

## **Walsall Wood Allotments Charity – 22 August 2024**

### **Annual Report 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024**

Charity Registration Number: 510627

Address: Walsall Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW

Trustees: Councillor Keith Sears (Chair of the Trustees)  
Mr Alan Paul (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Mike Bird  
Councillor Ken Ferguson  
Councillor Amanda Parkes  
Councillor Vera Waters

#### **1 Summary of Report**

- 1.1 This report presents the work of the Charity during 2023-2024 financial reporting year. The Committee met on four occasions and ensured the Charity acted in accordance with its purpose of relieving beneficiaries who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities.
- 1.2 This report will be submitted to the Charity Commission as part of the Charity's Annual Return (2023-24), if required by the Charity Commission.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the work of the Charity be noted.

#### **3 Governance and Trustees**

- 3.1 The Charity's Committee of Management consists of five co-opted Trustees serving five-year terms of office and one Trustee nominated by Walsall Council serving a four-year term of office. This is in accordance with the Charity's governing Trust Scheme (September 1993, as amended 2006 and 2023). New co-opted Trustees are recruited when vacancies become available and are appointed by the existing Trustees at special meetings.
- 3.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed by Trustees at the first meeting of the Trustees in each municipal year and the Chair is always eligible for re-election.

- 3.3 At their meeting in August 2023, the Trustees re-appointed Councillor K. Sears as Chair and Mr A. Paul as Vice-Chair of the Charity for the 2023-24 municipal year.
- 3.4 At their ordinary meetings, Trustees consider and determine applications received for financial assistance, after which the day-to-day administration of grants and the processing and handling of new applications, is delegated to the Clerk to the Trustees in co-operation with the Treasurer and Chair. The Clerk is provided by Walsall Council's Democratic Services team. Risks revolving around the spending of charity resources by successful applicants are managed closely by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair, outside of Charity Meetings.

#### **4 Charity Priorities and Activities**

- 4.1 The Charity's governing document explains that its income should be used for the purpose of relieving beneficiaries who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities. The governing document also states that charity income cannot be used to relieve 'rates, taxes or other public funds'. Further to this, Trustees have further developed the Charity's purpose with the following local conventions:
- The Charity will not use its income for the relief of the following:
    - Rent arrears and deposits;
    - Bankruptcy fees;
    - Applications for assistance from applicants living outside of the borough of Walsall Council.
  - Due to the substantial number of applications received and limited charitable resources, those applicants from residents in the Walsall Wood area (denoted by WS8 and WS9 postcodes) will be considered first.
- 4.2 At their ordinary meetings, Trustees consider and determine applications received for financial assistance based on their own merit and the resources available to the Charity. Trustees have a legal and moral obligation to ensure that when considering applications, they are fair and even-handed, and that the age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation of applicants do not prejudice or influence decision making. Requirements are in place for applications to be supported by minimum standards of evidence to help ensure Trustees make awards to those who most require assistance and therefore best meet their objectives of relieving beneficiaries who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress.
- 4.3 The Charity held four meetings in 2023-24 financial reporting year. Grants were made to 65 applicants. Awards were made for assistance including white goods, flooring, furniture, school uniform and clothing. Applications from residents in WS8 and WS9 postcodes were considered first, however most awards were made to residents in the rest of Walsall Borough. The total value of awards granted was £16,499.00 (including those not claimed). This was a reduction of £4537.00 from the previous year, due to the COVID-19 applications backlog being cleared.

## **5 Financial Review**

- 5.1 Details of the Charity's financial review can be found in the appended financial report. Trustees have a duty to manage the Charity on a sound financial footing and should seek to spend within its income levels.

## **6 Risk management**

- 6.1 The associated risks to this report revolve around the financial security of the Charity and statutory reporting requirements.

### *Serious incidents*

- 6.2 There have been no serious incidents requiring reporting.

### *Policy Statements*

- 6.3 The Charity Commission recommends that Charities should have policies in place to ensure that it carries out its aims lawfully and to safeguard its funds and assets. Whilst there is no specific legal requirement to have in place formal policies for some matters referred to by the charity Commission, it would be good practice to provide positive statements in areas where there is an identifiable need.

- 6.4 The Charity currently has in place the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding (adopted March 2017)
- Trustee conflicts of interest (adopted December 2016)

- 6.5 The Trustees have agreed for a report to be brought to a future meeting to review existing policies, make any necessary amendments and to consider whether to develop any further policies to complement their operations.

## **7 Legal implications**

- 7.1 Charities with an income exceeding £25,000 are required to provide a copy of the trustees' annual report, the Charity's accounts and Independent Examiner's Report as part of their annual return to the Charity Commission.

- 7.2 The 2022-23 Annual Return was submitted late due to issues with the Charity Commission's new digital system and user data. The Charity now has access to the new system and it is expected there should be no issues in completing the 2023-24 Annual Return.

## **8 Equality implications**

- 8.1 Trustees have a legal and moral obligation to ensure that, when considering applications, they are fair and even handed and that the age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation of applicants does not prejudice or influence decision making.

## **9 Consultation**

- 9.1 The Treasurer to the Trustees and finance officers from Walsall Council have provided the financial review and presented the report to Trustees at their meeting of 22 August 2024.

