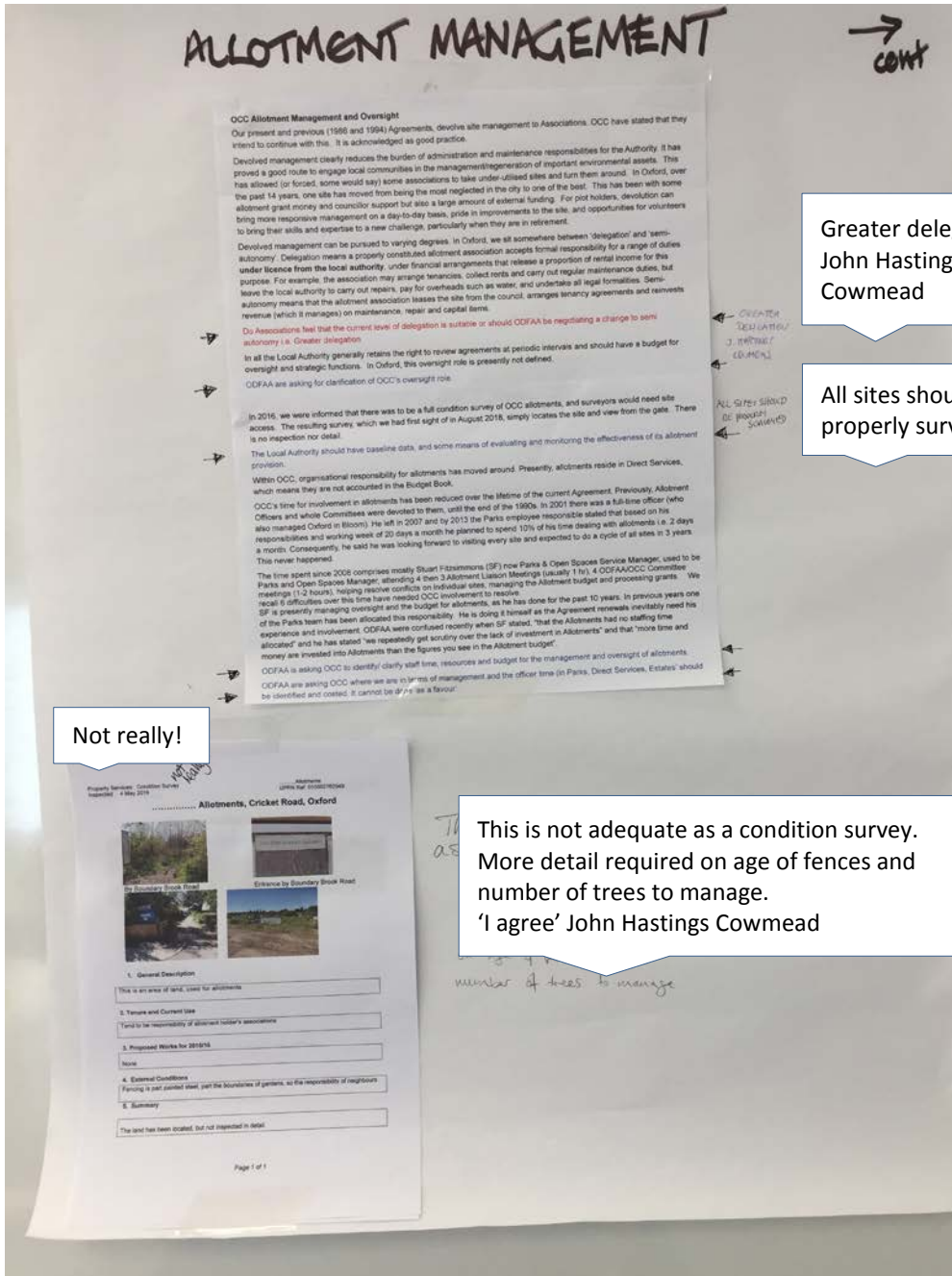
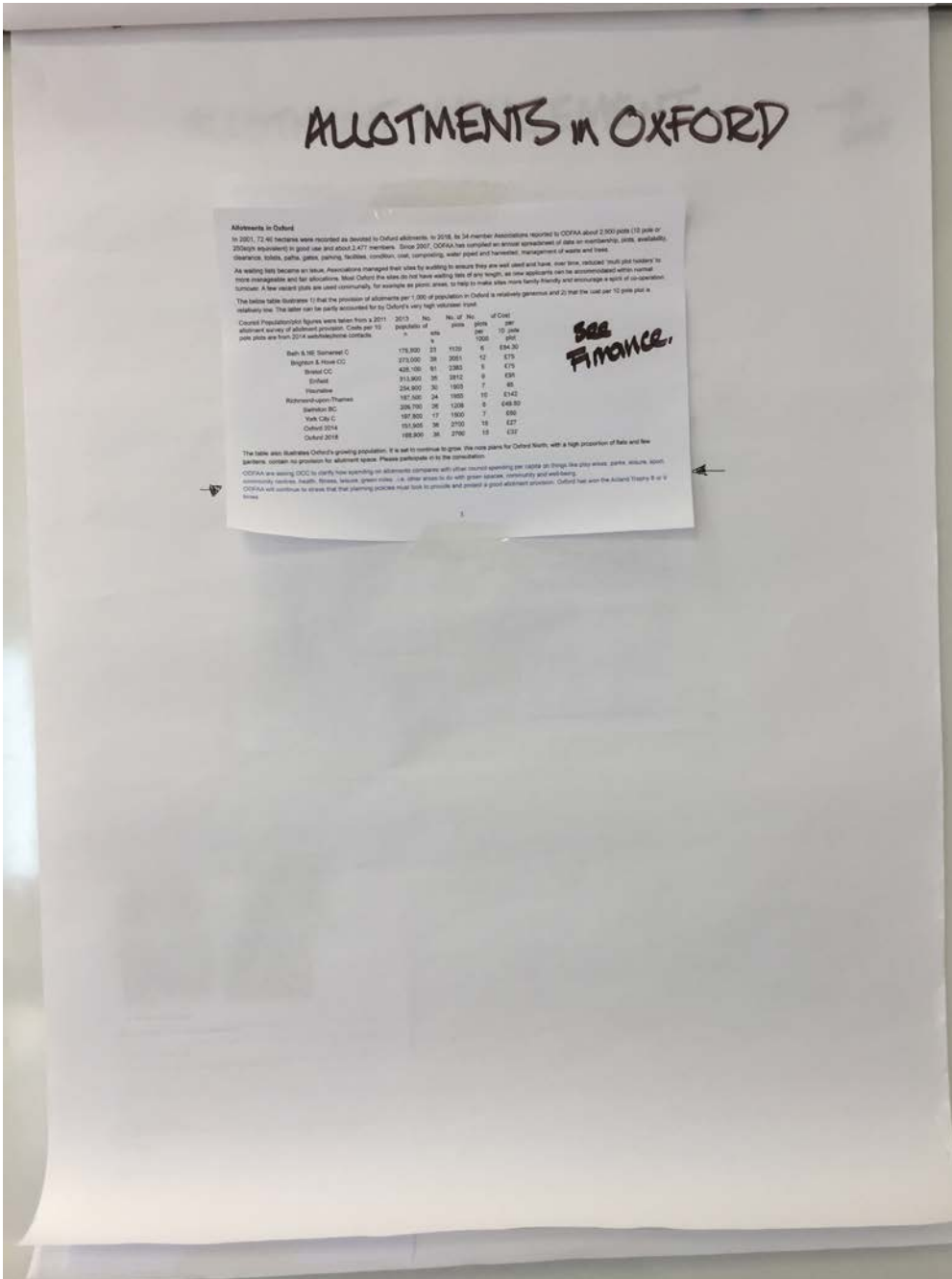


