

COMMITTEE REPORT

2025-26

The Committee met 10 times this year.

Throughout the year, we've enjoyed various social events: the delayed Wassailing celebration; the Plant Swap in May; our Picnic and BBQ in July and the annual Produce Show in August. In September, we held our first Apple Day which showcased our newly acquired electric apple press and pasteuriser. The new equipment certainly made the task of turning apples into juice so much quicker and easier. We hope that many of you will take advantage of this new kit in the years to come.

Maintenance of our site remains our highest priority. While no major projects were completed this year, managing it still required substantial funding. A substantial portion of our budget was dedicated to the disposal of waste and the clearance of plots that had become uncultivated or neglected. In addition, work was carried out to remove unwanted trees and prune back others as needed. These activities help keep our site safe, clean, and pleasant for everyone.

We have a large site to maintain and over 200 plot holders enjoying the amazing space we call our allotment. Volunteering throughout the year at our regular work parties is hugely beneficial and out everyone can have a part to play in helping to manage our allotment site. Looking back over the past 12 months a very significant amount of work has been done to help keep our site tidy, safe and enjoyed by all. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered at the work parties over the past 12 months.

More help would be much appreciated however and so we are trying hard to engage and encourage even more plot holders to volunteer. We are now awarding every plot holder, who attends a work party, a £5 voucher to redeem against their annual rent (max 3 vouchers per plot redeemable). Work parties will be held over the first weekend of the month; making it easier to know when they're taking place. If you have ideas or suggestions of what we can do to encourage more plot holders to help, or have suggestions of what we can do differently to make looking after our site easier please do have a chat with your zone rep.

Looking forward, please do try to find time to volunteer at one or more of the 7 or 8 work parties we're having in 2026. It is your site and it is in your interest to help keep it nice don't you think?

Since the last AGM, 21 plots have been let, and enquiries continue to come in on a regular basis. There are presently 35 people on the waiting list. As in previous years, 15 applicants, on reaching the top of the list, were no longer interested in having a plot or had obtained one on another site. New plot holders are still required to successfully complete a six-month probationary period before they can become full members of the Association.

We would like to thank those people who continue carry those regular duties for our Association; Lewis Lovett for maintaining our website, John Hawkins, Mike Proctor and Val Phillips for managing our Facebook. Membership continues to grow and now stands at 128. Members who use it, find it extremely useful for finding out what's happening, sharing ideas and asking for advice.

The Trading Hut continues to provide valuable support to our site by operating at weekends throughout the growing season. Members can find a variety of essential gardening supplies on offer, including slug pellets and garden canes, ensuring that everyone has access to the necessities for successful cultivation. In addition to these items, we have recently taken delivery of bags of compost, grow bags and bagged manure. The Hut also offers the use of gardening equipment such as mowers, trimmers and cultivators, making it easier for plot holders to maintain their allotments efficiently. We may not be always able to compete in price with the bigger outfits but we make up for that in convenience!

We were very sad to say goodbye to one of our longest serving plot holders, Maria Tortorelli. Maria died at the end of last year, after cultivating her plot well into her 90s. She will be missed.

We're all looking forward to the new growing season and, as always, no doubt, hoping to improve on past years. We wish you every success!