

Burgess Hill Shed

AGM Trustees Report October 2025

Introduction

This report provides a summary of our work over the past year and information on our performance as a local charity. It will form part of our Trustee Annual Report to the Charity Commission which may be published on their website.

At 11am, on Tuesday 2 December 2025, we will hold our eighth Annual General Meeting. During this meeting we will review our performance over the year, followed by an open members' session to discuss our current position and how we may best move forward.

Our mission

Our core mission is to help people suffering social isolation and loneliness. To do this we operate a craft workshop with facilities and resources for members to engage in activities as a means for social interaction. It is run entirely by members on a voluntary basis and together they make it a very warm and friendly environment for members and visitors to share interests and experiences.

Our charity began in June 2016 and has operated successfully for over 9 years. Since September 2016 sessions have been run at the Burnside workshop, and we expect to be there for at least another 3 years. Unfortunately, during the next three years there will be some disruption since the building requires major repairs. We understand that repairs are likely to commence after June 2026 and take around 6 months. During this time, it will be necessary to clear the workshop entirely. As this will be an extended period, the trustees are looking at options which will minimise disruption, and allow some if not all activities to continue at alternative venues during the break.

The break will also be a good opportunity to review our mission and look at improvements that could be put in place for when we return. The aim being to make our workshop a more effective and robust place for members.

Activities and Events

This year we ran activities 5 days each week with: leatherwork and computer-controlled woodwork machines Monday mornings; Wood and metal work all day Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; and willow-work, lino-printing and pyrography every Friday morning. All sessions were well attended.

Sessions require supervision, first aid and machine maintenance to be provided by volunteer members. Several times we struggled and although we managed to keep running sessions, this showed we need more cover if we are to avoid curtailing or closing some sessions in future.

This year we attended several events, beginning with our annual visit to St Peter and St James Open Garden event in May. In June we ran a stall at Burgess Hill Summer Fayre, the Wivelsfield Village Day and for the first time, Albourne Village Day. Fortunately, the weather was very kind for all events, there was a lot of interest and we made good sales.

Performance

Our overall performance as a charity is assessed against the following criteria: the number of people we help and benefits we provide; the level of attendance achieved; the value to our community; our ability to continue operations.

Members

Member levels tend to fluctuate in any year with the lowest in August growing to a peak mid-year. Last year we peaked at around 65 members. Currently we have 47 members and with growth currently around 15% per quarter, we can expect this to reach over 60 by June 2026, similar to 2025. However, we can then expect levels to drop as we approach the anticipated disruption later next year.

We remain very much a local charity with 60% of members from Burgess Hill, 16% from Haywards Heath and Lindfield, 10% from Hassocks and Ditchling. A few members come from Brighton, Ringmer, Cookbridge, Crawley Down and Horsted Keynes.

As always, we depend entirely on the contributions made by members to help manage and run the charity. Without them we would not be able to offer sessions or run events. Thanks to everyone who contributed to our activities and especially those that helped with voluntary roles, and thanks to all members that helped and participated in our external events. Through all of our activities, members have once again made a significant contribution to our mission and helped fund operations and engage with our community.

The Level of Attendance

Overall attendance figures for the Shed were good with most sessions well attended.

Value to Community

We continue to make a significant contribution to our community.

A measure of our contribution to the community is called the voluntary value. This is a financial assessment based on the voluntary work performed by members. This includes for example, management, admin, supervision, maintenance and repairs, first aid cover, giving and attending training courses, providing expertise, managing accounts, applying for grants, attending external events, running events, and so on. It is equivalent to the cost of employing individuals to operate a place like the Shed (NB. Some Sheds are funded directly by Councils). Last year we reported that our cumulative value was in the order of £940K. This year, this value has increased by around £90K to around £1,030K.

The Trustees pass on their thanks to all members that have contributed to this staggering amount.

Ability to Continue (Sustainability)

In our case, sustainability means ability to provide long term value to our members and community. At present we are sustainable only if we can continue to use our workshop at Burnside or we can increase income to a level that will allow us to operate elsewhere.

