

Winchester New Allotment Holders Society (WNAHS)

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 20th November 2025

Location: Primary Phase Hall, The Westgate Lower School, Cheriton Road, Winchester, SO22 5AZ

Present - a list of Members attending the AGM is held by the Honorary Secretary

Apologies - a list of apologies received from Members is held by the Honorary Secretary

The following documents were circulated by the Membership Secretary to all members by e-mail prior to the meeting. These documents were also posted on the WNAHS website.

- Agenda
- Minutes of the 2024 AGM
- Treasurer's report and accounts
- List of Committee members seeking election/re-election
- Nomination form

The meeting

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the agenda for the evening.
2. The Minutes of the 2024 AGM were agreed as a complete and accurate reflection of the meeting.
3. Matters arising from the 2024 AGM
 - There were no matters arising.
4. Report from the Membership Secretary.
 - The Society currently has 440 members.
 - The Society continues to maintain healthy waiting lists, with demand exceeding supply.
 - Average waiting time was approx. 21 months, though less for the Stanmore sites
 - 95% of annual renewals were now being made by bank transfer using the correct reference number. This helped reduce the administrative time spent having to match a remittance to the member.
 - A number of ploholders continue to be late payers.
 - Given the long waiting lists, plot inspections take place on a regular basis throughout the year. Members were asked to ensure that, if they had a problem looking after their plot, that they let their convenor know why that was and how long they expected the situation to continue before being able to return it to an acceptable standard. We don't charge a lot for our plots and

it is unfair on those prospective new members on the waiting list if current members are not fully utilizing their plots.

5. Report from the Treasurer

- In summary, another good year, with total net income showing a 'profit' of £5,174. This compared to £4,227 in the previous year.
- Rent income. Rent received from members of £18,708 was better than last year due mainly to the increase in rent per rod from £6.00 to £6.50 on 1st October 2024.
- The Trading Shed. Total sales reduced by -11% to £22,500. Thanks were expressed to those members who donated vegetable plants to the Shed for re-sale. The gross profit of £6,562 was, however, only -£190 lower than last year.
- Other income. This includes interest of £3,255 that we have earned on the various bank deposit and term accounts that the Society has been managing over the last year.
- Rent charged by Winchester City Council. This has increased by £941 in the year and reflects an accrual for the 5-year rent increase that we are expecting to receive from WCC.

As was reported to the AGM last year, our 12 sites are covered by two leases with Winchester City Council. The first lease, which covers the majority of our sites, expired on 31st December 2024. The second lease expires on 31st December 2025.

The Chair first wrote to WCC in May 2024 in order to initiate discussions for a new lease. Outline Heads of Terms were agreed in October 2024. The legal documents, formalising these Heads of Terms, is still awaited.

Over the last year, responses to our letters requesting progress updates have assured us that the delay in issuing new leases to us has nothing to do with the Council not wishing to grant new leases.

- Water charges. Despite the increase in cost per cubic metre, the overall cost of water is only marginally higher than last year due to the introduction of a hosepipe ban on Monday 21st July and the fact that recent water bills are only based on estimated usages.
- Repairs and maintenance. Was substantially higher this year due to a significant spend on general tree and hedge maintenance where we have to employ third-party contractors, replacement fencing and painting of the Trading Shed at Park Road.
- Administration. Following the significant costs incurred last year in 'future-proofing' our membership software and support costs, this year's costs are significantly lower.
- Looking at the Balance Sheet, it was noted that we continued to maintain strong reserves and a healthy bank balance.

6. Trading Secretary's report

- The Trading Shed Secretary thanked all those volunteers who have helped over the past year in the Shed, including those who have unloaded deliveries, and sorted and bagged the potatoes. They now have a great team, who step in where needed, with quite a few now willing to run the shop.
- The finances show another good year. We try to keep prices low, and some have remained the same as last year, but obviously that's not always possible. The profits from the shop are for the Society and help keep the allotment fees low, so even if you could save 50p by shopping elsewhere, buying from the Trading Shed benefits all Members in the long run.
- Many customers are now choosing peat free compost and we stock a variety of brands suitable for propagation. The addition of perlite and vermiculite to peat free compost can aid with water retention and drainage. We still stock compost with peat included for those who prefer it. To save money, it is recommended that members use homemade compost and leaf mould for all larger plants and only use the sterilised bought compost for sowing seeds and the initial pot-on of seedlings. When making your own compost on the plot, it's worth the effort to get rid of any perennial or annual weeds and ensure that the heap gets hot enough, so that you have a relatively clean growing media.
- The to-do list on the board outside the shop is still going strong. The reminders have definitely helped sales of those items that come in for a short period, such as onions, shallots and garlic.
- Tasks for now? It's a good time to renovate the soft fruit on your plot. Prune blackcurrants, redcurrants and gooseberries. Cut down autumn fruiting raspberries. Tidy strawberry beds, removing extra runners and old leaves. Now is also the time to lift and divide rhubarb. And, of course, mulch around the bushes.
- Potatoes. Order forms are now available. Please bring to the shop with your payment. As usual they will be delivered early February.

7. Motions proposed & adopted by the AGM

- The motion to appoint lay auditors to examine the annual accounts for 2024-25 was approved by those present.
- The submission of unaudited accounts for 2024-25 to the Financial Conduct Authority was approved by those present.
- The Election of Committee members listed in the AGM papers was approved by those present.

8. Any Other Business

- A question was asked as to why ploholders were not allowed to have large, enclosed, agricultural water tanks on their plots? The Chair responded by saying that a fellow ploholder who worked for one of the water companies had offered to do a review of how rainwater could best be collected on our sites. However, the water in these 'agricultural' units needed to be properly

managed to ensure that they did not become a health issue, they could not be easily transported to/from sites, and the Society had recently incurred costs in having to clear plots that members had vacated without removing all the excess material that they had accumulated. The use of standard water butts were likely to be just as efficient.

- A question was asked about the number of rats on some sites. The Chair responded by saying that we had looked at getting professionals in, but this would be very expensive and there was no guarantee that it would deal with the problem. Members were advised to buy their own humane rat traps.

In closing the formal part of the meeting, the Chair expressed his thanks to the Committee, the Convenors, the Site Representatives, Jo and Janet and all those who helped in the Shed at weekends or who helped unload supplier deliveries at short notice, and those who did so many 'odd jobs' around the sites during the course of the year.