### **Author**

Edward Cook

Democratic Services Officer

☎ 01922 653204

✉ [Edward.Cook@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Edward.Cook@walsall.gov.uk)

## Walsall Wood Allotment Charity

### Receipts and Payments Statement For the year ended 31 March 2024

2022/23			2023/24		
Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds (inc endowments) £	Total £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds (inc endowments) £	Total £
<b>Receipts from:</b>					
2,480	26,167	28,647	2,480	26,168	28,648
0	0	0	0	0	0
195	0	195	1,143	0	1,143
0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>2,675</b>	<b>26,167</b>	<b>28,842</b>	<b>3,623</b>	<b>26,168</b>	<b>29,791</b>
<b>Payments on:</b>					
0	21,036	21,036	0	5,992	5,992
0	0	0	349	0	349
0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>0</b>	<b>21,036</b>	<b>21,036</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>5,992</b>	<b>6,341</b>
<b>2,675</b>	<b>5,131</b>	<b>7,806</b>	<b>3,274</b>	<b>20,176</b>	<b>23,450</b>
30,074	71,852	101,926	32,749	76,983	109,732
<b>32,749</b>	<b>76,983</b>	<b>109,732</b>	<b>36,023</b>	<b>97,160</b>	<b>133,183</b>

on behalf of Shaun Darcy  
Treasurer to the Trust

# Walsall Wood Allotment Charity

## Statement of Balances as at 31 March 2024

### Cash Funds

Details	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Deposit Account	32,899	85,273	118,172
Current Account	3,124	11,887	15,011
<b>Total Cash Funds</b>	<b>36,023</b>	<b>97,160</b>	<b>133,183</b>

### Investment balances

Details	Fund to which investment belongs to	No of units held	Market valuation as at 31 March 2024	Market valuation as at 31 March 2023
			£	£
COIF Charities Investment Fund	Unrestricted Fund	4,552.40	93,017	85,192
COIF Charities Investment Fund	Restricted Fund	48,031.82	981,415	898,853
<b>Total Investments</b>			<b>1,074,432</b>	<b>984,045</b>

on behalf of Shaun Darcy  
Treasurer to the Trust

Management Account for Walsall Wood Allotment Charity  
As at 12 August 2024

Forecast Receipts and Payments 2024/25

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds (inc endowments) £	Total £
<b>Receipts received to date</b>			
Investments	625	6,595	7,220
Bank Interest	516	0	516
	<b>1,141</b>	<b>6,595</b>	<b>7,736</b>
<b>Forecast Receipts</b>			
Investments	1,875	19,784	21,659
Bank Interest	1,500	0	1,500
	<b>3,375</b>	<b>19,784</b>	<b>23,159</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>26,379</b>	<b>30,895</b>
<b>Payments made to date</b>			
Charitable expenses	0	0	0
Insurance	0	0	0
Administrative expenses	0	0	0
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Forecast payments for rest of year</b>			
Charitable expenses	0	36,690	36,690
Insurance	1,646	0	1,646
Administrative expenses	519	0	519
	<b>2,165</b>	<b>36,690</b>	<b>38,855</b>
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>2,165</b>	<b>36,690</b>	<b>38,855</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) as at 12 August 2024</b>	<b>1,141</b>	<b>6,595</b>	<b>7,736</b>
<b>Forecast Surplus/(Deficit) for Year</b>	<b>2,351</b>	<b>(10,311)</b>	<b>(7,960)</b>

Uncommitted Cash Funds

Details	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Current Account	959 -	8,874 -	7,915
Deposit Account	34,040	91,866	125,906
<b>Total Cash Funds</b>	<b>34,999</b>	<b>82,992</b>	<b>117,991</b>

On behalf of  
Shaun Darcy  
Treasurer to the Charity

Analysis of forecast expenditure for remainder of year

Description	Category	Value £
Payments due to Walsall Council 22-23	Charitable Expenses	1,219
Accountancy Fee	Administrative expenses	519
Insurance Payment due to Walsall Council	Insurance	1,646
Payments to be repaid to WC 23-24	Charitable Expenses	13,991
Unpaid Approved Grants	Charitable Expenses	3,368
Predicted Spend for rest of year Grants	Charitable Expenses	15,928
Payments to be repaid to WC 24-25	Charitable Expenses	2,183
<b>Total projected expenditure</b>		<b>38,854</b>

Projected bank balance year end:		£
Current bank balance		140,917
Add income for rest of the year.		23,159
Less expenditure for rest of the year.	-	38,855
<b>Projected year end balance</b>		<b>125,221</b>
Bank balance at start of year		133,181
Projected movement in bank balance		7,960
		-

Investments

Details	Fund to which investment belongs to	No of units held	Market valuation as at 07/05/2024 £	Market valuation as at 12/08/2024 £
COIF Charities Investment Fund	Unrestricted Fund	4,552.40	92,230	91,513
<b>Total unrestricted fund investments</b>			<b>92,230</b>	<b>91,513</b>
COIF Charities Investment Fund	Restricted Fund	48,031.82	973,110	965,540
<b>Total restricted fund investments</b>			<b>973,110</b>	<b>965,540</b>
<b>Total Investments</b>			<b>1,065,340</b>	<b>1,057,053</b>

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF WALSALL WOOD ALLOTMENT CHARITY**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2024.

## **Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43 (2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7) (b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## **Basis of Independent Examiner's Report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view of the accounts.

## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements set out below have not been met.

- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

Signed



Mr Robert Page MSc BSc (Hons) CPFA  
Walsall MBC, Civic Centre 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1TP

13 August 2024.