1. Allotment Management

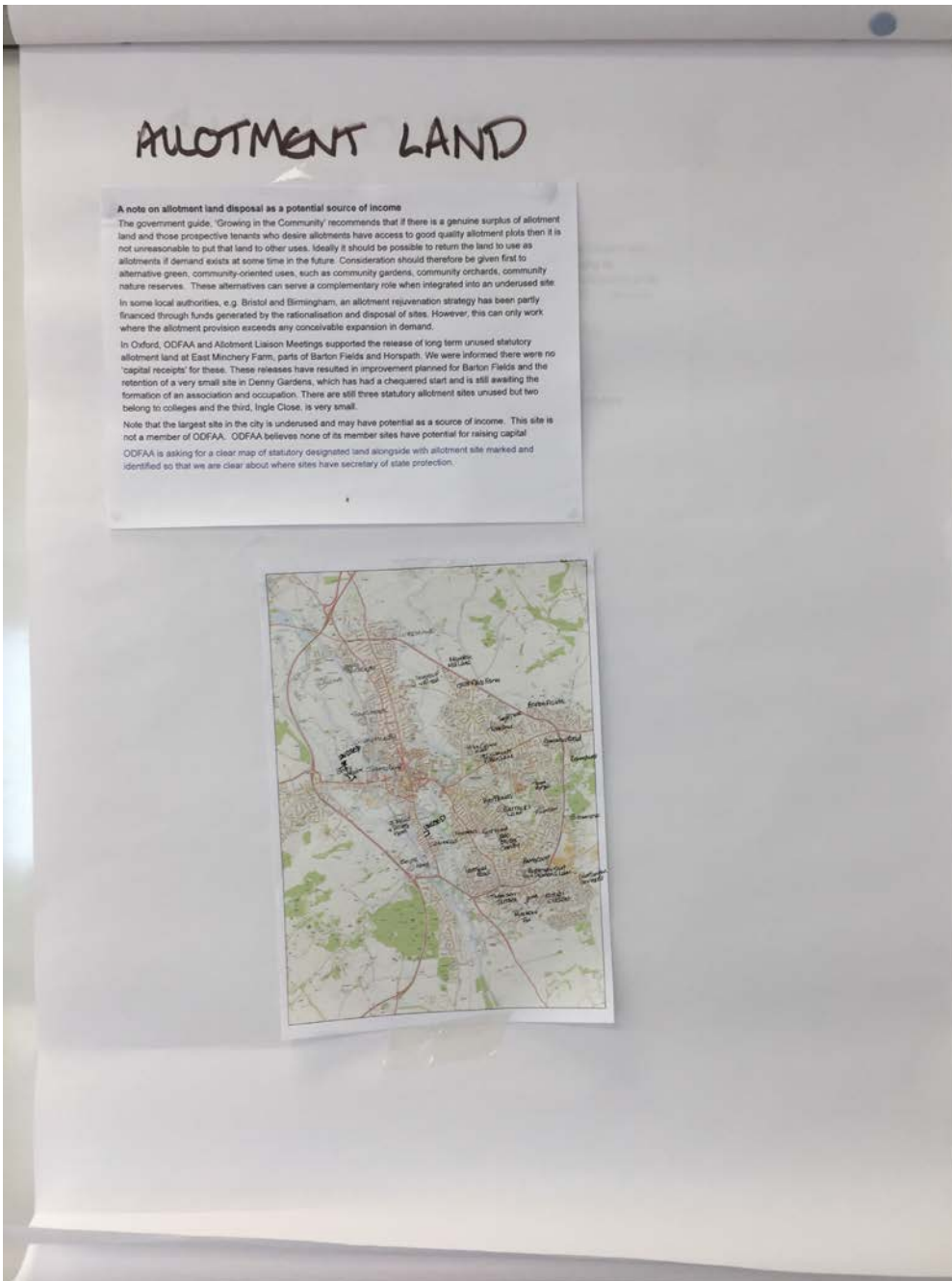


2. Allotments in Oxford



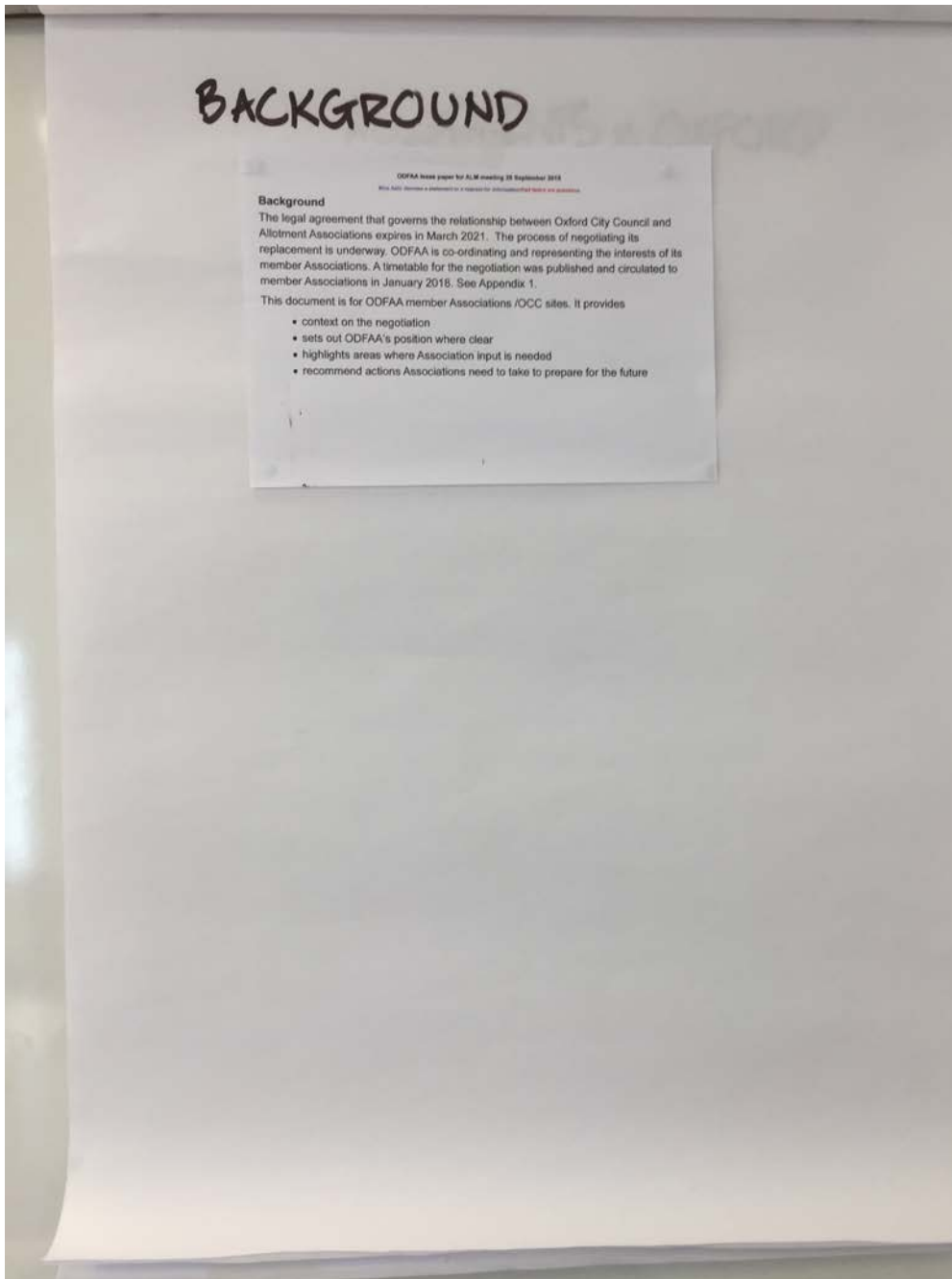
