

Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society
7th Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 20 July 2024
Bristol Estate Committee Room

Present:

Paul Skelly – 37CV – Chair
Jenny Embleton – 118CV – Treasurer
James Gilderoy – 37CV – Secretary
Mary Ledgard – 26CV
Vanessa Coxpendray – 137CV
Arthur Tallon – 77aWH
Roger Dean – 55CV
Tara Salter – 58bCV
Janice Johnson – 9 minibed
Joanne Lewis – 5 minibed
Troy Ewings – 31CV
Nick Fry – 64CV
Stephen Allen-Tidy – 143CV
Andrew Allen-Tidy – 143CV
Joy Smyth - 69CV
Kerry Slater – Whitehawk Food Project
Romany Slater – Whitehawk Food Project

Apologies:

Jane Griffin, Jonathan Smyth, Jenny Collins

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Minutes of last AGM, 1 August 2021

The minutes of the last AGM were agreed

2. Report of the Society's activities since the last AGM

Nick reported on the mini bed scheme:

- Idea came from a talk at the April 2023 Brighton and Hove Allotment Federation's (BHAF) AGM.

- A sub-committee was set up and the council approached about using a plot for the scheme. The council eventually issued the tenancy agreement to the Society in August 2023.
- A grant from BHAF's development fund was awarded in November 2023.
- 11 mini beds have been created and all let. More mini beds will be created later this year.
- The whole plot is rented by the Society from the Council and sub-let by the Society to mini-bedders for £12/year, made up of £7 rental and £5 Society membership (less for the initial part year).
- The scheme has been successful and BHAF is going to use it as case study.

In discussion it was pointed out that the gaps between the mini beds were too narrow to enable people to kneel down. It was agreed that future mini beds would be more widely spaced.

Jenny reported on the Men in Sheds (MiS) project:

- MiS first contacted the society in April 2023.
- It is part of a national charity (menssheds.org.uk) aimed at supporting community projects and improving wellbeing and mental health.
- They had made a number of plot numbers (available on 'first come first served' basis from the Hub) and numbers for each of the 7 site gates.
- It had been a successful collaboration and it was hoped MiS would be able to undertake more projects in the future.

Mary reported on the Society's events:

- Seedling swaps had taken place in May of each year, with many seedlings donated.
- Apple pressing days had taken place, co-ordinated with Roedale allotments who lent the equipment.
- Spud-in-a-bucket competitions had been held for the last three years, with this year's weigh in on 14 September.
- Plot open days had also been held and the Society's Hub opened all year round, twice monthly April to September and monthly for the rest of the year.
- A star gazing event had been planned with Brighton Astro but cloud cover prevented it going ahead.

Jenny reported on improvements at the Hub:

- After the shelter had been built gravel was installed on the ground and a new bench acquired.
- Plans are being considered to extend the seating area and to make it safer as the land slopes away.

- Thanks were extended to all those that volunteered to run the Hub throughout the year and provided cakes for sale.

In discussion it was suggested that a good quality strimmer be acquired to better maintain the outside area.

3. Committee Elections

The following committee office members were nominated and elected unopposed:

- Chair – Nick Fry, nominated by Jenny Embleton and James Gilderoy
- Treasurer – Jenny Embleton, nominated by Roger Dean and Tara Salter
- Secretary – James Gilderoy, nominated by Mary Ledgard and Nick Fry

It was explained that named office members were required for banking purposes but it was anticipated that chairing of meetings would rotate amongst other members.

The following committee members had stepped down since the last AGM and were thanked for their excellent contributions: Tessa Pawsey, Nigel Spencer, Susan Perrin and Anna Moulson.

The following committee members had recently joined: Jonathan Smyth, Jenny Collins.

New committee members were encouraged to put themselves forward, after one year of being a plot or mini-bed-holder.

