Walsall Wood (Former Allotment) Charity

Annual Report 01/04/2025 - 31/03/2026

Charity Registration Number: 510627

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

Trustees: Mr Ken Ferguson (Chair)
Mr Alan Paul (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Lesley Lynch
Councillor Amanda Parkes
Mrs Vera Waters

1 Summary of Report

1.1 This report presents the work of the Charity during 2025-2026 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, if required.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the work of the Charity be noted.

2.2 That the Annual Report be approved and submitted to the Charity Commission as part of the Charity's annual return.

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 ordinary meeting in each municipal year and the Chair is always eligible for re-election.

3.3 At their meeting on 21 August 2025, the Trustees re-appointed Councillor K. Sears as Chair and Mr A. Paul as Vice-Chair of the Charity for the 2025-26 municipal year.

3.4 For the full duration of 2025-26, the Trustees were:

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

3.5 At their ordinary meetings, Trustees consider and determine applications received for financial assistance. 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 regarding 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.
- 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 2025-26 financial reporting year. Grants were made to 48 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

applications received and awards made were to residents in the rest of Walsall Borough. The total value of awards granted was £12,796.84 (including awards not claimed).

5 Financial Review

5.1 Trustees have a duty to manage the Charity on a sound financial footing and should seek to spend within its income levels.

5.2 The year-end position of the trust is attached as Appendix A to this report.

5.3 The charity returned a surplus of £31,329 for 2025/26 on a cash basis. However, this surplus is due to no payments for grants etc having not been made from the charity's accounts.

5.4 This surplus has meant that the cash position of the charity as at 31 March 2026 was £195,170 compared to £163,481 as at 31 March 2025.

5.5 Whilst the banking arrangements were changed to enable online banking and the mandate adjusted to allow named officers to approve payments, payments were made by Walsall Council on the charity's behalf. As at 31 March 2026 this totalled £45,138 of which £17,671 related to 2025/26.

5.6 Taking the expenditure of £17,671 relating to 2025/26 into account, this would result in an adjusted surplus in year of £13,658. Adjusting for the reimbursement due to Walsall Council the adjusted cash position as at 31 March 2025 is £150,032.

5.7 There is a requirement for the Trustees to have an independent examination of the accounts conducted as the annual income of the charity excels £10,000. In common with other charities and trusts, this is carried out by a qualified accountant in the employment of the council and can be found as Appendix B.

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 is

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)

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 2024-25 Annual Return was submitted on time.

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 18 August 2026.

Appendices

Appendix A: Financial accounts 2025/26
Appendix B: Independent Examiner's report

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This Annual Report was approved by the Trustees of the Charity at their meeting on 18 August 2026.

Walsall Wood (Former Allotment) Charity

Charity Commission Number: 510627

Receipts and Payments Statement
For the year ended 31 March 2026

2024/25				2025/26		
Unrestricted Funds	**Restricted funds (inc endowments)**	**Total**		**Unrestricted Funds**	**Restricted funds (inc endowments)**	**Total**
£	**£**	**£**		**£**	**£**	**£**
			Receipts from:			
2,530	26,691	29,221	Investments	2,606	27,493	30,099
0	0	0	Donations	0	0	0
1,439	0	1,439	Bank Interest	1,230	0	1,230
0	0	0	Other receipts	0	0	0
3,969	**26,691**	**30,660**	**Total Income**	**3,836**	**27,493**	**31,329**
			Payments on:			
0	0	0	Charitable expenses	0	0	0
0	0	0	Insurance	0	0	0
0	0	0	Administrative expenses	0	0	0
0	**0**	**0**	**Total Payments**	**0**	**0**	**0**
3,969	**26,691**	**30,660**	**Surplus/(Deficit) for Year**	**3,836**	**27,493**	**31,329**
36,023	97,158	133,181	Total Cash Funds Brought Forward	39,992	123,849	163,841
39,992	**123,849**	**163,841**	**Total Cash Funds Carried Forward**	**43,828**	**151,342**	**195,170**

Shaun Darcy
Treasurer to the Trust

Walsall Wood (Former Allotment) Charity

Charity Commission Number: 510627

Statement of Balances as at 31 March 2026

Cash Funds

Details	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Deposit Account	40,704	139,455	**180,159**
Current Account	3,124	11,887	**15,011**
Total Cash Funds	**43,828**	**151,342**	**195,170**

Investment balances

Details	Fund to which investment belongs to	No of units held	Market valuation as at 31 March 2026 £	Market valuation as at 31 March 2025 £
COIF Charities Investment Fund	Unrestricted Fund	4,552.40	81,123	88,683
COIF Charities Investment Fund	Restricted Fund	48,031.82	855,917	935,689
Total Investments			**937,040**	**1,024,372**

Shaun Darcy
Treasurer to the Trust

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 2026.

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

Anisah Khan
Walsall MBC, Civic Centre 3rd Floor, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1TP

30 July 2026