No comments received

3. Allotment land



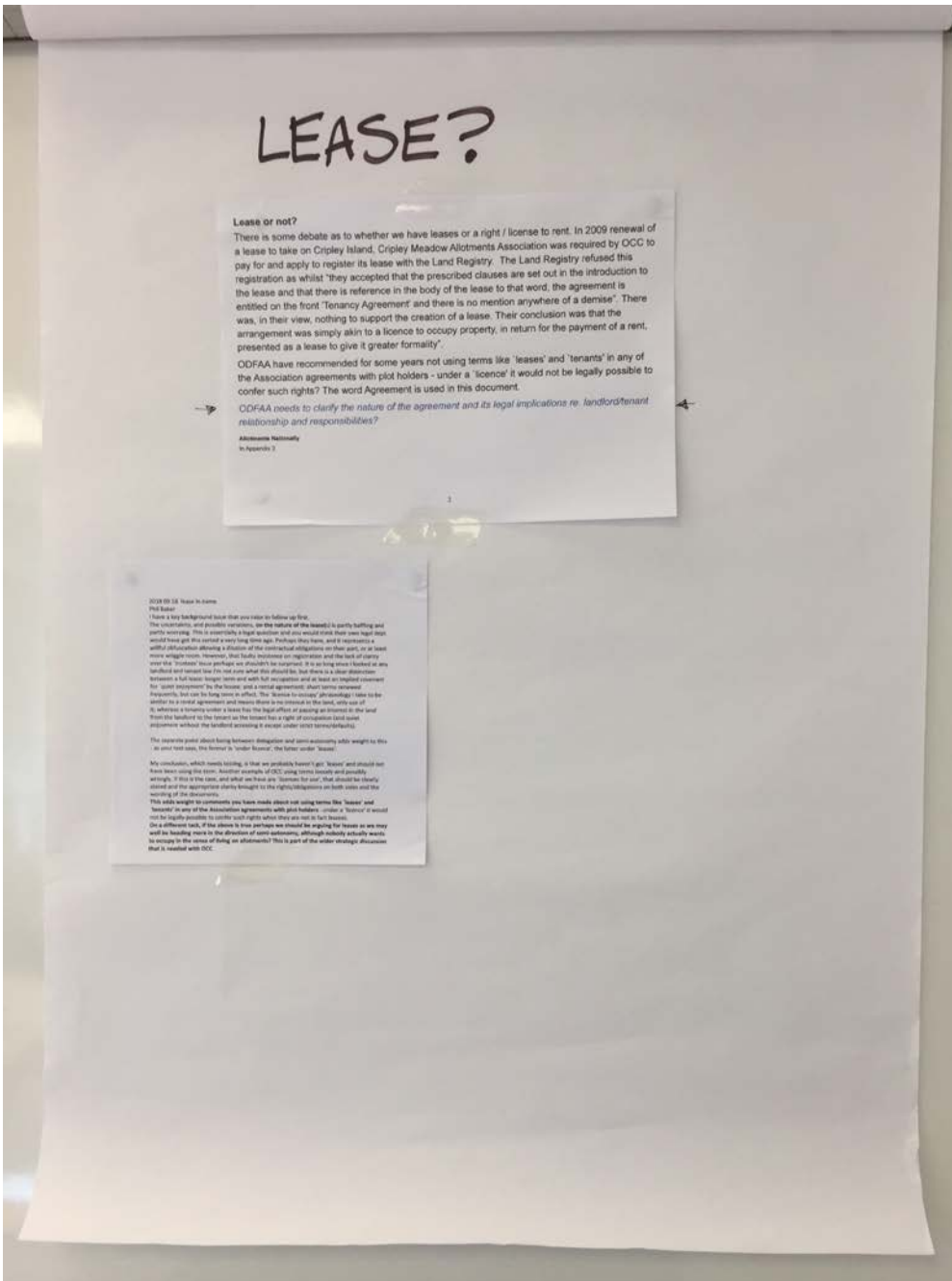
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4. Background



