late November, but not yet confirmed.

Now that Jen has moved to be parks officer in SW Edinburgh she has less time for Cammo, and has asked for the frequency of CMG meetings to be reduced. The last meeting was on 23 June, and Forest Kindergarten had again been unable to attend. There had been little progress on the matters being actioned by Council staff. Jen said that if we were to lay slabs as a base for our second cabinet behind the Lodge this would expedite matters, so we have now laid the slabs and notified Jen to order the cabinet. The next CMG meeting is scheduled for 29 September.

8. Archaeology update: No report had been received from EAFS for the meeting. It had been noted that work continues on the Walled Garden "Conservatory", and that an additional area to the west had been cleared for excavation seeking evidence of another building and of paths. The base that has been lying next the cottages ruin may now be moved to the Walled Garden; it was noted that it had been lifted to be upright.

9. Open Day: For the joint Open Day with EAFS on Sunday 6 September FoC will do 5 nature walks, leaving the Lodge on the hour between 10am and 2pm, using a route and script devised by Michael, each expected to take about 40 minutes and finish at the Walled Garden, where John will talk about honeybees and Lynn about the Victorian Garden and other FoC activity there. We will have a stall at the main entrance similar to Gate Days, where people can join FoC, take away forms or buy publications. All the Committee members and Dougie have agreed to help. EAFS will have two guided walks and other activities.

10. Any Other Business:

Sheena asked about willow trees overhanging the canal. During the visit on 7 July it had been agreed that they should be coppiced (cut off near the base, after which they will sprout again). FoC had offered to do this, but the Council will first contact the Zoo to see whether want the willows, no progress known.

Sheena said that some of the protective fencing around the stables had come down. This will be reported to the Council.

Date for the next Ordinary General Meeting is Wednesday 2nd December.

Thanks were expressed to Lynn and Grahame for providing the refreshments.

Meeting Closed

**Friends of Cammo
September 2026**