The complete list of committee members following the 2024 AGM are:

Chair – Nick Fry (site rep)
Treasurer – Jenny Embleton
Secretary – James Gilderoy
Jenny Collins
Roger Dean
Pete Elliot (site rep)
Jane Griffin (site rep)
Mary Ledgard
Tara Salter
Paul Skelly
Jonathan Smyth
Arthur Tallon

4. Treasurer's Report for April 2021 to July 2024

Jenny reported:

- Opening balance in April 2021 of **£987.50** (including (£211 of protected key deposits) and a closing balance at 10 July 2024 of **£1461.56**.
- Grants: £405 from East Brighton Trust for the purchase of a new bench. Unspent funding from St George's Church and BHAF for the purchase of a gravel surface in the Hub shelter. £76 remains from these funds for improving the Hub. Other BHAF development fund grant was used to purchase notice boards and replacement sign covers for each of the gates. £44 remains for notice boards as needed. BHAF also granted £800 for the mini bed scheme, which was used for wood to make the raised beds and other materials; £179 currently remaining.
- A bank card reader was purchased to make payments for goods etc easier.
- CVWHAS has Employer's Liability, Public and Products Liability and Trustee's and Directors Indemnity Insurance with Ansvar Insurance.
- Funds have been raised from events held during the year and donations for tea/cake etc at Hub openings. Products are sold at cost prices.
- CVWHAS membership has grown each year, with 66 members currently. Membership includes membership of the National Allotment Society (NAS). Members are automatically covered by NAS' Allotmenters Liability Insurance.
- The full financial report is attached to these minutes.

5. Report from Site Reps

Nick reported for Craven Vale allotments:

- Plot inspections were undertaken in May 2023 and April 2024. The Council has said that they will be stricter with inspections and plan to do three per year. It was noted that this year's wet weather had encouraged a lot of weed growth.
- Craven Vale's last letting session was in July 2023, when six plots were let.
- The next letting session is 3 August and it is hoped to let 10 plots. The most readily lettable plots had been identified and the council's maintenance team had started strimming them. Only two staff are allocated to this, which means the most overgrown plots are likely to remain that way for some time.

The following points were made in discussion:

- On-going frustration with the slow pace of letting plots, partly due to the very limited resources available to the allotment service but also the narrow

interpretation of data protection rules which had stopped allotment societies from helping with the letting process.

- Clarification was needed on the rights of co-workers to take over plots, potentially ahead of those that had been on the waiting list for a longer period.
- Some leeway should be given to older and less mobile plotheolders with respect to weed notices.
- It was suggested that some prospective plot-holders on the waiting list would not mind clearing a very overgrown plot and that these should be offered alongside the more lettable ones.

6. Any other business

- Cllr Mitchie Alekander, who has taken the allotments portfolio on the council, plans to visit the site on 14 September (rescheduled from 4 August). The committee will take her around the site and make suggestions for improvement of the council's allotment service.
- Jonathan Smyth had made some helpful suggestions about the council's interpretation of data protection rules. It was noted that BHAF and the council were working together on a more agile letting process. CVWHAS had been an important voice in this debate.
- CVWHAS will look at ways to help deepen the sense of community on the site, e.g. raising profile, helping new tenants.
- Joanne Lewis highlighted the Crops not Shops movement (cropsnotshops.co.uk), which encouraged the sharing of excess crops.

Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society Treasurer's report for years April 2021 – July 2024

The opening balance in April 2021 was **£987.50**. This includes the remaining balance of £211 of protected funds (key deposits).

The closing balance at 10 July 2024 is **£1461.56**.

In November 21 we successfully applied to the East Brighton Trust at Sussex Community Foundation for funding to improve the hub; we received £405 and purchased a bench. We also used unspent funding from St George's Church and some of the previous year's funding from Brighton and Hove Allotment Federation Development Fund (BHAFDF) to put a gravel surface in the hub shelter. There is currently £76 remaining in the funds to use for further developments at the Hub.

In August 21 and March 22 we used some of the remaining funds from the previous year's BHAFDF to purchase larger A3 noticeboards for the 5 gates, WH1, WH2, WH3, WH5 and CV2 and replacement covers for the notice boards. There is currently £44 remaining in the funds to use for notice boards as necessary.