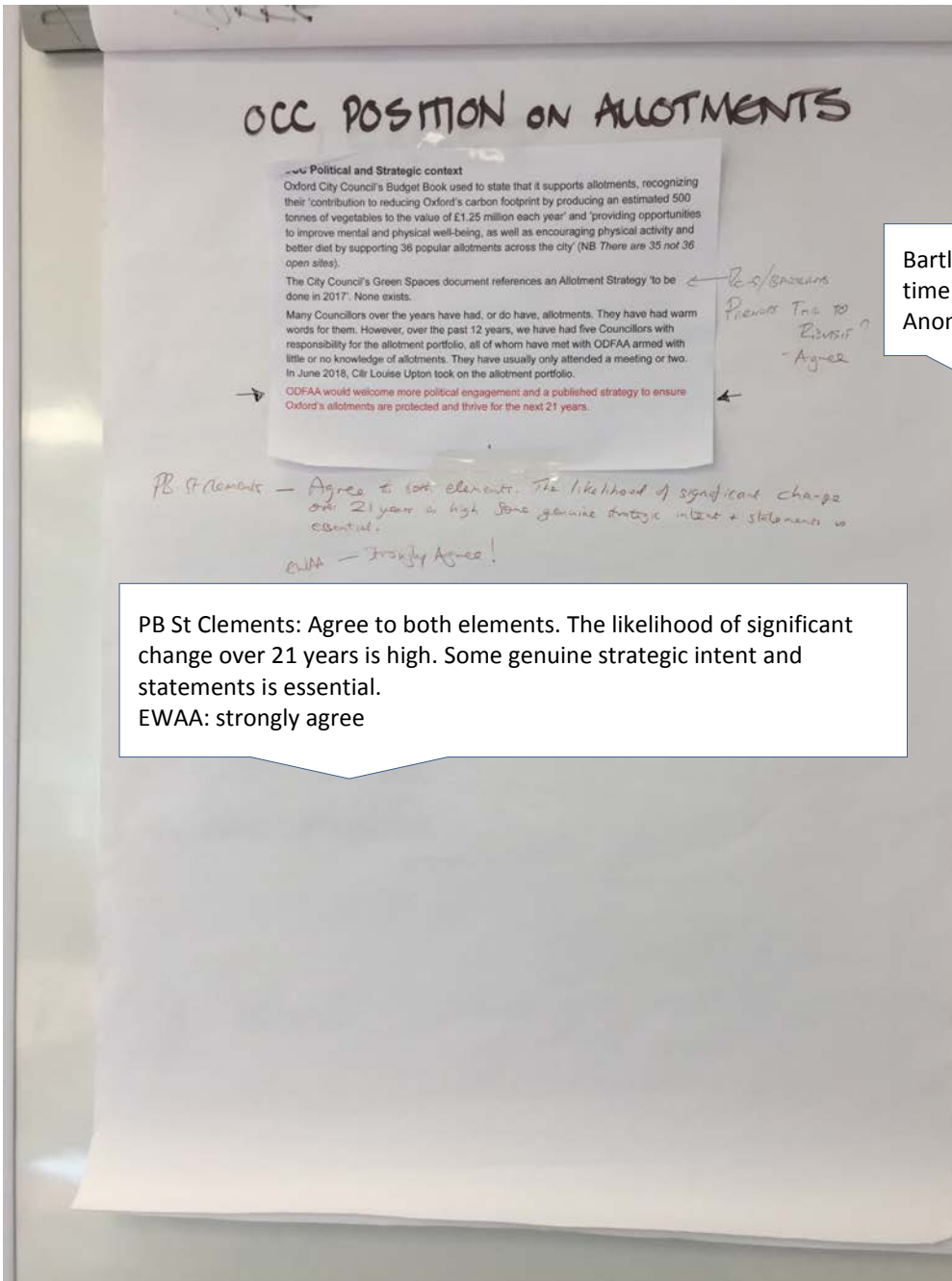
No comments received

5. Lease



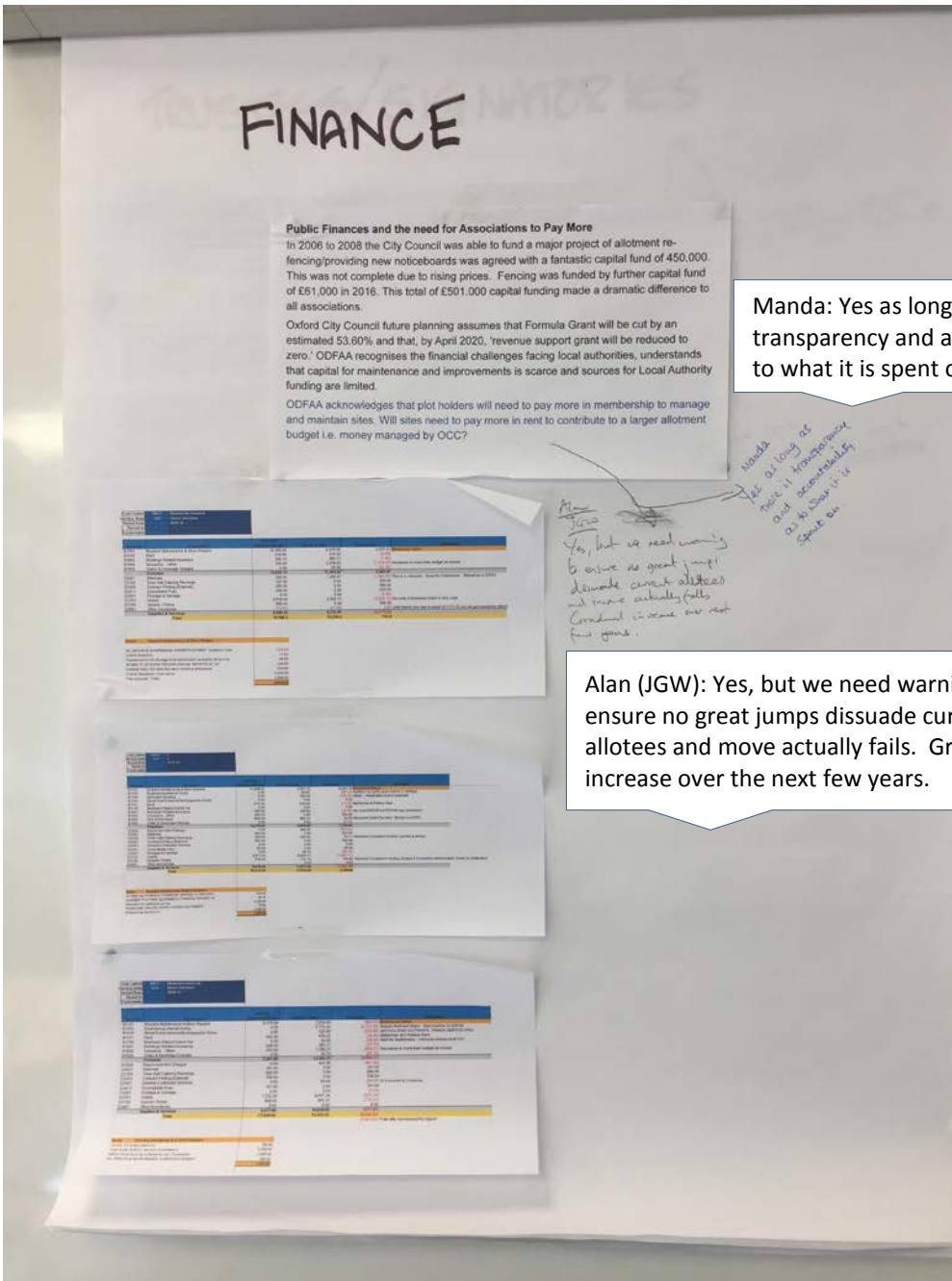
No comments received

6. OCC position on allotments

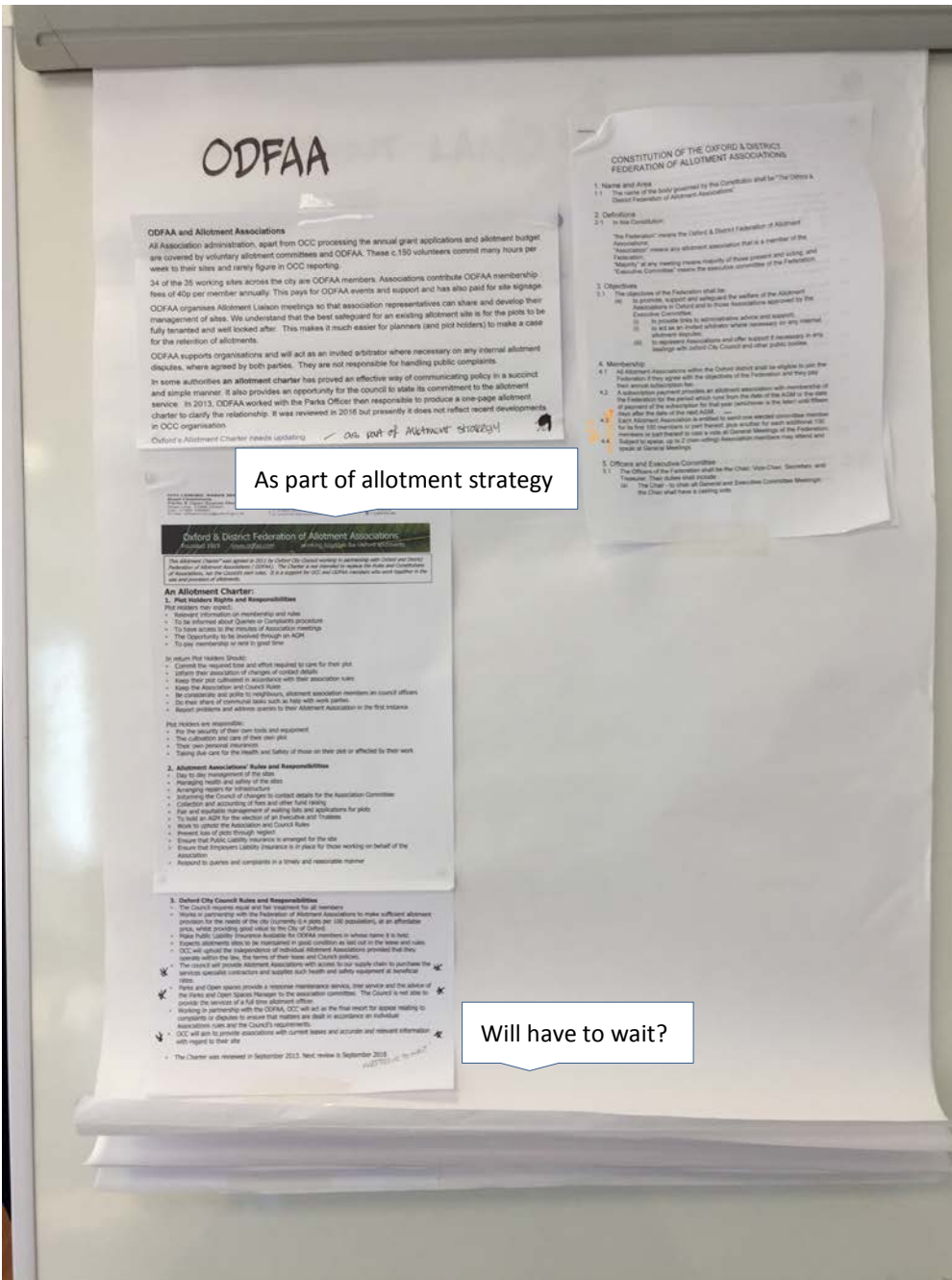


PB St Clements: Agree to both elements. The likelihood of significant change over 21 years is high. Some genuine strategic intent and statements is essential.
EWAA: strongly agree

7. Finance



8. ODFAA



As part of allotment strategy

Will have to wait?

9. Site rents

SITE RENTS, MEMBERS SUBS (see Oxford Allotments)

Allotment Rents and the Basis for Charges
8 of OCC's 36 sites are on non-OCC land but 2 of these pay rent into the council. 29 pay rent annually to OCC as landlord. One site, High Close is disused. Since 2015 this allotment rent money has been ring-fenced within OCC, augmented by income from other sites (electricity stations). It is ploughed back into allotments as:

- the reactive maintenance budget. This is the maintenance budget which OCC control. It can be and has been used to cover some long-term maintenance issues. Work should be reported to Allotment Liaison Meetings. Some expenditure has not been reported until after the event. Budget income and spending has proved difficult to come by. If severely exceeded figures for three years, 2015 to 2018.
- grants which are available to all allotments (including sites on non-OCC land). Most of the grant requests we get from Associations, except from small sites, are for projects that could probably be managed within their own resources. ODFAA have copies of some awarded grants back to 2008.
- competition budget £987
- insurance presently of £30 per site