In the longer term, we have two options: continue to use the Burnside workshop; move to alternative premises. Both options present uncertainty and risk.

Lease Status

Finding suitable premises for community sheds is difficult in most areas, and especially in Mid Sussex. We are therefore very fortunate that West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and the Burnside Team, allow us to use the workshop on favourable terms.

Last year we reported that we had discussed a new lease with WSCC which they said was likely under similar terms. We can now report that we have since been offered a new 3-year lease with a higher rent to cover increased energy costs. The higher rent is

affordable and the Trustees have in principle accepted the new lease subject to detailed negotiations.

Unfortunately, as covered previously, there is likely to be a period over the next 3 years when the building is closed for major repairs. The timing, terms and impact have yet to be fully determined. At the end of 3 years with possibly an extension to cover the period of disruption, there is a possibility of a new lease but no guarantee.

Alternative Premises

At present there are no suitable and affordable premises that we can use at current income levels. To pay for alternative premises we therefore need to increase income significantly, possibly by increasing member levels to probably around 100 at current rates, and extend opening times.

Trustees

Trustees not only frequently contribute as members they also give up their valuable time to look after strategic and governance aspects of our organisation. The following are our current Trustees:

Brian Campion (elected 2023)
David Hayes (re-elected 2024)
Eric Palmer Chair (re-elected 2024)
Graham Mason Treasurer (elected 2023)
Jasmine Patel Membership Co-ordinator (re-elected 2023)
Ken Edwards (appointed by trustees 2025)
Lee Pennicard (appointed by Trustees 2025)
Tony Ryan (elected 2023)

Trustees stand down on rotation or at the end of three years, and may be re-elected. This year (Jas Patel, Brian Campion and Graham Mason are standing for re-election).

David Bailey, a founding trustee who served from 2016 until August 2025, has decided to stand down as a trustee and member for health reasons. He has helped many since joining and during the Kiln project took the lead in managing the workshop for several years. He continues to be a strong supporter and aims to return once he has received the health treatment he needs. As a mark of our thanks and appreciation for everything he has done for the Charity, the Trustees have made him an honorary member.

Stakeholders

We extend our thanks to two very important external stakeholders: West Sussex County Council and the Burnside team for allowing us to use the workshop on favourable terms.

We also thank Burgess Hill Town Council for giving us space in the help point and for selling some of our products.

Finance

A summary of our financial performance for year ending September 2025 will be provided during the AGM. On behalf of the trustees and members we express our thanks and appreciation to our Treasurer Graham Mason and to Lynne Adams for examining our accounts.

Summary

Overall, Burgess Hill Shed has performed well over the year. Our finances, membership and attendance are all in good shape. We have been offered a new 3-year lease at an affordable rent and we are in a great position to build on our first 9 years. Although there is little doubt that we will encounter some disruption in a year or two due to necessary building repairs, there are options for minimizing disruption. We are therefore optimistic that we can remain active for the foreseeable future and can all look forward to celebrating our 10th anniversary next year. As always, the Trustees welcome views, ideas and recommendations from members, on ways we can improve, add to our range of crafts, increase income and address our challenges.

Thank you to all members, past and present, and please keep doing what you do so well.

The Trustees
Burgess Hill Shed
13 November 2025

Burgess Hill Shed - Summary Receipts and Payments

	2025	2024	Change	
Income				
Subscriptions	2352	2112	240	
Session fees	7231	6155	1076	
Donations	616	1675	-1059	
Sales	2110	3173	-1063	
Workshop	0		0	
Other	0		0	
Interest	941	454	487	
	13250	13570		-320
Expenditure				
Equipment	458	2631	-2173	
Materials	1703		1703	
Rent	785	2366	-1581	
Sundry	1049		1049	
Grant	0		0	
Training	170	245	-75	
Insurance	584	548	36	
Other		1960	-1960	
	4749	7749		-3000
Excess Income over expenditure	8501	5821		2680
Balance Sheet				
Cash at bank	21295	13111	8184	
Cash in hand and at bank	0	470	-470	
Savings accounts	10139	35454	-25315	
95Day	26264		26264	
	57698	49035		8663