In July 23 we started to develop the Mini-bed scheme and in November 23 successfully applied to the BHAFDF for £800 for the Mini-bed scheme. So far we have purchased wood and materials to create the beds and improve the plot (Craven Vale 47). There is currently £179 remaining in the funds to further develop the site. Mini-bedders will pay £7 pa rental for their beds (this year they were only charged £3.50 for the half year). At present there are 11 beds but there will eventually be 18-20 beds. Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society (CVWHAS) pay rental with 'charitable status/activity concession' for the plot to Brighton and Hove City Council which will be fully covered by the rental from the beds.

We purchased a card reader to make it easier for people to buy sundries and make donations at the Hub.

CVWHAS has Employers' Liability, Public and Products Liability and Trustees' and Directors' Indemnity Insurance with Ansvar Insurance.

We have continued to raise extra funds with donations for tea and cake when the hub is open; from the Seedling Swaps and Apple Pressing days. There is also a contribution of £2 per member per annum. We have used our funds to purchase items for the running of the hub, communications and stock to sell to plot holders; all stock is sold at cost price.

The number of members of CVWHAS has grown each year and we currently have 66 members in the society. Membership of the CVWHAS includes the membership of the National Allotment Society (NAS) and members are automatically covered by Allotmenters Liability Insurance by the NAS. The NAS renewal will be due in September 2024.

The financial reports from April 21 up to 10 July 2024 are attached to this document.

Jenny Embleton
CVWHAS Treasurer

16 July 2021

**Financial Report for Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments
Society**

April 2021 – March 2022

Money we had at start of the year 987.50

Money In

Float	-
Donations	182.69
Membership fees	265.00
Grant income	405.00
Sales	418.44
Other	-
Protected funds	-

Money In Total 1,271.13

Money Out

Membership fees	162.00
Grant expenditure	114.09
Stock	309.96
Running costs for Hub	46.71
Photocopying/printing/stationery	21.46
Materials	40.00
Hire costs	-
Other	72.99
Protected funds	-
Bank charges	15.00

Money Out Total 782.21

Money we have now 1,476.42

**Financial Report for Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments
Society**

April 2022 – March 2023

Money we had at start of the year 1,476.42

Money In

Float	-
Donations	304.90
Membership fees	306.00
Grant income	-
Sales	421.30
Other	5.00
Protected funds	-

Money In Total 1,037.20

Money Out

Membership fees	183.00
Grant expenditure	530.10
Stock	399.73
Running costs for Hub	66.73
Photocopying/printing/stationery	8.85
Materials	23.32
Hire costs	50.29
Other	74.95
Protected funds	-
Bank charges	60.00

Money Out Total 1,396.97

Money we have now 1,116.65

Financial Report for Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments

Society

April 2023 – March 2024

Money we had at start of the year **1,116.65**

Money In

Float	-
Donations	532.27
Membership fees	325.00
Grant income	-
Sales	665.35
Other	-
Protected funds	-
Mini bed scheme grant income	800.00
Insurance	-
Mini bed scheme rents	35.00

Money In Total **2,357.62**

Money Out

Membership fees	198.00
Grant expenditure	57.46
Stock	890.22
Running costs for Hub	164.47
Photocopying/printing/stationery	8.36
Materials	-
Hire costs	10.00
Other	12.99
Protected funds	-
Bank charges	70.54
Mini bed scheme	585.57
Insurance	139.60
Mini bed scheme plot rental	68.95

Money Out Total **2,206.16**

Money we have now **1,268.11**

Financial Report for Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society

April 2024 – 10 July 2024

Money we had at start of the year **1,268.11**

Money In

Float	-
Donations	156.65
Membership fees	-
Grant income	-
Sales	436.55
Other	-
Protected funds	-
Mini bed scheme grant income	-
Insurance	-
Mini bed scheme rents	-

Money In Total **593.20**

Money Out

Membership fees	-
Grant expenditure	-
Stock	266.90
Running costs for Hub	33.25
Photocopying/printing/stationery	5.80
Materials	-
Hire costs	37.50
Other	-
Protected funds	-
Bank charges	20.65
Mini bed scheme	35.65
Insurance	-
Mini bed scheme plot rental	-

Money Out Total **399.75**

Money we have now **1,461.56**