Non-OCC sites pay rent to their respective landlords. To date, it has been ODFAA's policy to enable these sites to access all the above budgets even though they have not contributed to them, because we were supported major clearances to bring sites and plots back into operation. Future arrangements and costs are under review.

ODFAA will ask the Council to give a written commitment that its 2015 undertaking to ring-fence the allotment budget and dedicate it to allotments will continue.

Over 1000 of the plot provision in Oxford sits in the Flood plan. Councilors gave these sites compensation after the 2007 floods and agreed a continued rent discount of 5%.

ODFAA recommend that the current rent discount for flooding continues in the future.

Each Association determines its own plot holder membership fees. Many have increased over the past 10 years as Associations have begun to manage sites more actively (a few already look too low). In the context of the continued support on public finances, if they wish to maintain and develop their sites, Associations will probably need to increase their fees.

Further, Long term Site Management Plans and associated financial planning will enable sites to be even more assured to managing their own resources and ensure informed dialogue with their members.

Do Associations agree with ODFAA's conclusion regarding the likelihood that plot holder rent/membership fees will need to increase?

ODFAA recommend that Associations undertake budget planning to cover the period of the new Agreement. Rising costs are likely to make longer term estimates less accurate, but a 5-year period, maintenance plan is a start. The information ODFAA recently requested from Associations (data sheet) should help.

ODFAA intends to request from OCC analysis of OCC's maintenance spending for at least the past 7 years (i.e. since the last review) as a reference for Associations to develop their financial plans.

