



**Speen Allotment Association CIO**  
**Charity Number 1191276**  
**Trustees Annual Report**  
**2023**

Speen Allotment Association (SAA) became a CIO on 14 September 2020. This is the charity's annual report covering the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

**Objectives and activities**

To further or benefit the residents of the parish of Speen, Newbury, Berkshire and the surrounding area, without distinction of gender, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious, or other opinions by providing allotment facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreational leisure time occupation with the objective of improving their conditions of life and physical and mental well-being.

**Public benefit**

The Trustees are made aware of the Constitution and the three Charity Commission guideline documents on public benefit PB1, PB2 and PB3.

**Trustees**

John Headland – Chair  
Nicola (Nicky) Jenkins – Secretary  
Colin Mansell – Treasurer  
Martin Wiltshire  
Lynne Roberts  
Jonathan Fitch

**Governance**

The CIO constitution is that of an association with voting members other than the Trustees. The Board of Trustees is elected by the members and comprises the CIO's management team. The Constitution provides for up to nine (9) Trustees. We have three vacancies.

Each Trustee is made aware of the contents of the charity's constitution and their terms of office, holding their posts for at least two years before retiring and offering themselves for re-election.

Since the last report two of the original founding Trustees retired as required by the Constitution and were re-elected at the CIO's AGM held in March 2023. Also at that meeting the former Chair and Trustee, Alan Foley, stood down as a Trustee. He was replaced as Chair by John Headland, an existing Trustee. Members expressed their gratitude to Alan for the hard work and effort he had made in dealing with the protracted lease negotiations with our landlord prior to the change of legal entity to a CIO

The Trustees meet formally on a quarterly basis at minuted meetings. Individually, Trustees are involved informally in dealing with day-to-day issues on site that arise that affect members.

## **Background**

SAA has a 70-year lease on the land at Station Road, Speen, Newbury.

The land bordering the allotments on its southern and western sides is now owned by David Wilson Homes (DWH) who are currently pursuing various planning applications with West Berkshire Council (WBC) to deliver a major housing development that will have implications for the allotments and its members.

Throughout 2023 the Trustees monitored three planning applications submitted by DWH and made representations where appropriate to both the Speen Parish Council and WBC. At the time of writing this report the Trustees are aware that each of the three planning applications have been granted outline planning consent. The Trustees are monitoring how DWH is complying with the relevant planning conditions particularly those that have both direct and indirect implications for the allotments/members.

The Trustees organised a survey of its members in connection with one of the planning conditions associated with bus stops/parking in Station Road, Newbury, alongside the allotments. Trustees attended meetings of the Speen Parish Council's Planning Committee and made representations on behalf of the SAA members regarding the adverse impact the proposed parking would have.

The allotments benefit from a supply of water that runs through the site to the river Lambourn. This supply tends to dry up during prolonged hot weather such as we have encountered in recent years. Due to the uncertainty about the possible adverse effects the housing development might have on the natural water supply SRSI agreed during the lease negotiations to install a mains water supply at no cost to the SAA.

During the prolonged dry spell, the Trustees were compelled to use the mains water supply by introducing quantities of water into the existing water infrastructure. This proved to be an onerous task. As a result, the Trustees sought advice from local contractors to identify a method of integrating the mains water supply into the existing infrastructure without losing water to the river whilst minimising the cost to members. A project outline was developed but unfortunately it proved difficult to obtain quotes from contractors in time to commence the planned work ahead of the 2024 'growing season'. The project will be put to Members for discussion and agreement at the 2024 AGM in March.

## **Activities and achievements**

Once again, the Trustees tried to operate on a 'Service as usual' basis throughout the period of this report but this was affected by both the early storms and later the sustained period of dry weather that wrought havoc for many members in terms of crop production.

