Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society
9th Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 10th October 2026
Function Room, The Rock Inn, 7 Rock Street, Brighton BN2 1NF

Nick Fry – 64CV – Chair & CV Site Rep
Jenny Embleton – 118 CV – Treasurer
James Gilderoy – 37CV – Secretary
Jane Griffin – 47WH – WH Site Rep
Virginia Almklev – 91a&bWH
Simon Atkins – 91a&bWH
John Batt – 7CV
Hannah Carter – 57CV
Nichola Charlesworth – 109 & 116CV
Vanessa Coxpendray – 137WH
Troy Ewings – 31CV
Laura Johnston – 8aCV
Dan Johnston – 8aCV
Mary Ledgard – 26CV
Andy Liles – 51CV
Deb Raeburn – 60WH
Sarah Rankin – 60WH
Pete Razen – 6aCV
Tara Salter – 58bCV
Paul Skelly – 37CV
Al Studd – 57CV

Apologies: Fiona Byrne, Sean Ruffell

The Chair explained the purpose of the meeting was to deal with matters on the agenda relating to the governance and business of the Society, according to its constitution. All tenants, co-workers and mini-bed holders could attend the meeting but only members of the Society could vote.

1. Minutes from last AGM, 19 October 2025

The minutes of the last AGM were agreed.

Matters arising from the minutes:

- Welcome pack for new tenants – Fiona Byrne is preparing this.
- Update for website – to be progressed (Jono Smyth had moved from Brighton).

- Environmental gardening – discussed under agenda item 6.
- Repairs to haulage way – had been referred to Council but no action taken to date.
- Rubbish/fly-tipping – had been referred to Council but no action taken to date.
- Volunteer group – Andy Liles kindly agreed to co-ordinate this group. Volunteers as a group could offer to help clear plots or undertake other one-off tasks.
- Drain at Beresford Road gate – had been cleared.
- Dead sycamore tree next to the Hub had been cut down by the council (after two years of pressure).

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

Events:

- Spud in a Bucket – launch 5 April, weigh-in 20 September. Many thanks to Mary for organizing this event. Spud variety for this year's competition was Acoustic, a second early. The top three places were:
  - 1st, £22 – Fiona M, 81CV, 1175g
  - 2nd, £11 – Clare J, 40WH, 1170g
  - 3rd, £11 – Andrew A-T, 143WH, 1164g
- Seedling Swap – 16 May. Many thanks to all those who donated seedlings and attended the event.
- Hub opened on 16 occasions since last AGM, making £392 in donations and £1002 in sales. Many thanks to all volunteers who donate time, cakes etc.

Mini-bed Scheme:

- Open to anyone on the waiting list (does not affect place on list) and downsizers.
- Started in January 2024, with 20 mini-beds available; 16 currently let.
- To date 39 people have been in the scheme with 12 moving to larger plots.

Improvements at the Hub:

- Old railway sleepers, donated by BHCC, had been installed as terracing/seating.
- A 1,000l water butt, also donated by BHCC, had been installed to collect rainwater for the mini-beds.
- Rust remediation had been undertaken. Thanks to Paul.
- Thanks were extended to Mary for regular strimming at the Hub.
- Thanks were extended to Jenny for all the work she does for the Society, including ensuring notice boards are kept up-to-date.

3. Committee Elections

- Sean Ruffell (mini-beds) was elected to the committee.

- Arthur Tallon and Jono Smyth had left the committee.
- The following committee members were nominated and elected unopposed:
    - Chair – Nick Fry, nominated by Jenny Embleton and seconded by Jane Griffin
    - Treasurer – Jenny Embleton, nominated by Andy Liles and seconded by Virginia Almklev
    - Secretary – James Gilderoy, nominated by Jenny Embleton and seconded by Jane Griffin
- All committee members, past and present, were thanked for their contribution. The CVWHAS committee members are:

    Chair – Nick Fry (also CV site rep)
    Treasurer – Jenny Embelton
    Secretary – James Gilderoy
    Fiona Byrne
    Roger Dean
    Pete Elliott (WH site rep)
    Jane Griffin (WH site rep)
    Mary Ledgard
    Andy Liles
    Sean Ruffell
    Tara Salter
    Paul Skelly

4. Report from Site Reps

Jane Griffin, WH Site Rep:

- Letting process much improved following recruitment of new allotments officer.
- 19 plots had been let this year, with 12 currently vacant.
- 230 applicants on the waiting list.
- The track from Whitehawk Hill Road to the transmitter, and the double gates leading from the track to the allotment site, were in poor condition and had been reported to BHCC. As BHCC's maintenance team was overstretched, the work was unlikely to be prioritised.
- BHCC would be asked whether Section 106 funds could be used for these access improvements.

Nick Fry, CV Site Rep:

- Agreed that letting process much improved now that Site Reps could contact prospective tenants on the waiting list.
- 29 plots had been let this year with 2 or 3 currently vacant and 2 or 3 on hold or pending termination.
- Plot inspections were carried out in April, June and September.
- A new gatepost had been installed at the Beresford Road entrance making the gate much easier to open.

5. Treasurer's Report

- Jenny reported that the bank balance after the last AGM was £1587.04 and now stood at £1379.12

- The full Treasurer's Report is attached.

6. Items for discussion

Constitution – update to include environmental gardening

The following changes to the constitution were agreed:

- References to 'the club' to be changed to 'the Society'.
- References to 'all tenants and co-workers' to be changed to 'all tenants, co-workers and mini-bed tenants'.
- The aims of the Society would now include the promotion of sustainable and environmentally friendly gardening and contribution to enhancing the sites for wildlife and maximizing biodiversity.