A condition survey should be the start of a new lease, so that all are aware of what they are taking on. ODFAA intends to ask OCC to fund such a survey and have it carried out.

A possible breakdown of 2018 allotment spend
11,468k income from site rent - 8,000 from other allotment land users e.g. electricity stations
23k capital funding (500,000/21)
Plot holders 2477 x average plot fee 32 = 79,264 - site rents 11,468 = 67,796
Overall annual allotment funding 198+23k = 221,796 = 109,796

This does not include OCC spend on management and oversight (which is their responsibility for funding) or Association volunteers managing sites. Assuming no big capital funding in future, associations need to at least augment their income to make up for its loss.
E.G. A site of 100 members with an additional maintenance cost of £30,000 over 21 yrs, would need to charge an extra £24 per member per year.

Disparities in rent per hectare and site area records
ODFAA negotiated the allotment site rent for all in 2015. Previous rent reviews did not successfully address the disparities in price per hectare which had over the years with no recorded reason. The 2015 rent review acknowledged that another round of adjustments is necessary. We have a table of 2015 rent adjustments. Unlike 2015, it could be possible to reduce some of the rents (if deemed too high) coincident with the new Agreement.

In the 2015 review many sites queried their recorded hectare figures. Where the site rent is based on area it must be checked and agreed.
ODFAA will request that OCC undertake to collect accurate records of site areas and continue the work on parity per hectare. Presently rents are reviewed every 7 years.