We were able to participate in the local annual Speen Fete where we had a stall with produce donated by our members. Money from the stall and the sale of our own raffle tickets provided us with a small amount of additional income and we were able to celebrate our first winner with the draw made at our annual BBQ for members and invited guests in July

The Trustees met on a number of occasions and were able to discuss strategies for maintaining the site, with one eye continuously on the housing development. To achieve these objectives the Trustees again successfully applied to Greenham Trust's Tree Project.

Members continue to harvest as much water as possible and most members with sheds have now fitted guttering.

Throughout the summer the Trustees encouraged Members to donate their surplus produce to the West Berkshire Food Bank. Deliveries were made to the food bank each Monday.

Throughout the reporting period membership has been consistent. The Secretary has managed the Waiting List exceptionally well is again able to meet prospective members on site whenever appropriate. It is pleasing to see that some members are encouraging their friends to help, thereby promoting our core objective.

## **Financial Review**

The SAA's primary sources of income continue to be allotment rents and Membership fees. Historically these were paid in cash at the AGM held in March but Covid changed all that. Alternative, on-line methods of payment introduced directly as a result of Covid, have continued and it is pleasing that Members have accepted these arrangements wholeheartedly.

Annually, SAA provides access to a supply of farmyard manure but in 2021 the quality of what was delivered raised concerns and therefore the Trustees sought alternative arrangements. In December a supplier delivered some 225 (80ltr) bags of compost so we are hoping that the proof of the pudding ....!

The Trustees budget to break-even whilst trying to maintain rent levels that are noticeably lower than the Town Council's; the latter includes water supplies.

SAA's use of mains water began in August following the sustained period of dry weather that had affected the supply of natural water. The Trustees arranged for the mains supply to feed into the existing infrastructure and took regular meter readings for cost monitoring purposes. This proved invaluable as the charges levied were far in excess of what was expected. After challenging the invoicing organisation, it emerged that there had been an error on its part regarding the type of meter that had been installed and normal service was resumed after exchanges of messages and further meter readings.

The Treasurer prepares an annual budget ahead of the AGM and this is used by the Trustees to determine whether or not any increase will be necessary. Rent levels are voted on by members at the time of an AGM and increases take effect from the following year.

Refundable deposits for new members were introduced when the CIO started to cover the costs involved in restoring to a reasonable standard any plots given up where no work had been undertaken. This initiative has been well-received and is working well.



The CIO now has a reserves policy and provides members with a Statement of Assets and Liabilities. Reserves are earmarked separately for Tree and Water projects, sheds, refundable deposits and a general fund.

The accounts show that the CIO made a small surplus over the reporting period in line with previous years and expectations.

Speen Allotment Association CIO			1191276		CC16a
Receipts and payments accounts					
For the period from	01/01/2023	To	31/12/2023		
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Membership fees	156		-	156	144
Allotment rents	1,009		-	1,009	1,046
Refundable deposits		200	-	200	200
Shed rents		80	-	80	80
Fundraising (net)	697		-	697	331
Manure/Compost	28		-	28	760
Donations	2		-	2	1
Other				-	18
NWB interest	68		-	68	11
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	1,959	280	-	2,239	2,591
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	1,959	280	-	2,239	2,591
A3 Payments					
Insurance	344		-	344	318
Rent	103		-	103	103
Compost/Manure	-		-	-	788
Tree project	-		-	-	501
Fundraising costs	151			151	
Site maintenance	86		-	86	65
Water usage	118		-	118	40
Water standing charges	45			45	
BBQ	72			72	98
Equipment service	180		-	180	14
Equipment purchase	239			239	
Admin	83			83	
Other miscellaneous expenditure	118		-	118	86
Sub total	1,539	-	-	1,539	2,012
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	1,539	-	-	1,539	2,012
Net of receipts/(payments)	419	280	-	699	579
A5 Transfers between funds					

A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	419	280	-	699	579

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	General fund	3,119		-
	Water project		750	
	Tree project		450	
	Refundable deposits		600	-
	Shed rents		240	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b> (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		<b>3,119</b>	<b>2,040</b>
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Sheds	Restricted	600	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Colin Mansell	20/03/2024
			John Headland	20/03/2024