John and Paul would help develop ideas on what the new aims on environmental gardening might mean in practice in the context of BHCC's Allotment Rules, including minimum 75% cultivation.

7. Any other business

There was a wide-ranging discussion on the application of weed notices. The Chair noted that all tenants were bound by BHCC's Allotment Rules[1] as a condition of their tenancy. The Allotment Rules were achievable, and most tenants never received a weed notice.

Concern was raised about overly strict application of the Rules when a weed notice had been issued within six months after new tenants had taken on a severely overgrown, rubbish-strewn plot, and that period included winter.

Concern was also raised at the lack of feedback after weed notices were issued.

It was suggested that Site Reps could advise plotholders early if their plot was at risk of a weed notice so action could be taken.

It was also suggested that difficult conditions, such as this year's hot and dry summer, should be taken into account.

It was noted that changes to the Allotment Rules would need co-ordination with the Brighton and Hove Allotment Federation; concerned plotholders could attend BHAF meetings to make these points.

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[1] https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/allotments/allotments-rule-book

It was agreed that the Committee would write to BHCC and BHAF to record the concerns made about weed notices, if that was the majority view of Society members.

More help from BHCC to remove rubbish from allotments was requested generally and particularly when new tenants take over an allotment. The CV site rep pointed out that new tenants should inform the Allotment Service within 1 month of taking on their plot if they require a collection of non-biodegradable rubbish, which should be placed in a pile as close to the nearest track/path as possible. Due to the shortage of maintenance staff, actual collections will take far longer than this to happen, so plotholders have plenty time in which to clear their plots of all rubbish.

All were asked to ensure the numbers on combination locks were properly scrambled when they are locked. It was noted that the lock at Manor Road gate was hard to open.

Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society (CVWHAS)
Treasurer's report from 19 October 2025 – 10 October 2026

The opening balance on 16 Oct 2025 *(the date of the closing balance at the time of the last AGM)* was **£1587.04.** This included the remaining balance of £211 of protected funds (key deposits).

The closing balance on 9 October 2026 is **£1379.12.**

We have not applied for any grant funding this year; the grant funding we had was spent last year. All expenditure since the last meeting has been paid for from our own funds.

- Improvements at the hub – terracing and water butt: the railways sleepers used to create steps and shore up the slope were donated but we paid £22 for metal bars to anchor the sleepers. A large water butt was sourced for free. Future expenditure may be needed to pay for guttering and pipes to connect the water butt.

- Notice boards – we spent £74 for two A1 notice boards to replace the broken ones at Beresford Road (gate CV1) and by the mast (gate WH4) and £16 for some 'please lock the gate' signs for the Beresford Road gate.

- Mini-bed scheme –
  Brighton and Hove City Council (B&HCC) donated some mulch. A few other items have also been sourced for free by a member of the sub-committee.
  There are 20 beds and 16 are currently rented out; the sub-committee is in the process of renting out the last 4 beds.
  Each Mini-bedder pays £7 pa rental for their bed. CVWHAS rent plot 47 with 'charitable status/activity concession' from B&HCC; this will be fully covered by the rents from the Mini-beds.
  A refundable deposit of **£10** is now charged to secure a Mini Bed and as guarantee that the bed will be left in a weed and rubbish-free state, ready to pass on to the next tenant at the end of the tenancy.

CVWHAS has Employers' Liability, Public and Products Liability and Trustees' and Directors' Indemnity Insurance with Ansvar Insurance. This is due to be renewed in November 2026.

We have continued to raise extra funds with donations for tea and cake when the hub is open and from the Seedling Swap. There is also a contribution of £1.50 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.

We currently have 70 members in the society. Membership of the CVWHAS costs £5 per year and includes affiliate membership of the National Allotment Society (NAS). The NAS fee is £3.50 per affiliate.

The financial reports from 1 April 25 up to 9 October 2026 are attached to this document.

Jenny Embleton
CVWHAS Treasurer

October 2026

Financial Report for Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society
1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

Money we had at start of the year	**1,191.26**

Money In

Float	-
Donations	362.49
Membership fees	409.95
Grant income	-
Sales	993.27
Other	-
Protected funds	-
Mini bed scheme grant income	-
Insurance	-
Mini bed scheme rents	136.50
Money In Total	**1,902.21**

Money Out

Membership fees	273.00
Grant expenditure	50.37
Stock	944.83
Running costs for Hub	38.00
Photocopying/printing/stationery	11.40
Materials	83.29
Hire costs	-
Other	168.37
Protected funds	-
Bank charges	34.10
Mini bed scheme	64.99
Insurance	155.80
Mini bed scheme plot rental	77.96
Money Out Total	**1,902.11**

Money we have now	**1,191.36**

Financial Report for Craven Vale and Whitehawk Hill Allotments Society
1 April 2026 – 9 October 2026

Money we had at start of the year	**1,191.36**
Money In	
Float	-
Donations	330.60
Membership fees	375.00
Grant income	-
Sales	818.08
Other	-
Protected funds	-
Mini bed scheme grant income	-
Insurance	-
Mini bed scheme rents	122.50
Mini bed scheme deposit	30.00
Money In Total	**1,676.18**
Money Out	
Membership fees	266.00
Grant expenditure	-
Stock	1,085.98
Running costs for Hub	38.48
Photocopying/printing/stationery	4.40
Materials	22.34
Hire costs	-
Other	62.40
Protected funds	-
Bank charges	8.82
Mini bed scheme	-
Insurance	-
Mini bed scheme plot rental	-
Mini bed scheme deposit returned	-
Money Out Total	**1,488.42**
Money we have now	**1,379.12**