Differential rent according to services or site characteristics?
It has been suggested by SF over the past few years that there might be differential site rents based on services provided in the past. For example, OCC installed water on some sites in the 50s, some association sheds between the 50s/60s, and one metalled road. Should these sites pay more?

Should sites with facilities such as trees and ditches pay less?
ODFAA believes the fairest way to apportion rent is per hectare, with some consideration for trees? See below.

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Alan [JGW]: Need to have ability for a 'disasters fund'

Manda [Cripely]: Yes – essential for planning

Alan [JGW]: Probably, but need to function as [xxx] fund and routine maintenance along with routine replacement

JH Cowmead: Yes
Alan [JGW]: Yes but different sites have differing priorities

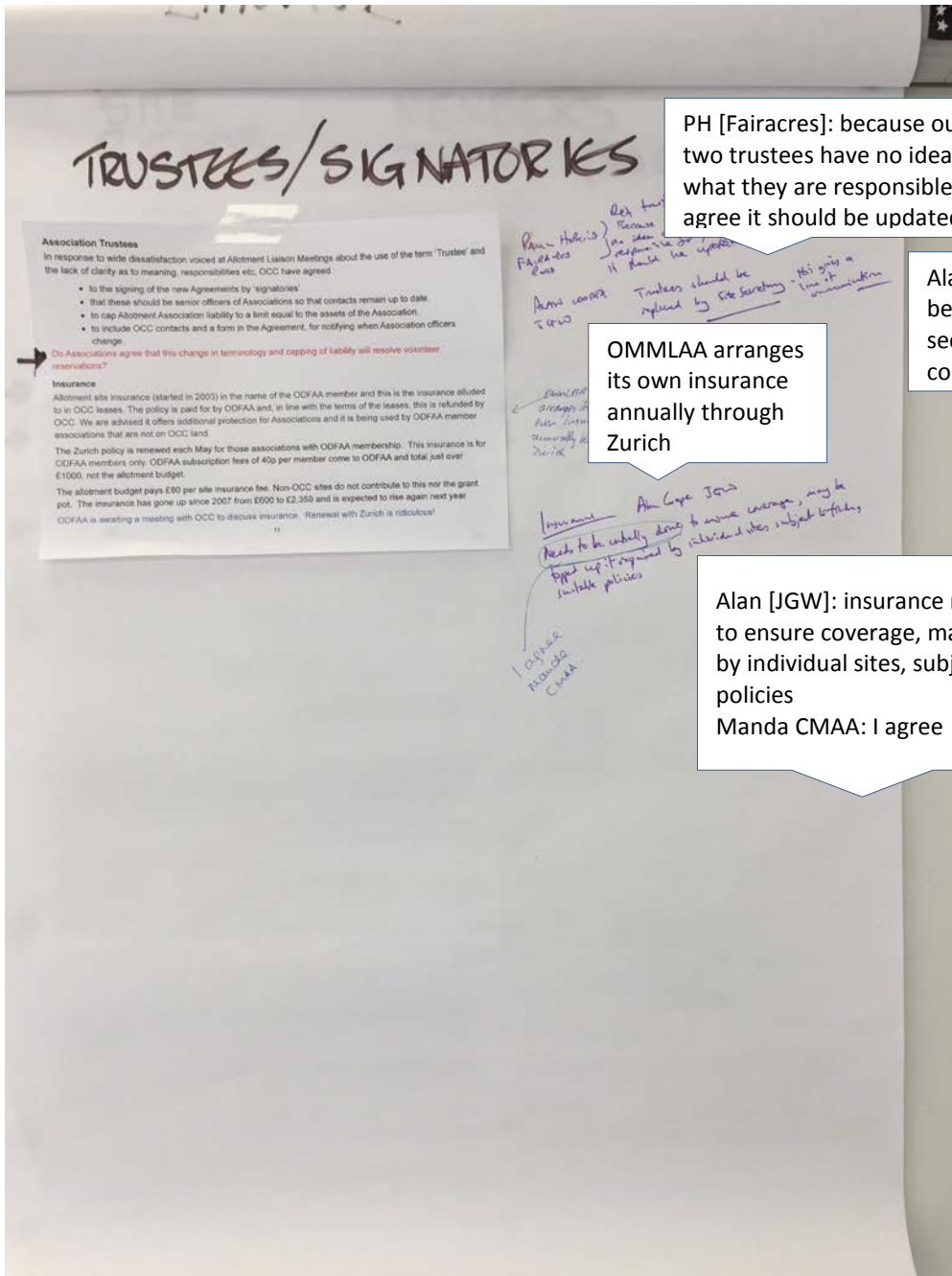
Please note Old Marston Mill Lane – we arrange our public liability insurance through Zurich

Alan [JGW]: does not take into account nature of the site and needs for paths/access/boundary protection (naturally brambles)

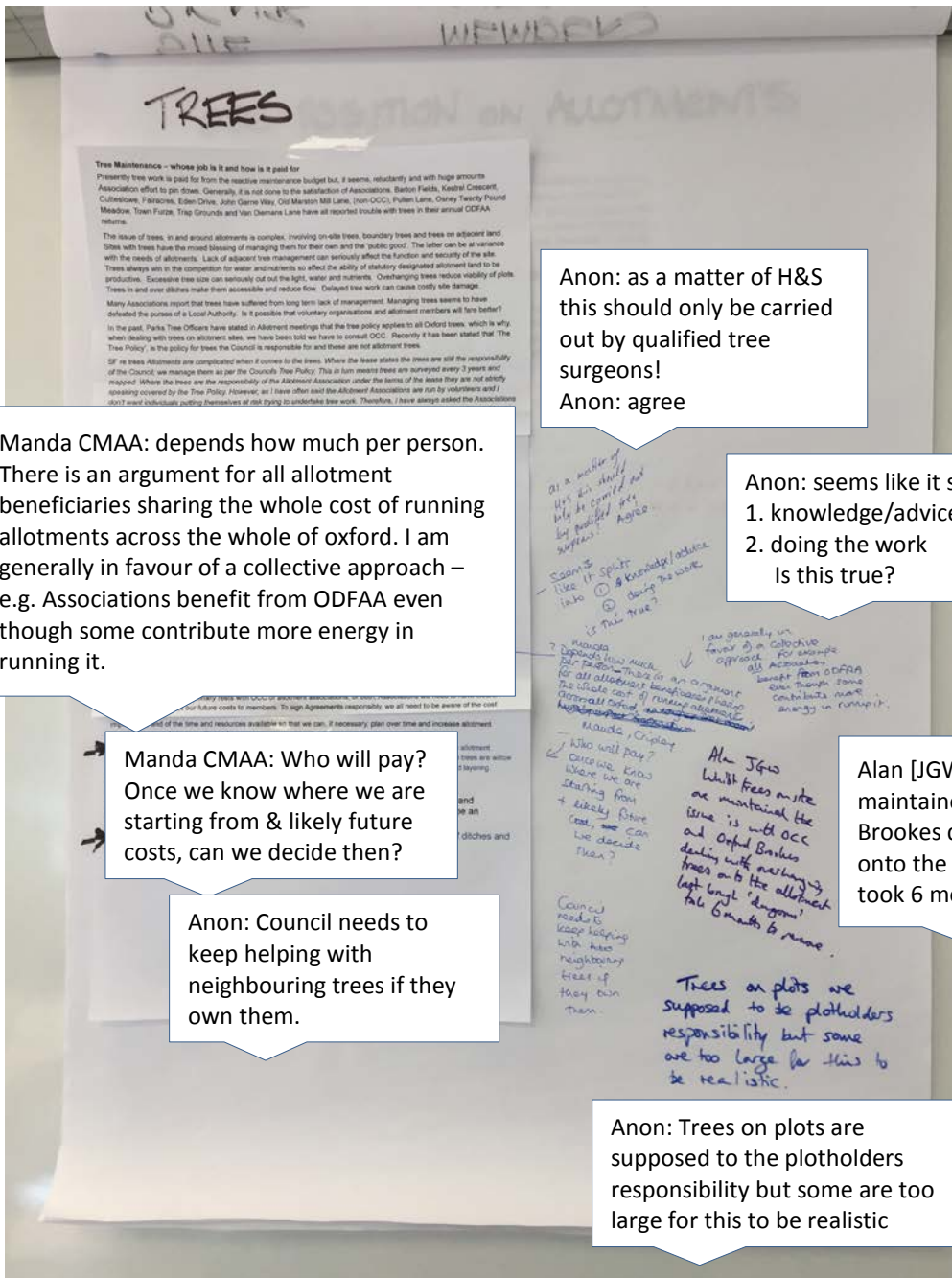
Handwritten notes on the document:

- A-JGW: Must have ability for a disasters fund!
- Cripely: Manda
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10. Trustees & signatories



11. Trees



TREES

Tree Maintenance - whose job is it and how is it paid for

Presently tree work is paid for from the reactive maintenance budget but, it seems, reluctantly and with huge amounts Association effort to get done. Generally, it is not done to the satisfaction of Associations. Barton Fields, Keble Crescent, Cuffeswell, Faircross, Eden Drive, John Game Way, Old Marston Mill Lane, (non-OCC), Pullen Lane, Osney Twenty Pound Meadow, Town Furze, Trap Grounds and Van Demans Lane have all reported trouble with trees in their annual ODFAA returns.

The issue of trees, in and around allotments is complex, involving on-site trees, boundary trees and trees on adjacent land sites with trees have the mixed blessing of managing them for their own and the 'public good'. The latter can be at variance with the needs of allotments. Lack of adjacent tree management can seriously affect the function and security of the site. Trees always win in the competition for water and nutrients so affect the ability of statutory designated allotment land to be productive. Excessive tree size can seriously cut out the light, water and nutrients. Overhanging trees reduce visibility of plots. Trees in and over ditches make them inaccessible and reduce flow. Delayed tree work can cause costly site damage.

Many Associations report that trees have suffered from long term lack of management. Managing trees seems to have delivered the purpose of a Local Authority. Is it possible that voluntary organisations and allotment members will fare better?

In the past, Parks Tree Officers have stated in Allotment meetings that the tree policy applies to all Oxford trees, which is why, when dealing with trees on allotment sites, we have been told we have to consult OCC. Recently it has been stated that 'The Tree Policy' is the policy for trees the Council is responsible for and those are not allotment trees.

If all trees on allotments are complained when it comes to the trees. Where the lease states the trees are still the responsibility of the Council, we manage them as per the Council's Tree Policy. This in turn means trees are surveyed every 3 years and mapped. Where the trees are the responsibility of the Allotment Association under the terms of the lease they are not strictly covered by the Tree Policy. However, as I have often said the allotment Associations are run by volunteers and I don't want individuals putting themselves at risk trying to undertake tree work. Therefore, I have always asked the Associations

Anon: as a matter of H&S this should only be carried out by qualified tree surgeons!
Anon: agree

Manda CMAA: depends how much per person. There is an argument for all allotment beneficiaries sharing the whole cost of running allotments across the whole of Oxford. I am generally in favour of a collective approach - e.g. Associations benefit from ODFAA even though some contribute more energy in running it.

Anon: seems like it splits into:
1. knowledge/advice
2. doing the work
Is this true?

Manda CMAA: Who will pay? Once we know where we are starting from & likely future costs, can we decide then?

Anon: Council needs to keep helping with neighbouring trees if they own them.

Alan [JGW]: while trees on site are maintained the issue is with OCC and Oxford Brookes dealing with overhanging trees onto the allotment. Last bought 'dangerous' took 6 months to remove.

Anon: Trees on plots are supposed to be plotholders responsibility but some are too large for this to be realistic